

Causes and factors responsible for Operation Zarb-e-Azb: perspective of internally displaced persons of North Waziristan, Pakistan

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Abstract: After 9/11 incident, the US and NATO forces entered Afghanistan to defeat Al-Qaida and its affiliated militant group–Taliban. The NATO forces invasion pushed militants from Afghanistan to take refuge in nearby places. Due to close proximity and vulnerable borders, many of these militants entered Pakistan’s erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), which resulted in the growth of militancy and extremism in the region. Pakistan launched a series of operations to counter terrorism and its facilitators. Operation Zarb-e-Azb was the continuation of those operations, started as a last vengeance in North Waziristan Agency with the aim to evacuate common people and then to extinguish militants. Resultantly, operation started in the mid of June, 2014 and the people of North Waziristan Agency started migration to the adjacent areas i.e., Bannu, Lakki Marwat and Karak etc. with worries and miseries in their hearts. Operation Zarb-e-Azb has been discussed in the literature. However, the perspective of IDPs has been overlooked. The study is descriptive-exploratory which is accomplished on a mixed study approach. This research article aimed to assess the perception of IDPs camped in Lakki Marwat from 2014-17 regarding the operation's causes and factors and the problems IDPs faced during displacement.

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1. Introduction

After the US-led operation against War on Terror, Taliban from Afghanistan moved towards the border region for survival. Being a clear policy against the Taliban, Iran was not an option for them to infiltrate. In such situations, Taliban had no other choice but to escape to Pakistan's areas attached to the border. Most of the Taliban were Pashtuns, who shared the same ethnicity with the people of tribal areas who lived under the system of Pashtunwali, a common code of moral and legal system (Ahmad, 2010). These similarities in culture and traditions provided a favourable soil for the militants to reorganize and expand their area of influence. Another concern for the forces fighting against terrorism was the Pashtuns areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially FATA and Quetta which had shown sympathies with the Taliban and *Al-Qaida*, being an enemy of the West (Kronstadt, 2007).

Soon the militants became so organized that they even challenged the government's writ in areas like Swat, South Waziristan Agency (SWA) and North Waziristan Agency (NWA). Pakistan remained with no option but to take direct military actions against the militants. The situation became more severe when the military was involved in militants' containment. Taliban and *Al-Qaida* declared war against Pakistan Army and all other agencies and institutions being there were serving the interest of US. Besides, the militants not refrained themselves from targeting common citizens, minorities, religious places, public gatherings and political parties etc. The situation remained uglier during the years from 2007 to 2013. Pakistan's security, peace and stability was at stake. It has no option but to take drastic action against the militants to eliminate them along with their roots, supporters, masterminds and facilitators. In June 2014, Pakistan political leadership and Military officials decided to eliminate every militant from the soil of Pakistan and so they decided to start Operation Zarb-e-Azb.

1.1. Escalation in the conflict

Tension between law enforcement agencies and militants escalated after several severe attacks, terrorists made on much secured places like General Headquarters (GHQ), Mehran Air Base Karachi, 2011 etc.

1.1.1. Terrorist attacks on General Headquarters in Rawalpindi

Soon after the Sri Lankan Cricket team attack in 2009, militants went for a disrupt attack over Pakistan Military General Headquarters Rawalpindi in October 2009. Terrorists along with sophisticated weapons dressed in army uniform attacked over a check post at the GHQ which resulted in the death of two civilians and nine soldiers, nine militants were also killed. During the attack military officers and civilians were made hostage in the compound. Later on, the hostages were released by the Special Services Group (SSG) Commandos. Pakistani officials and armed forces were stunned over such a planned and bold militants attack and speculated that the attack might have links with the ongoing operations against militants especially in SWA.

Militants attacked at 6 O'clock in the morning when a white van arrived at the GHQ entrance. They attacked the compound with guns and grenades; some of them exploded themselves on the entrance check point. Due to prohibition of carrying weapon inside the compound made it

quite easy for the attackers to take control of the building. To negotiate with Pakistani government for their militant's friend's freedom they took 42 hostages included civilians as well as senior military officers. Forces sharply planned the rescue plan with the SSG Division. The rescue Operation was named "Operation Janbaz." Soon the building was cleared and hostages were recovered. All the militants were killed except one Mohammad Aqeel aka Dr. Alias Usman who was also considered as the mastermind behind the attack made over Sri Lankan Cricket team in Lahore.

Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) (Amjad Farooqi Group) spokesman Azam Tariq claimed the attack in a phone call to AFP reporter. They threatened the officials with severe counter attacks as long as, they continue their operations against Taliban. Analysts had the opinion that the said leader Dr. Alias Usman who planned the attack over GHQ have also links with *Harkat-Ul-Jihad-Al-Islami* (HUJI) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) (The New York Times, 2009). The small groups of militants were now operating with the TTP. After that, they attacked Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) building in Lahore and Police Academy and Police Station at Kohat on October 15, 2009. Pakistan's Prime Minister along with the Interior Minister Rehman Malik strongly condemned the attacks and declared that "we have been left with no other option except to go ahead and face them" (Rasool, 2016).

