Counter-Terrorism Policies in Pakistan: A Qualitative Analysis of Experts' Perceptions

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ABSTRACT- The aim of the paper is to analyse the counter terrorism measures taken in Pakistan. After the incident of 9/11, Pakistan has become a front line state against terrorism. This has ledto the emergence of anew wave of terrorism in Pakistan engendering extreme challenges. The qualitative research method has been adopted to evaluate the counter-terrorism policies of Pakistan.For this purpose, the study employedpurposive sampling technique to conduct in-depth interviews with thecounter-terrorism policy experts.The results indicate an absence of citizen participation in the counter-terrorism policies, which has resulted in a policy formulation and implementation gap.Additionally, there remains a need for the counter-terrorism policies to focus on the "soft factors" responsible for terrorism in Pakistan instead of exclusively concentrating on military solutions.

Keywords: Counter-terrorism, National Action Plan, Terrorism, Policy Evaluation, Pakistan

I.   INTRODUCTION

The Bush Administration launched the War on Terror in 2001 in response to the al-Qaeda 9/11 terrorist attacks in US. The terrorist group responsible for the attack, al-Qaeda, was known to be based in Afghanistan, and the perpetrator of the attack, Osama bin Laden, was suspected to be hiding within the Afghan territory (Chermak & Gruenewald, 2015).General Pervez Musharraf (1999-2008) took the decision of allying with the United States post the attacks, mainly to gain legitimacy for his government. However, this decision was largely criticized within Pakistan, and laterled to insurgency and widespread terrorist attacks in the country. From 2001 to 2018, approximately 63,509 individuals have died in terrorist attacks across Pakistan(Portal, South Asia Terrorism, 2016).

Pakistan's link with the Afghan militant group is not new. During the regimes of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1971 – 1977) and General Zia-ul-Haq (1978 – 1988), Pakistan had remained a key player involved in the Afghan geo-political affairs. The two regimes had supported Afghan militants by supplying them with weapons, information and training to fight against the Afghan communist government that was backed by the Soviet Union (Murphy & Malik, 2009; Asim & Bilal, 2017).During the Soviet-Afghan War, Pakistan Military was predominantly used by the American governmentto train the Afghan Taliban to fight against the Russians (Carpenter,1994).

Major types of terrorist acts in the country have been committed over sectarian, ethno-linguistic and racial nationalism and religious issues during the 1970s and the 1980s. The Islamic Revolution in Iran stirred up a sectarian conflict in Pakistan. This was aggravated by General Zia ul Haq's hype to religion (Carpenter, 1994). Pakistan, however, faced its first real threat from terrorism during the late 1990s, after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghan territory (Saeed, Syed & Martin, 2014). The five waves of terrorism that Pakistan faced from 1970 to 2007 are shown in Figure (1) (Hussain, 2010).
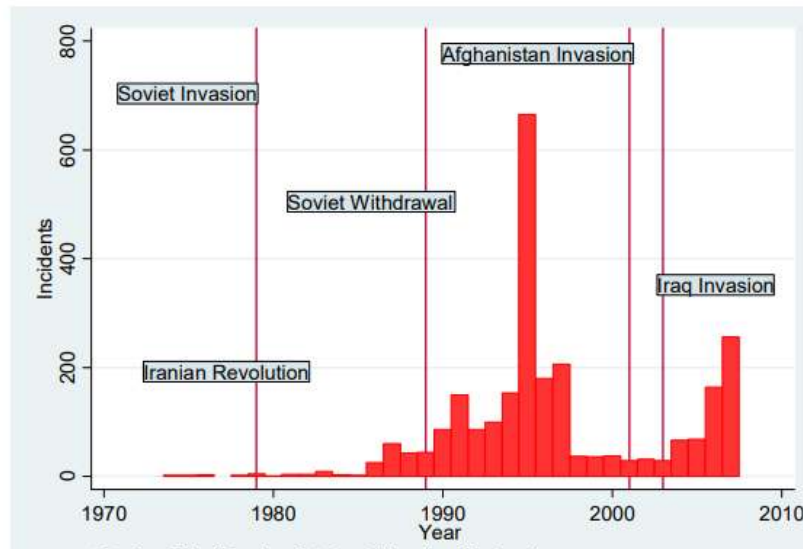
Figure 1: *Five Waves of Terrorism*. Source: Hussain (2010)

In order to curb the waves of terrorism in the country, government havedevisedseveral counter-terrorism policies. Pakistan took its first step towards curbing terrorism in the country through the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 (The Anti-Terrorism Act 1997, 1997). While the efficiency and success of the Act remains questionable, the strategy for countering terrorism in Pakistan only emerged after the Army Public School (APS) attack in Peshawar. While the first comprehensive policy document for countering terrorism was made in 2014, known as the National Internal Security Policy (NISP), it was rendered inconsequential after the APS attacks. The attack on the APS Peshawar on 16th December 2014 led to the killing of 150individuals by six or more terrorists dressed in military uniforms.Emergency meetings of the civil and military leadership were called, leading to the formation of the National Action Plan (NAP)in 2015, forthe eradication of terrorism from Pakistan. The National Action Plan's implementation report of 2017 showed that the sectarian attacks in the country have significantly decreased, decreasing from 185 attacks in 2012 to two attacks in 2017 (Guramani, 2017).

Although terrorism seemed to decrease from 2010 to 2016, its recent re-emergence in 2017 has raised concerns about the future of peace in Pakistan.Experts believe that the main cause of re-emergence of terrorism is the inefficiency of counter-terrorism policies in dealing with the soft factors responsible for terrorism in the country (Rehman, Nasir & Shahbaz, 2017). The soft factors that are responsible for terrorism in Pakistan need to be identified and discussed. One of the major limitations in defining these soft factors is the absence of a proper definition of terrorism in Pakistan (Nizami, Hassan, Yasir, Rana, & Minhas, 2018).While the Armed forces engaged in several military operations to uproot terrorists from their hubs along the Pak-Afghan border, this has still proved to be ineffective for lasting results (Siddiqa, 2011).

Several countries are working on bringing the academics, youth and the citizens towards a collective action for the elimination of terrorism effectively; Pakistan has done little to take steps in this direction. Consequently, counter-terrorism laws, strategiesand policies in Pakistan are mostly believed to be unsuitable for the country and not tailored for long-term results. Several researches (Shaffer, 2015; Shah, 2016; Samad, 2016)have exhibited doubts over the continuously required engagement of military on all levels at all times to control, limit or eradicate terrorism.While most countries around the world use the police for the purpose of dealing with terrorism, Pakistan's police is neither empowered enough, nor has the resources to curb terrorism (Qurat-ul-Ain & Cheema, 2016).Besides state policies, the causesof terrorism highlighted in the past researchesprimarily indicate that certain social deprivations are responsible for militancy and terrorism in Pakistan. Nevertheless, these social factors have seldom been addressedwhile making policies (Malik, Sandholzer, Khan & Akbar, 2015).

This paper focuses on the evaluation of Pakistan's counter-terrorism policies for the purpose of understanding their effectiveness in eradicating terrorism from the country. This study further analyses perception of experts in the field of terrorism, regarding causes of terrorism and the scenario emerged after implementation of NAP. The questions addressed in this study aim to comprehend the implementation gaps in counter-terrorism policies and explore the means and methods to improve these policies.

In the study, the theoretical framework has been established for the evaluation of Pakistan's counter-terrorism policies using the collective action theory. Collective action theory, published first by Olson in 1965, is the basis for participatory democracy (Marwa,2015).The collective action theory was initially used in the field of economic studies, but later traversed the boundaries of the discipline and is now used in different disciplines of the social sciences (Liao,1994).Collective action is defined as the actions a group takes for the combined interests of its members (Liao,1994).In order to carry out accurate and extensive policy evaluation, the theoretical underpinnings of the research shall be specified through this theory.