1.1.2. The breakdown of Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan jails

TTP were in such a position to enter into a settle district having police stations and army bases, and release many of their friends from a jail. On December, 2012 when more than 200 heavily armed TTP militants attacked a central jail in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Southern District Bannu. Asimullah Mehsud the then TTP spokesman told the Express Tribune that the attack was made by our TTP militants along with more than 150 suicide bombers and freed our friends successfully.

The attack was made on Sunday at pre-dawn time when militants attacked the central jail building in Bannu where more than 900 prisoners along with several militants were stationed. The assault lasted for two hours, and they escaped before the arrival of law enforcement agencies, injuring four police officials. Officials believed that the attack was made for the release of Adnan Rashid. Adnan Rashid a former PAF junior technician plotted the suicide attack on former President General Pervez Musharraf.

Inspector General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police also endorsed the statement. Besides Adnan Rashid, other most wanted criminals and militants were held in the compound. According to an official, 384 prisoners escaped during the attack. Mian Iftikhar Hussain the then Information Minister for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa declared that there were at least 20 most wanted terrorists who made their escape (Adeel, 2012).

Unfortunately, the attack was repeated once again in the same manner and with the same planning in a near district, Dera Ismail Khan (DIK). On July 30, 2013 TTP militants attacked and released several militants along with several other criminals from Dera Ismail Khan Jail. Militants attacked the building of the central jail with modern weapons, mortars and rocket-propelled grenades and streamed inside the building. During the fight between the TTP militants and police 13 people died including six police officers. The attack was planned on the same approach they used for Bannu jail in 2012. This attack happened on the day when there

were elections in the parliament for a new president. This attack salted the wounds of the Pakistani authorities and people. Although no high-profile TTP militants were held there, but they were successful in releasing at least 30 hard-core militants (Ilyas, 2015).

Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pervaiz Khattak confirmed the escape of the hard-core militants from the jail complex. Later it was announced that approximately 247 prisoners including six women were missing. Militants entered the building dressed in Police uniform with exploding the outside wall of the building, several bomb blasts were heard in the surroundings with huge shouts of “Long live Tehrik-i-Taliban.” TTP accepted responsibility for the attack and said to Dawn news that there were 100 militants along with several suicide bombers who attacked the jail and freed their friends.

The DIK central jail is one the oldest and largest prison in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, containing several TTP militants and banned sectarian activists. Jail authorities said that there were more than five thousand prisoners in the DIK Central Jail situated in a Tank adjacent to SWA a volatile place. Khalid Abbas a senior police officer told Dawn news that the jail authorities had received threats from the militants several times; he claimed that the prison is one of the safest prison in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but it is built for “Criminals” only not for “Terrorists and Militants” (Sherazi, 2013).

1.1.3. PNS Mehran terrorist attack

Pakistan Navy came under the attack of the Taliban when on May 22, 2011 TTP and Al-Qaida militants attacked Mehran Naval Base at Karachi. PNS Mehran; Pakistan's Navy's headquarters and the Navy's Naval Air Arm installation is located near the PAF's Faisal Air Force Base in Karachi. Sindh. The terrible attack resulted in the death of 18 military personnel along with 15 militants. The attackers also destroyed two US-built P-3C Orion surveillance aircrafts.

According to Western and American intelligence sources, this attack was more sophisticated, better planned and rehearsed than the 2009 Pakistan Army GHQ attack Clang. It was the biggest attack on Pakistan Navy and its assets since 1971 and the biggest counterattack of Special Services Group Navy SSG (N) since 1971 operation Jackpot.

Before the attack on PNS Mehran, Pakistan Navy's personnel and vehicles were targeted several times in Karachi. The attackers, 15 in number, entered the base in the evening at around 20:30 PST. They cut the barbed wire on the place where they were invisible to the surveillance cameras. They first attacked the aircrafts and equipment on the base, with rocket-propelled grenades they damaged warplanes and several anti-submarine surveillance aircrafts. Besides, the multimillion-dollar P-3C Orion aircraft was set on fire. To evacuate the building from the militants and to rescue the hostages SSG (N) entered the compound. Former Prime Minister of Pakistan Yousaf Raza Gillani personally monitored the covert SSG (N) operation along with Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff Committee, Army Chief, Air and Naval Chiefs (Ali, 2011). During the operation, the SSG (N) team eliminated all the militants and rescued safely 11 People Liberation Army (PLA) Air Force technicians and 6 United States Navy military advisers. A senior officer of the Interior Ministry's Crises Management Cell said that the attack cost Pakistan a loss of 6.47 billion Rupees. Ehsanullah Ehsan spokesman of TTP claimed the responsibility while saying that, it was the revenge of Osama bin Laden and a gesture of our unity and power.