The counter-terrorism policies in Pakistan have attempted, at different times, to eradicate terrorism from the country. Despite all efforts and different military based operations, complete eradication of the issue has not been possible. The collective action theory would allow an understanding of the effectiveness of Pakistan's counter-terrorism policies, through a detailed study of the policy objectives, study of citizen participation in the policy making and implementation and experts' understanding of whether a collective interest of the public and institutions has been formed for the eradication of terrorism?It also explores if there is a realization for making public to be a part of a collective action for the eradication of terrorism from Pakistani society.Hurdles that are present in the formation of collective interests, incentives and efforts have also been explored in the research.

Review of Pakistan's Counter-terrorism Policies
Counter-terrorism policies and strategies in Pakistan remained widely non-existent during the initial 50 years of its inception. Anti-terrorism Act 1997 (ATA 1997) and NAP are the two major steps designed and taken by the government, to counter terrorism. However, it has been seen that the implementation has been haphazard, with the presence of several kinds and types of policies in governmental institutions, which have not been communicated across different institutions of the State.

The laws, strategiesand policies formed in Pakistan to combat terrorism are surprisingly few, considering the immense threat that the phenomenon has posed for the country for a long time now. ATA 1997 was the first major law formed in this respect and was later amended, while the NAP is the only major or nation-wide policy to combat terrorism in Pakistan.

The Anti-terrorism Act was formed in 1997 for the purpose of preventing sectarian violence, terrorism and for "the speedy trial of heinous offenses" (Liao,1994).The major steps taken in the law for the purpose included the use of armed forces as well as civil armed forces for the purpose of preventing terrorism; detailed definition of terrorism to allow its identification and means for curbing the phenomenon; defining punishments for acts of terrorism, including: the death of a person or persons to be punishable by death, life sentence or a fine, endangering life of a person or likely death will be punishable by a minimum of ten years of imprisonment that may be extended to a life sentence with fine, grievous harm to someone's body or life will be punishable by same as above, grievous harm to property will be punishable by same as above, kidnapping for ransom will be punishable (n conviction) by death or life imprisonment and the use of explosives will be punishable by minimum 14 years and may extend to life imprisonment etc.; prohibition of acts that incite hatred or sectarian violence; power to arrest as well as detain person(s) who are suspected of terrorism; preventive detention for inquiry of suspected individuals; entering proscribed organization is allowed to forces for investigation and any member a part of such an organization will be punished; prevention of directing terrorist activities from within Pakistan and the prohibition of funding or fundraising for terrorist activities.

ATA 1997 was amended in 2013, bringing about the following changes: allowing longer detentions of terror suspects; justifying the admissibility of evidence that is electronic in nature; introducing trial through videos and new measures for the protection of witnesses; and the banning possession of cell phones by the prisoners.

In addition to these amendments, the Protection of Pakistan Act, 2013 was introduced, that contained the following features: conferring power on the police, civil armed and the armed forces to use force against any terror suspects after prior warning and the establishment of special courts and separate police stations for terror suspects in the future.

By the end of the 20th century, the incidence of terrorism decreased, only to re-emerge in full intensity after Pakistan sided with US post 9/11. The invasion of Wana in 2003 and Red Mosque raid in 2007 further intensified the violence, making it indiscriminate and widespread throughout the country (Syed, Saeed & Martin, 2015). From 2001 to 2008, during the Musharraf era, Pakistan's counter-terrorism policies relied heavily upon military operations, drone strikes, reformed Madrassahs and banned extremist organizations (Khattak, & Mushtaq, 2015). Under the leadership of Pakistan People's Party, the policy was focused on Swat military operations and the heavy reliance on drone warfare. During the era of

Pakistan Muslim League (N), peace talks with the militants were initiated again but failed. Operations *Zarb-e-Azb* and *Radd-ul-Fasad* were then launched and carried out.

The Ministry of Interior announced the National Internal Security Policy in 2014, in light of increasing terrorism in the country. The comprehensive, first-ever policy document by Pakistan on counter-terrorism was based on three principles and elements. The first element is *dialogue* with all the stakeholders, the second element is *deterrence* through capacity building of the police, the counter-terrorism departments, and the civil armed forces. The last element of the NISP is the *isolation* of the terrorist organizations through proper documentation of the Afghan refugees and the security of the Western borders (Ministry of Interior, 2014).