After the PNS Mehran tragedy, Pakistan put its government and military facilities on high alert. According to the media reports Pakistan had declared a red alert for its nuclear facilities and assets; they were on 24-hour alert. It was also reported that India had also declared a red alert for her nuclear facilities and naval bases. Prime Minister Gillani who monitored the operation vowed that Pakistan will fight the terror till its end. This attack really alerted Pakistan authorities and all other forces fighting war against terror. US, NATO, United Kingdom and China praised the role and sacrifices of Pakistan against terrorism and ensured Pakistan moral as well as strategic support against the militants (Ali, 2011).

1.2. Beginning of Operation Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan Agency

On June 15, 2014, at 01:30 PST, PAF combat jets started attacks over the hideouts of militants in Datta Khel and Degan of North Waziristan Agency (Singh, 2015). Later, ISPR confirmed that Pakistan armed forces had launched a composite operation Zarb-e-Azb on the directions of governmental authorities against local as well as foreign militants without any discrimination. Experts and foreign representatives from the whole world appreciated this bold step against militants and acknowledged it as a “final blow” to the militants inside Pakistan. Pakistan Prime Minister Mia Muhammad Nawaz Sharif affirmed in National Assembly on June 16, 2014, that to restore peace and stability operation *Zarb-e-Azb* was the last resort and it will continue till the elimination of the last militant from the soil of Pakistan. The immediate cause for Zarb-e-Azb was the militant’s attack on Karachi Airport on June 8, 2014, which resulted in 33 deaths including all ten attackers. The responsibility was claimed by Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). General Raheel Sharif, COAS, on June 16 emphasized on the demilitarization of the region without any care for “Good” and “Bad” Taliban. He added that the operation isn't against our own local tribal people but against every terrorist and extremist (Singh, 2015). The operation had three-tier strategy: a) evacuation of the local population from NWA; b) elimination of terrorism; and c) restoration of the Government's writ.

Before launching, the operation governmental authorities directed the local people of NWA to leave the area. A large number of people started migration and during 3 days nearly one million people left NWA and sheltered in Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Karak and Peshawar etc. Government has also established IDPs camp for the people with all necessities. People were ensured that the operation will end soon and soon they will return home. According to Khawaja Asif Federal Defence Minister, “we will try to complete the operation in NWA as soon as possible” (Singh, 2015).

Given the broad scope of the description, this research study is mainly focused on those internally displaced persons who have been forced to flee from “armed conflict.” Those who have been internally displaced because of natural or man-made disasters are not included in this study.

3. Review of literature

According Stephen Cohen “internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border” (Cohen, 1998).

Pakistan Army engaged in Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) operation in Islamabad for their involvement in anti-state activities and Taliban favouring. The operation resulted in the death of Maulana Abdul Rashid Ghazi the omen of the movement, several Madrassa students and security officials (Rediff News, 2007). They also distributed pamphlets in Islamabad containing their demands (Haider, 2007). The “operation silence” resulted in 106 deaths and many casualties. *Al-Qaida* on the same day released a video message of Aymen Al-Zawahiri, threatened Pakistani government for revenge. The operation resulted a countrywide agitation, especially in FATA and a new intense ray of terrorist attacks seemed all over the country (Ahmed, 2007).

In Swat great role has been played by the religious leaders. During different periods of time, call for Jihad was made by religious leaders against invasions and occupation. The ideology of Taliban spread quickly after their quick conquests in Afghanistan. Meanwhile in 1992, a new organization claimed that they are working for Islamic law enforcement. This was the beginning of Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariate-Mohammadi (TNSM) under the command of Sufi Muhammad (In 2001 Sufi Muhammad was jailed for involvement in the attacks in Afghanistan against US).

A large number of government officials, tribal leaders and political figures were targeted. Those who raised their voice were either slaughtered or kept in torture cells. Music disks, CDs and DVDs were banned in Swat and Malakand (Pakistan Defence, 2015). To combat the situation Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani called all parties and religious groups meeting at Islamabad where they unanimously endorsed military action against the militants. With the huge moral support from all around the world and Pakistani nation, Pakistan army launched operation Rah-e-Rast (The Right Way) in Swat on May 1, 2009. After the successful completion of operation Rah-e-Rast 1DPs return to home was planned from July 13, 2009 and was completed in ten weeks successfully. The operation was appreciated nationwide and especially by the people of Swat even though they were the most suffered community.

Pakistan Military had to launch another operation in Khyber Agency. Operation Sirate-Mustaqeem (Righteous Path) was launched by Pakistan armed forces under the direction of the then Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani. Pakistan Army 40th Infantry Division took the charge against Tehreek-e-Taliban *Lashkar-e-Islam* (LeI and its rival, Ansarul Islam. The Military Operation was to restore government writ and to secure peace in Khyber Agency as well as to secure the nearby cities situated in close proximity. Peshawar the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa situated nearer, and it had to be in deep trouble if Pakistan Army ever failed to curb the militancy in Khyber Agency (Malick, 2008). After a week of fighting, Pakistan military successfully taken control over the key places and dismantled LeI’s militants and their infrastructure. According to one official the basic purpose behind the operation was to cut off the funds of militants flowing from this region and to dry up the sources which cultivated those funds. By the end of 2008 armed forces successfully secured the area, regained control and destroyed the parallel administrative structures of LeI in Khyber Agency (Shah, 2008).

The Bajaur operation “operation Sherdil” launched by Frontier Corps supported by Pakistan Army against TTP. Bajaur a northern most agency of FATA borders the TTP strong hold provinces in Afghanistan the Kunar and Nuristan. Geographically it is the smallest agency but have the highest population density in FATA. The military operation began in the start of August, 2008. Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Director General, General Shuja Pasha

personally supervised the military Operation in Bajaur. The XI Corp division of Army under the leadership of General Muhamad Masood Aslam, conducted the counter insurgency with the aerial support from PAF. The place was a gut for militant and terrorists (Chakrabarti, 2008). Final operation was launched in 2010 with fresh reinforcement to clean the area including the most dangerous Damadola. In March 2010, Bajaur agency was declared clear after 97 soldiers embraced Shahadat (Martyrdom).

After the successful commencement of operation Rah-e-Ra'ast the strategic offensive operation Rah-e-Nijat (Path to Salvation) started by the Pakistan unified command of Armed Forces against the *Al-Qaida*, TTP and their allies in SWA on June 19, 2009. This was a part of the grand Operation against militants in the Pakistan's Western fronts. SWA became a nursery for militants under the leadership of Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud (1972-2009) (Rasool, 2016). Pakistan Army started the operation on October 17, with 2800 infantry against militants in SWA. Soldiers advanced the agenda from three directions---- From Razmak the Northern side, from Shakai the Western and from Jandola the Eastern side. By December 12, Pakistan Army announced successful completion of the operation and restored the writ of government in whole SWA. The general masses greatly supported and appreciated the military Operation against militants after increased militant activities in Buner, Swat and other areas of FATA (BBC News, 2009).

Operation Koh-e-Sufaid (Mountain White) started on July 4, 2011 in central and lower Kurram Agency with the main objective of securing the *Thall* Parachinar road and culmination of the sectarian clashes between Sunni and Shia. Pakistan forces main target was TTP militants in the region, that's why 4,000 troops along with heavy artillery and Jet bombers were deployed (Syed, 2011). Kurram Agency has very strategic importance because of its geographical attachment with NWA, Khyber Agency and the parrot's beak shape deep inclusion inside Afghanistan. On July 4, the Operation Koh-e-Sufaid started by Pakistan Army with the aim to curb the terrorist and extremist in the region and brought peace and stability. Brigadier Basharat Ahmed the sector commander and the officer in command for Operation said that the operation has five directions strategy. The operation was successfully completed on the popular demand, eliminating TTP and other militant groups, opening of the *Thall* Parachinar Road, the key demand of the Kurram agency local population (Syed, 2011).

The available literature showed that a series of operations launched by Pakistani government to encounter terrorism in Pakistan, but unfortunately failed to combat terrorism. That's why the government needed to launch a decisive operation with zero tolerance to cope the problem. Hence, in this study we attempted to assess the perception of IDPs camped in Lakki Marwat about causes and factors related to operation Zarb-e-Azb.

3. Research methodology

This study is descriptive-exploratory and a blend of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods by applying mixed study approach for collection of data enables a researcher to collect data from different sources, and it increase richness of the investigation, and meet the challenge of considering views that might not have been considered. For data collection, researchers used primary and secondary sources. To collect Primary data, a structured questionnaire for a quantitative survey among the IDPs of North Waziristan was constructed for data collection. IDPs were selected through random

sampling. Interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a number of respondents to explore their perspectives on particular idea, program, or situation. Secondary data was collected from different books, articles, thesis and journals etc.

Data recorded from interviews was thematically sorted out, transcribed and directly translated into English. Further, detail interviews were analysed by method of “content analysis”, transcribed and merged with field survey outcome to provide a more comprehensive understanding of IDPs perceptions. Data from the questionnaire was entered into SPSS and variables were constructed according to the study requirements.

4. Causes of operation Zarb-e-Azb: an analysis

The above Table shows the level of education background of Head of household of IDPs living in host community of Lakki Marwat. It indicates that majority (47%) of the IDPs living in host community had either not gone to school or left school before completing primary education. It further highlights that only 12.7% IDPs completed their primary schooling living in host community. Followed by 11.3% at High School level and 8% at intermediate level. Apart from this, all of them were lacking education.