This policy document, however, became inconsequential after the attack on Peshawar's Army Public School in 2014, known as the worst terrorist attack in the recent history of Pakistan. Immediately after the attack, the National Action Plan was introduced (Yusuf, 2014). According to the South Asian Terrorism Portal, a total of 1260, fatalities occurred in Pakistan in the year 2017, including civilians, security force personnel and insurgents or terrorists. The casualties that occurred before 2017, from 2003 to 2016 have been shown in Table(1). The total of terrorism casualties fell from 11,704 in 2009 to 1,260 in 2017.

Table 1: Terrorism in Pakistan (2003 – 2016)

Year	Civilians	Security Force Personnel	Terrorists/Insurgents	Total
2003	140	24	25	189
2004	435	184	244	863
2005	430	81	137	648
2006	608	325	538	1471
2007	1522	597	1479	3598
2008	2155	654	3906	6715
2009	2324	991	8389	11704
2010	1796	469	5170	7435
2011	2738	765	2800	6303
2012	3007	732	2472	6211
2013	3001	676	1702	5379
2014	1781	533	3182	5496
2015	940	339	2403	3682
2016	308	151	623	1082
Total	21185	6521	33070	60776

Source: Authors' compilation from the South Asia Terrorism Portal and Global Terrorism Database

The NAP was formed in 2015 with the collaboration and deliberation of the civil and military leadership of Pakistan. The twenty points that were formed as a result of these deliberations included the following elements (PILDAT, 2017): death sentence implementation for those individuals who had been convicted in terrorism cases; Army-supervised trial courts that were formed for two years and then the duration was extended; preventing operation of armed gangs and military outfits in Pakistan; strengthening the anti-terrorism institution (NACTA); taking strict action against any literature newspaper or magazine that promotes intolerance, sectarianism, extremism and hatred, choking of finances for terrorists as well as terrorist group organizations; ensuring the prevention of re-emergence of any proscribed organization; establishment and deployment of dedicated counter-terrorism forces; effective steps to be taken against religious persecution; regulation and registration of all religious seminaries; ban on print and electronic media that glorifies terrorists and terrorist organization; development and administrative reforms in FATA, focusing on IDPs repatriation; complete dismantling of terrorists' communication networks; measures to be taken against abuse of social media or media for the purpose of terrorism; no tolerance for any kind of militancy in Punjab; logical end for ongoing operation in Karachi; full empowerment and political reconciliations with the Baluchistan government and complete ownership to be taken by all stakeholders; firm dealing with sectarian terrorists; comprehensive policy to be formulated for the

purpose of dealing with Afghan refugee issues and registration of all refugees to be begun and the reformation and revamping of the Pakistan criminal justice system.

As per the spirit of NAP, NACTA was strengthened and set to work.The first evaluation report by NACTA was launched in December 2017, and the second one in March of 2018. Although these reports showed significant steps taken by NACTA, the Armed forces, Rangers and Judicial courts, it failed to explain the re-emerging wave of terrorism in the country despite the implementation of NAP's 20 points.

III.   METHODOLOGY

The research work was carried out between March and August 2018. The qualitative research has been used in this research allowing a comprehensive understanding of experts' perception regarding the effectiveness of Pakistan's counter-terrorism policies and strategies. This study has employed aninclusive and unstructured gauge for the evaluation of diverse mind-sets and perceptions. The study was carried out inIslamabad, the capital of Pakistan. Major policy research institutes of Pakistan, Counter-terrorism institutions and the Parliament House are all located in the federal city.