Table-1: Highest level of education background of head of household

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Illiterate | 141 | 47.0 | 47.0 |
| Primary | 38 | 12.7 | 59.7 |
| Middle | 22 | 7.3 | 67.0 |
| High School | 34 | 11.3 | 78.3 |
| Intermediate | 24 | 8.0 | 86.3 |
| College | 18 | 6.0 | 92.3 |
| Master | 12 | 4.0 | 96.3 |
| Madrassa | 11 | 3.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-2 shows that according to the IPDs, there were three main reasons that brought operation Zarb-e-Azb to their area, even to their doorstep. As 78 respondents (26%) said that presence of the terrorism and terrorists in their area was the major reason. Some respondents hold the security agency (12.3%) and government (10.7%) responsible for the operation.

Table-2: What were the main reasons of operation Zarb-e-Azb?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Terrorism | 78 | 26.0 | 26.0 |
| Political Agent | 5 | 1.7 | 27.7 |
| Security Agencies | 37 | 12.3 | 40.0 |
| Government | 32 | 10.7 | 50.7 |
| Terrorism + Security Agencies | 113 | 37.7 | 88.3 |
| Others | 23 | 7.7 | 96.0 |
| Don't Know | 12 | 4.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

When the respondents were asked about the presence of Taliban in North Waziristan Agency 98% of the respondents confirmed their presence, while only 2% were of the view that there were no Taliban in their area (North Waziristan Agency).

Table-3: Do Taliban exist in North Waziristan Agency?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 294 | 98.0 | 98.0 |
| No | 6 | 2.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-4 shows that almost half of the respondents (41%) are holding the Security Agencies responsible for the creation and pampering of the Taliban. While almost equal number of respondents reported that Taliban took birth and grew stronger in the caring hands of Government (14.7%) and America (14.3%).

Table-4: Who are responsible for the creation of Taliban?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Local Tribesmen | 18 | 6.0 | 6.0 |
| Foreign Agencies | 13 | 4.3 | 10.3 |
| Government | 44 | 14.7 | 25.0 |
| Security Agencies | 123 | 41.0 | 66.0 |
| Afghanistan | 28 | 9.3 | 75.3 |
| Russia | 17 | 5.7 | 81.0 |
| America | 43 | 14.3 | 95.3 |
| Others | 14 | 4.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

The respondents answered to the question about the presence of Foreigner Taliban in their area. In the view of 98% of respondents Foreigner Taliban were present, while only 2% respondents denied their presence.

“... I saw them patrolling in our markets with the local Taliban. They came with the local Taliban and joined their training sessions” (Jamshed Khan Miranshah).

Table-5: Do Foreigner Taliban exist in your respected Agency?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 294 | 98.0 | 98.0 |
| Don't Know | 6 | 2.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-6 shows that according to 66% of the respondents there were about 501-1000 Foreigner Taliban in the area worked jointly with local Taliban. Among the respondents 6% said that there were 1001-5000 Foreigner Taliban, while only 0.7% said that the number is larger and there were more than 5000 Foreigner Taliban in their area.

Table-6: What will be the number of those foreigners?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| 50-200 | 22 | 7.3 | 7.3 |
| 201-500 | 54 | 18.0 | 25.3 |
| 501-1000 | 198 | 66.0 | 91.3 |

| | | | |
|----------------|-----|-------|-------|
| 1001-5000 | 18 | 6.0 | 97.3 |
| More than 5000 | 2 | .7 | 98.0 |
| Don't Know | 6 | 2.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-7 shows that according to the respondents most foreigners Taliban that came to their area were from Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Arab countries.

Table-7: Foreigner Taliban belong to which countries?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Afghanistan | 87 | 29.0 | 29.0 |
| Tajikistan | 72 | 24.0 | 53.0 |
| Uzbekistan | 84 | 28.0 | 81.0 |
| Arabs | 53 | 17.7 | 98.7 |
| Others | 4 | 1.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-8 demonstrates that according to 97% of the respondent foreigners Taliban were actively involved in terrorists' activities inside Pakistan. Only 3 percent of the respondents said that they had no idea about their activities in Pakistan.

Table-8: Did the Foreigners Taliban participate in the terrorist activities in Pakistan?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 291 | 97.0 | 97.0 |
| Don't Know | 9 | 3.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

According to the table-9, 59 percent of the respondents said the local people treated the Taliban in a good way and their behaviour was very polite and hospitable towards them. Some respondents reported that local people were either avoiding (13.7%) the Taliban or they were afraid (16%) of them. They were afraid that in case of any unfavourable situation the Taliban would harm them in every possible way; therefore, they preferred to avoid them. Some local people also had a bad (8%) attitude and feeling for Taliban.

Table-9: How the local community members treat Foreigner Taliban in North Waziristan Agency?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Good | 178 | 59.3 | 59.3 |
| Bad | 24 | 8.0 | 67.3 |
| Avoid | 41 | 13.7 | 81.0 |
| Fair | 48 | 16.0 | 97.0 |
| Don't know | 9 | 3.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

According to table-10, 32.3% of the respondents the sole motive for the people to form bonds with the Taliban was financial assistance. Those who joined the Taliban were paid handsomely. Even this statement stands true for the motivation of Taliban too. As Taliban at that time were enjoying all kind of facilities and financial aids from unknown sources. This was very luring for most of the Taliban. Only 15.7% respondents said that the Taliban were motivated by the Sharia implementation in the area and also in the entire country, Pakistan. 16 percent respondents hold terrorism responsible and said that it was the reason that motivated Taliban.

Table-10: What are the motives of Taliban?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Financial Interest | 97 | 32.3 | 32.3 |
| Sharia Implementation | 47 | 15.7 | 48.0 |
| Terrorism | 48 | 16.0 | 64.0 |
| Governance | 12 | 4.0 | 68.0 |
| Others | 85 | 28.3 | 96.3 |
| Don't Know | 11 | 3.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-11 shows most of the respondents (76%) were of the view that Taliban did not achieve their goals and motives. According to 4.7% respondents the Taliban were successful in attaining their targets and motives.

Table-11: Are Taliban successful in achieving their motive?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 14 | 4.7 | 4.7 |
| No | 228 | 76.0 | 80.7 |
| Up To Huge Extent | 3 | 1.0 | 81.7 |
| Up To Some Extent | 12 | 4.0 | 85.7 |
| Don't Know | 43 | 14.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

The respondents were asked about their well-wisher and 69.3 % of the respondents showed their faith in the government. According to them the government is sincere with local people of the area and is trying its best to solve the terrorism and all related problems. During this study, it was observed that local people were unhappy with the attitude and role of political agent of their area and only 0.7 % spoke in their favour. This raised numerous questions about the role of political agents as in FATA a political agent governs the whole area. Only 7 % of the respondents showed that security agencies were sincere with them. Most of the respondents considered Taliban and security agencies as two faces of the same coin.

Table-12: What do you think, who are sincere with the local natives of North Waziristan Agency?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Government | 208 | 69.3 | 69.3 |
| Taliban | 7 | 2.3 | 71.7 |
| Security Agencies | 21 | 7.0 | 78.7 |
| Political Agents | 2 | .7 | 79.3 |
| Don't Know | 62 | 20.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-13 shows that according to the locals this operation launched by Pak army was aimed to eradicate foreigner Taliban from the area. Therefore, 59.7% respondents hold Foreigner Taliban responsible its operations. While according to 18 % of the respondents as the Pakistan security agencies were behind the whole operation therefore, they were responsible.

Table-13: What do you think that who are responsible for Operation Zarb-e-Azb?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Local Taliban | 36 | 12.0 | 12.0 |
| Foreigners Taliban | 179 | 59.7 | 71.7 |

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-------|-------|
| Government | 19 | 6.3 | 78.0 |
| Security Agencies | 54 | 18.0 | 96.0 |
| Don't Know | 12 | 4.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

According to table-14, 85.7 % of the respondents this operation will eradicate the Taliban from their area. According to them this time Pak army would neutralize and destroy all the safe breeding houses of Taliban in their area. Only 2% reported that even after this Operation the situation remained the same as this operation was not going to encounter Taliban effectively.

Table-14: Will Zarb-e-Azb encounter Taliban in North Waziristan Agency?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 257 | 85.7 | 85.7 |
| No | 6 | 2.0 | 87.7 |
| Up To Huge Extent | 21 | 7.0 | 94.7 |
| Up To Some Extent | 3 | 1.0 | 95.7 |
| Don't Know | 13 | 4.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

According to this table-15, almost all of the respondents (98.7%) are of the view that this operation that was launched against Taliban was not the response to the directives of America. They reported that they felt that their government and security agencies were doing this operation for national interest. The intentions of the operation were very clear as it was to de-root terrorism from the country rather than making America happy.

Table-15: Did America order/ask to start operation against Taliban in North Waziristan Agency?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| No | 296 | 98.7 | 98.7 |
| Yes | 3 | 1.0 | 99.7 |
| Yes But Conditionally | 1 | .3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

About the solution respondents shared mixed views as 32.7 % said that operation against terrorism could be the possible solution, 23.7% reported that negotiation with the Taliban could be helpful in this regard, while 28% respondents said that expelling the foreigner Taliban could be the best solution. They said that after the arrival of foreigner Taliban the terrorist activities have been intensified manifolds. And the operation that has launched in their area is also against foreigner Taliban in specific and local Taliban in general.

Table-16: What can be the permanent solution of terrorism in North Waziristan Agency?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Operation | 98 | 32.7 | 32.7 |
| Negotiation | 69 | 23.0 | 55.7 |
| Foreigner Exist | 84 | 28.0 | 83.7 |
| Don't Know | 12 | 4.0 | 87.7 |
| Others | 37 | 12.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-17 shows that local people of the area don't share positive views about Pak army and its role in the area. 39% of the respondents did not like the security agencies. There was a total of

29.3% of the respondents that shared a positive view about Pak army and they liked its role, while 12.7% of the locals were afraid of Pakistan army. This attitude was also predicted in the table 12 of this section.