Purposive sampling has been used for the study. Purposive sampling is the process in which deliberate selection of participants is carried out because of the qualities that they possess (Etikan & Alkassim, 2016). In the forms of purposive sampling techniques, the Maximum Variation Sampling (MVS) – also known as heterogeneous sampling- allowed the collection of information about terrorism from different perspectives. The criteria for purposive sampling was that the respondent should have an understanding and professional experience in dealing with the terrorism in Pakistan and awareness regarding counter-terrorism policies of the country. Accordingly, the sample of experts was drawn from a broad spectrum of organizations including public organizations like NACTA, academics from public-sector universities, intelligence agencies and policy research institutes.

For the purpose of data collection for this research, ten in-depth interviews were carried out. An interview guide was formed for this purpose and tested for its clarity. The interview guide was prepared in the English and Urdu languages. The interview guide comprised of open-ended questions that could facilitate discussions and opinions. Informed consent was taken from the interviewees for using their names and other information in the research. Where requested by the interviewee, anonymity was maintained by using pseudonyms instead of real names. The time of these interviews ranged from 40 to 75 minutes. The interviews were carried out in different locations, mostly at the offices of the participants. For the purpose of this study, thematic analysis has been used to analyze, interpret and describe data. The latent content as well as the manifest content is used as category in the process of data analysis(Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen & Snelgrove, 2016).A theme is defined as an implicit topic that allows a researcher to organize groups of repeating ideas. They contain codes which have some common reference point and unify ideas about the phenomenon or subject under study (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen & Snelgrove, 2016).Verbal and non-verbal expressions of the respondentswerealso observed and analyzed by the researcher, for better analysis. The respondents' body language, gestures and postures were noted during the interview and their comfort level during the interview was considered an important factor in analyzing their responses during the research analysis.

IV.   RESULTS & FINDINGS

The current research reveals that the experts were highly divided on the effectiveness of Pakistan's counter-terrorism policies and strategies. It was learned during the fieldwork that several academics and specialists in the field consider these policies to be inadequate. Several of these experts claimed that the policies were ill-formed, non-strategic and vague in their objectives. They also criticized the policies for having no adequate implementation mechanism.

The major focus of the anti-terrorism has been towards defining terrorism in Pakistan and establishing a set of rules for its control and eradication from the society. Terrorism in Pakistan has remained largely undefined,which has created serious policy confusion in the country. In 1997, an Act passed by the Parliament which defined terrorism - the themes that defined terrorism as per the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), 1997 are:the use of threat for intimidating government, public or a sect; use of threat for inciting sectorial or ethnic causes; grievous violence or bodily harm to a person; committing action or doing anything that might cause death; endangering someone's life; kidnapping for ransom, hijacking or hostage taking; grievous damage to any property; inciting hatred or contempt on sectarian, religious or ethnic basis; taking law in own hand; risking safety of the public and interfering with or disrupting a public utility service and communication systems etc.

However, ever since the definition of terrorism was coined and accepted by the executive and legislative sections of government, it has remained continuously debated upon on various forums. The text of ATA has been called ambiguous and arbitrarily applied throughout Pakistan(Parvez & Rani, 2015; Omar, 2017; Rehman, Nasir & Shahbaz, 2017), whichhas allowed the law to be misused.

Many of the experts stated similar opinions and views about the ATA. They stated that terrorism in Pakistan is not defined. In fact, it is not defined all around the world (Lentini, 2008; Freilich, Chermak & Simone, 2009; Huff, & Kertzer, 2018).Those who were aware of the ATA stated that the definition was too broad and vague. It allows cases like that of kidnapping to be included in terrorism and thus the Anti-Terrorism Courts cannot then effectively deal with the cases, leading to their inefficiency and the need for military courts in the country.

During the interview, a research fellow from Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI), Asadullah Khan, held the opinion that Pakistan had mixed the definition of sectarian violence, radicalization, and other forms of violence like kidnapping to be a part of a concept that was more focused on factors that threaten the government. He stated:

کونسا دہشت گردی کا کیس ہے؟"Kidnapping for ransom"

Which kind of a terrorism case is "kidnapping for ransom"?

The experts were then asked to provide their definition of terrorism. Mr. Asadullah Khan[1] held the view that if an action is in no way aimed at threatening the status quo of the State or its government, the action is not an act of terrorism.