Table-17: What are the sentiments of local community members towards Pakistani Army?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Good | 88 | 29.3 | 29.3 |
| Bad | 117 | 39.0 | 68.3 |
| Fair | 38 | 12.7 | 81.0 |
| Don't Know | 57 | 19.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-18 represents the view of respondents about the attacks of Pak army in their area. The residents shared mixed view as 22.7% attacks were by the local Taliban while 29.7% hold foreigner Taliban responsible for those attacks. Interestingly and surprisingly 41% of the respondents reported the involvement of foreign agencies in the attacks on Pakistan's army.

Table-18: Who attacked Pakistani troops in North Waziristan Agency?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Local Taliban | 68 | 22.7 | 22.7 |
| Foreigner Taliban | 89 | 29.7 | 52.3 |
| Foreign Agencies | 123 | 41.0 | 93.3 |
| Don't Know | 20 | 6.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-19 shows that according to 91% of local respondent that participated in study, the training camps of the Taliban were present in their area. They said that the camps were active till the arrival of army in their area. They said that those camps were present in different parts of the area. Taliban used those camps not only for training but for staying in too.

Table-19: Are training camps exist in North Waziristan Agency to trained Taliban regularly?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 273 | 91.0 | 91.0 |
| No | 16 | 5.3 | 96.3 |
| Don't Know | 11 | 3.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

A very high percentage of the local (74.3%) confirmed the presence and involvement of the foreign agencies in their area. They reported that foreign agencies were supporting foreigner Taliban. Taliban were financed, trained and equipped by agencies. All their activities were planned and conducted by the directives of foreign agencies. Only 15.3% of the respondents denied that presence of agencies in their area.

Table-20: Are foreign agencies like RAW exist in North Waziristan Agency?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 223 | 74.3 | 74.3 |
| No | 46 | 15.3 | 89.7 |
| Don't Know | 31 | 10.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-21 shows that the active foreign agencies worked inside local communities to turn them against their army. 69.3% of the respondents confirmed that kind of activities. According to these respondents those agencies were working to develop hatred for Pak army among the local community. A very small proportion (17.7%) of the respondents said that such an activity did not happen in their area.

Table-21: Are the foreigner agencies playing their role to motivate local people against Pakistan?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 208 | 69.3 | 69.3 |
| No | 53 | 17.7 | 87.0 |
| Don't Know | 39 | 13.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-22 shows the success rate of the active foreign agencies in developing negative perception and hatred for Pakistan's army among the local people. Among the respondents 54.3% were of the view that the agencies failed to gain their goal of turning local people against their own army. They reported that those agencies were active and worked very cleverly among local community but so far, they were far behind their goals. While 39% of the respondents documented that those agencies were attaining their aims as now most of the people think that all the miseries that we are going through are due to Taliban and Pak army. Taliban and Pak army are sharing the same weightage of responsibilities.

Table-22: Are the foreign agencies successful in motivating local people?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 117 | 39.0 | 39.0 |
| No | 163 | 54.3 | 93.3 |
| Don't Know | 20 | 6.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-23 shows that the IDPs were very optimistic about the operation Zarb-e-Azb, and they hoped that it would cut the cancer of terrorism out and will bring peace to their area. Most of the respondents (70.3%) were of the view that it will bring a positive change to their area. They said that terrorism is like a "Trogon Horse" which brought all the miseries to their area in the form of foreign agencies and Taliban. 21.3% of the respondents were hopelessly saying that nothing happened even after that Operation too. They said that these Operations brought sufferings for local people.

Table-23: Do you think that Operation Zarb-e-Azb will bring changes in North Waziristan Agency?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Positive | 211 | 70.3 | 70.3 |
| Negative | 64 | 21.3 | 91.7 |
| Don't Know | 25 | 8.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

Table-24 is presenting the views of the respondents about the victims of the operation *Zarb-e-Azb*. Majority of the respondent IDPs reported that local tribesmen were the major victims to the operation, as they were forced to leave their area, homes and business. They were made to live in the open sky and un-facilitated camps.

“This operation is harmless like a poor snail for Taliban, security agencies and other foreign agencies. But it was not less than a nightmare for the common people, for those who like to live in peace and have no concern with Taliban or security agencies” (Tahir primary teacher 33 years old).

Table-24: Who became the major victims of the Operation Zarb-e-Azb?