An element that was prominent during the data collection and analysis was that all the experts defined terrorism as per their fields. It was interesting to note that the experts from security and defense backgrounds, included a new word into the definition. Terrorism, according to Jehangir Khan, the ex-Director of FIA (Peshawar) and an officer from the Armed forces who have served in the Intelligence (who chose not to share name and other personal details), was a war with another state or country to prevent its occupation of, and infiltration into, one's own State. When asked for a background to this definition, the experts from the armed forces came forward to state:

یہ دہشت گردی کہاں سے آئی ہے؟ یہپاکستان میں ایسےبھی نہیں تھی. بھارت، اسرائیل، افغانستان، امریکہ اور سعودی عرب شامل ہیں اس میں.

Where did this terrorism come from? It was not in Pakistan as it is now. India, Israel, Afghanistan, Americaand Saudi Arabia are involved in this.

Therefore, the definition was from a defense perspective, one that had been completely ignored in the ATA.

A definition put forth by Dr. Muhammad Makki from NUST was focused on the ontology and etymology of the word[2]. He stated that careful deliberations need to be carried out to ensure that terrorism is defined well and in proper terms to allow a better understanding of what terrorism in Pakistan constitutes. According to him, when defining terrorism, we cannot bring religious goals completely into the sphere because religion is a major part of the societal infrastructure and cannot be separated from it. However, radical and extremist concepts of religion need to be separated from the mainstream definition of terrorism. Dr. Makki defined terrorism as

اس طرح کا یقین پیدا کرنا اپنے اندرکہ جیسا مجھے اپنے ہونے پر یقین ہے اور اس پر پہرہ دینے کا حق ہے ویسے ہی کسیاور کو ہونے اور اس پر پہرہ دینے کا حق ہے. اور یہ جزبہمکمل خیر خواہیجذبے کے ساتھ ہو.

To build a belief in yourself that just as I have a right to be and to guard my own being, the other person also has a right to be and to guard his/her being. And this feeling needs to exist with a mutual feeling of wellbeing.

His definition and concept seemed to be focused on providing an ontological and epistemological definition of terrorism to allow better and detailed understanding of the word from the societal perspective.Thus, the experts expressed the need for a complete redesign and re-evaluation of the

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[1]Informed consent has been taken from respondents. Where the consent was not granted by respondents, pseudonyms have been used.

[2]Dr. Muhammad Makki is a Professor in the Centre of International Peace and Stability (NUST) and is currently working on a research project on the National Action Plan, approved and financed by the Higher Education Commission, Islamabad.

definition of terrorism as stated in the ATA, to allow better efforts and efficiency by State institutions in dealing with it.

One of the major issues stated by the experts was the lack of an efficient implementation mechanism for NAP 2015. In fact, one of the experts stated that the 20 points are no more than 20 goals that the government and military authorities set, with no clue in mind as to how to achieve them.

آپ نے دیکھا ہے NAP کے points 20 کو؟ ایسا لگتا ہے ہوا میں باتیں اڑا دی ہیں کہ ہاں یہ ہونا چاہیے، یہ بھی ہونا چاہیے، ہو گا کیسے؟ کوئی نہیں جانتا۔

Have you seen the 20 points of NAP? It seems like they are all assumptions and guesswork about what should happen. How will it happen? No one knows.

Other respondents believed that NAP had failed to address the major "soft" factors that had led to the initiation and rapid spread of terrorism in the country. Their major concern in this respect was the probability of terrorism rising again in the country because the main societal factors responsible for it had not been considered by the military and civil leadership. One of the respondents, Mr. Raja Qaiser, stated that the South Asian Terrorism Portal had shown a marked decline in events of terrorism in the last few years. Hence, the "vertical proliferation" of terrorism seemed to have decreased, with the effects becoming less costly and less destructive, and acts of terrorism decreasing significantly. However, he was concerned about the horizontal domain of terrorism, which showed more actors in the terrorism phenomenon, with groups like ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) on the rise and more players entering every day. A similar response was provided by Mr. Muhammad Makki, who stated that quantitatively and statistically, terrorism had decreased in the country. Several tribal areas had been recovered and reclaimed (especially those in Swat and FATA, Bajore Agency, Kurram, North and South Waziristan as well as the South of Baluchistan). The footprints of Taliban in Pakistan have somewhat diminished, he added. However, he believed that the conditions that had led to the presence of terrorism and radicalizationin the region have not been addressed and remained the same. These, they believed, were the drawbacks of the policies and NAP. They also stated that while hard force by the military had been used for operations but the main conditions including the growing intolerance, the lack of counter-terrorism narrative, political instability, lack of effective crime control and the poor law & orderconditionneed to be dealt effectively to achieve peace in the country. Mr. Sohail A. Malik from National University of Sciences & Technology, Islamabadexpressed that one of the major reasons for the inadequacy of these plans and strategies is the absence of a proper research into its causes. While referring to his own research he mentioned several causes of terrorism in Pakistan, most of which were: dishonest leadership, inflation, high consumer price index (CPI) etc. None of these causes has been targeted in NAP, or in any other government action, he added.There was unanimous agreement on the presence of extensive efforts by the military forces in this regard, but the lack of a proper narrative or set of actions by the civil government were seen as major sources of concern.

For the purpose of establishing a well-rounded analysis, experts from the NACTA were approached. When asked about their work on NAP, the respondents Zulfikar Bhatti (Dir CT) and Nida Anum (Dir Counter-Violence and Extremism), seemed to hold NAP as a guide rather than an effective strategy or policy. Mr. Bhatti said:

دیکھیں، آپ NAP سے نکل جائیں۔ ہم نے NISP بنا دی ہے۔ اپ اس کو Study کریں۔ NAP بس ایک guideline تھی۔

Please come out of the NAP (discussion). We have made NISP. Please study that. NAP was just a guideline. While the policy analysts and academicians who had studied the Plan had referred to it as a policy document, NACTA officials referred to it as a "guide", while they claimed to be working on NISP 2014. The NISP made by the Ministry of Interior,contains a two-themed approach – one aimed at gaining the confidence and trust of the public against terrorism, called the Comprehensive Response Plan (CRP) and the second approach is towards the Composite Deterrence Plan (CDP) (Huff, & Kertzer, 2018). Thus, the NISP is found to be a comprehensive security plan with comprehensive guidelines on how to achieve the goal of eradication of terrorism. However, despite the inter-institutional spirit that the document posits, no other expert who had been approached seemed to be aware that such a policy exists. Even when the policy explicitly stated the involvement of all educational, defense and civil sectors, it seemed that only NACTA was aware of, and focused on, implementation of this policy. The rest of the experts and professionals considered NAP as the 'policy'.

In accordance with the NISP, a Youth Conference was held in Islamabad by NACTA. While the experts at NACTA had emphasized that the Conference would allow them to gather information and ideas from students of relevant fields and subjects, however, it was not publicized much. Universities were just sent

memos of the event with the instructions of sending a couple of students to attend the event. Surprisingly, students of International Relations, Law, Policy and Peace &Conflict studies who seemed to be most related to it, had no clue that such a conference was on way or being conducted. In fact, even the professors from highly esteemed public and private universities in Islamabad, who suggested that the youth should be involved through seminars and conferences, had not been invited to the Conference. Whether it was a lack of proper management or planning or the absence of research, is not apparent. There just seemed to bea huge gap in what NACTA's claim and actions.The inefficiency of the institution seemed too apparent.

Other experts and academicians claimed that the NAP was a complete and comprehensive document that required complete and effective implementation for good results. In fact, Mr. Asadullah Khan stated "Can you tell me that if the NAP had been implemented in its true spirit, terrorism in Pakistan would not have ended?"He had carried out research on the effectiveness of NAP and found it comprehensive and tailored enough for the circumstances. Other experts, like Ms. Shabana Fayyaz[3] of the Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad, and Nida Anum[4]declared that NAP is a complete and comprehensive approach for the eradication of tolerance in the country. However, when asked what about the NAP appealed to them, some of these experts stated that they were not aware of the exact points. Ms. Shabana Fayyaz did, however, suggest that there was a need for a community-based approach, where the youth of the country are involved in the processes of policymaking and implementation for effective results.