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Taliban | 17 | 5.7 | 5.7 |
| Security Agencies | 9 | 3.0 | 8.7 |
| Foreign Agencies | 11 | 3.7 | 12.3 |
| Local Tribesmen | 257 | 85.7 | 98.0 |
| Others | 6 | 2.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | |

5. Discussion and findings

One of the causes of the operation Zarb-e-Azb was that those groups were putting their best foot forward for the sake of creating their own will. In order to take hold of their ultimate vision no stone was left unturned. They did homework for it and prepared well planned scenario. Law enforcement agencies felt it one of the greatest threats and this layout made them realized that if the members of the very group are moving at the same pace, they will make a separate status where they can make their own decisions. Keeping all these things in mind Pakistan Army was taken into confidence and it was told to take steps against those who challenge the writ. Since the same was acted upon without any delay. The criterion was brought forth and that was... operation is the only solution because they were left with no choice. Bringing one thing more to viewers that before the delegations were sent from both parties to a neutral place, but with the passage of time that negotiation was put to the ground and the findings were absolutely unfertile.

One more cause was that the people from other countries, for instance, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Saudi Arabia were coming and standing in the rows of those people who were not submissive to the rules and regulations of Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan felt it that these people will bring lots of miseries and they will throw our laws and peace to the wind. For the sake of checking this fluent progress the Government thought about the solution and they found Operation prolific. The Government was thinking that with the help of drastic actions they will be able to root out the strong trunks and to make them hollow. Security forces could not stand the interference of the foreigners in Pakistan security affairs. In order to check this onslaught, the Government opted Operation, because this clicked their mind that these people needed retaliation.

This fact is visible that enemies are opportunist because they do not miss the target when they find a gap. Since the same philosophy was adopted by them. Foreign agencies like RAW, CIA, Israelis intelligence participated actively in order to split the serene environment to pieces. They found it an inevitable chance that is why they could not miss it, rather utilized it in a crafty manner. These people are really very cunning, because they know how to deceive gullible people and how to make a very good use of their weak point. The Government of Pakistan felt that now the safeness of Pakistan is at stake. After analysing the activities of those agencies thoroughly they decided to disarm those who were using these arms for strengthening their power. One cannot throw aside this fact that people are asset to a country, because the

foundations of a nation are built strong with the help of those people. Here comes one question to the surface and that is... was operation the only solution? Most of the analysts disagreed with this stance and some of them did it a favour.

America tried her best to stabilize law enforcement institutional in Afghanistan, but they failed repeatedly, because armed forces gave them tough time. Americans hold Pakistan responsible for their failure and they were blaming our country for providing safe havens to Taliban in Pakistan. They made a final decision and came up with a chain of drone attacks. The result of those attacks was hazardous, because those were done blindly. Lots of innocent were left dead and most of precious lives got spoiled. The relatives of those martyrs are still posing this question... what was the fault of our beloved? Nobody was able to justify this brutality. They could not forget the very massacre. It really matters a lot to lose a beloved one without any proper reason. These attacks spoiled the environment of Pakistan, because the residents were demanding justice from their country. If we track those mishaps, throw prejudice aside for a while, remain neutral we will find that those poisonous weapons pierced the fragile bodies without showing pity.

It was amazing to note that people had a confidence in informal courts established by Taliban. They settled down disputes within a short span of time and those were blessed with their rights who deserved. Most of them commented on the open discrimination done by Tribal leaders in past years. They came up with the conclusion that only those were done a massive favour that had approach and helpless people were pleadingly looking at them, but they ignored their beseech. The Government felt that with the help these steps they are going to take all the residents into their confidence and a day will come that all of them are working in collaboration and will cause troubles to the state. In order to shatter their strength operation was decided. They thought it suitable and productive. But being researchers, we found it damn clear that this aggressive decision could not bridge the gap, rather took the things on extreme point where a light push was more than enough. This is something natural that when you are coming up with zero tolerance your opponent cannot keep soft corner for you, rather he/she is stubborn enough and will never bow down.

6. Conclusion

After the US invasion into Afghanistan, the scattered and defeated Taliban flee to neighbouring countries in general and Pakistan in specific due to its long and porous border with Afghanistan. Soon the militants became so organized that they even challenged the writ of the government in areas like Swat, South Waziristan Agency (SWA) and North Waziristan Agency (NWA) etc. Besides attacking the armed forces of Pakistan, the militants not refrained themselves from targeting common citizens, minorities, religious places, public gatherings and political parties etc. Resultantly, in the mid of June 2014 Pakistan political and military leadership decided to eliminate militant from Pakistan and decided to start Operation Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan Agency. Consequently, almost all the local people of North Waziristan agency migrated to the adjacent areas i.e., Bannu, Lakki and Karak etc. with empty hands. Operation Zarb-e-Azb brought worries and miseries to the local people of North Waziristan agency, as they became hopelessly homeless. In the beginning of operation the then Government promised, that the affected IDPs families will be facilitated during the operation and compensated for their losses after it but in vain. Local people reported that they were the real and only losers in the whole scenario and suffered at the hands of both the Taliban and armed forces/government. They argue that internal displacement welcomed worries and miseries in the lives of common people of North Waziristan Agency.

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