The process of policy making and evaluation in Pakistan was criticized and dismissed by all experts alike. They felt that while the stakeholder in the policies was extensive and well chosen, the process of policy making fails to focus on the root causes and problems. The NAP was evaluated two years after its implementation and there remain a section of experts who feel that the evaluation is focused greatly on the hard factors and less on the soft factors.

Despite many research papers being written on terrorism and counter-terrorism policies in Pakistan, the effectiveness of NAP and the ways in which it can be improved, there remains a gap of understanding and communication between experts who are actually involved in implementation, making and evaluation of such policies. While researchers (Sahill, 2018) claim that NAP is a Plan formed mainly with Pakistan's typical "monstrous enemy" narrative, focusing on the elimination of a group rather than conditions, others researchers (Khan, A. & Khan, M. A. 2018)have called NAP a comprehensive document that if implemented in its complete spirit, could decrease terrorism in Pakistan to a great extent. The divided narrative showed that a majority of the academic experts in the field of counter-terrorism, had not been consulted during policy or strategy formulation. If several of these experts, belonging to reputable organizations in the capital of Pakistan, feel so alienated, it is concerning how the majority of experts from other regions might view the counter-terrorism policies and strategies of the State.

The policies of successive governments after 9/11remained a dilemma for most of the experts. In fact, the discussion about the causes of this new wave of terrorism in Pakistan kept arriving at the involvement of Pakistan in the Afghan War. While many researchers and historians have called the Afghan War a 'proxy' war, the gun culture, violence, extremism and*jihad* culture propagated during the time led to the evolution of terrorism globally (Mehmood, 2014).Thus, the Afghan War has not only had its implications on the current situation of terrorism in Pakistan, as stated by experts, it has also affected countries around the world.

V. CONCLUSION& POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The counter-terrorism policymaking and implementation processes in Pakistanrequirean extensive appraisal. There is a dire need to realize thatthe involvement of experts is necessary in order to allow policies to target the soft factors of a phenomenon with a thorough theoretical understanding. Additionally, the lack of public involvement in policy formulation has been creating severe challenges for the government while dealing with the menace of terrorism. This makes it perplexing for the government to properly ascertain the changes that need to be made in policy interventions. Involvement of the public and academicians in the counter-terrorism policy-making and implementation processes will allow the government to define terrorism in the Pakistani context to better understand the causes of terrorism in Pakistan and formulate improved policies for the future.While the NAP was probably the best strategy that the government could come up after the APS attack in 2014, there is a need for improvement. This includes the mobilization of police departments all around Pakistan to curb terrorism and eradicate it

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[3] Assistant Professor of Quaid e Azam University. She has completed PhD in Terrorism Studies.
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from the roots. In addition to that, the inclusion of a more inclusive and soft-factors based policy that could allow better implementation with long-termed results.

A definition of terrorism, specifically tailored for Pakistan, needs to be developed to allow effective dealing with terrorism on all levels in the country. Causes of terrorism need to be evaluated and correctly determined in order to redesign the Plan for internal security as well as defence when dealing with the phenomenon. There is a need to bridge the communication gap that exists between different stakeholders involved in the process of counter-terrorism and it needs to originate from the civil government to allow the public to be more involved and to bring them to trust the decisions or the narratives of the government. This would involve the proper inclusion all-concerned into the policy-making and evaluation process. The broken communication networks would serve little except to further deteriorate situations and bring the country to the brink of administrative failure.

The findings of this study will benefit the society and the government by allowing a better understanding of experts' perceptions of terrorism and the ways in which terrorism can be countered. This research would not only be significant in understanding the perspectives of experts and academicians as major stakeholders, but also provide an in-depth idea of how to integrate the public in the process of counter-terrorism policy making for better results.

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