

# University Students' Experiences of Militancy Affected FATA Areas and Academic Trajectories

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## Abstract

*This study explored university students' experiences in militancy-affected FATA areas and their personal and academic trajectories. This research study used a mixed-methods approach. A closed five-point Likert scale questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedule were used to collect data. A stratified sampling technique was used to select 300 students for the quantitative data, while a purposive sampling technique was used to collect qualitative data. Significant findings of the study show that militancy had severe detrimental effects on families. Students who had their schooling disrupted due to militancy in FATA faced difficult conditions when applying to universities, choosing the fields or subjects they wanted to study, locating appropriate colleges, and coping with the effect of militancy. It was not easy to acclimatize to university life. It was also highlighted as a challenge because there were high merit standards. Some respondents were shy and reluctant to adjust to the new surroundings. However, many respondents found support from their contemporaries who also belonged to the former FATA area. However, most respondents owned cell phones, while only a minority knew the possibility of employing them in educational settings. The findings of this study, which provide evidence-based recommendations for enhancing the personal and academic trajectories of university students in FATA, have the potential to impact both policy and practice of education and conflict studies. Additionally, it has the potential to serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, educators, and practitioners who work in situations analogous to the ones being studied.*

**Keywords:** FATA Areas, Academic Achievements, Personal Trajectories.

## Introduction

Pakistan's history is at a crossroads. In the fight against so-called terrorism, Afghanistan and Pakistan bore the brunt of all this, having devastated all aspects of the lives of ordinary people, with children and women suffering the most. Children's education suffered the most, and the children's aspect of life was affected. The main objective of the militants who resided in the Ex-FATA area and remained hidden was to keep this a haven for catering to their needs to fulfill their ill plans and to carry out their terrorist activities in other regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan. On the other hand, education creates awareness among people, enabling them to differentiate between good and evil. Militants destroyed all educational institutions and created fear by killing innocent schoolchildren and teachers. This created such an atmosphere that people stopped sending their children to schools, and the entire education process stopped in a situation like that; some children, even after having such an atmosphere of fear, went through schooling in other areas. Some parents

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migrated for the safety of their families through schooling one way or the other (Khan & Adnan, 2018).

The people of FATA suffer the most from very poor socio-economic conditions and scarce amenities. About 60 percent of people live below the poverty line. The region has meager literacy rates (29 percent of the total population), which have had a debilitating impact on all aspects of life, including education (Mohsin, 2013).

The destruction of schools by militants in FATA has made the status of education more miserable. The literacy rate was already low, whereas such insecure conditions have made the future of these children darker and, due to fear and psychological trauma, have pushed them away from education. About 458 government schools were destroyed during militancy in FATA, which is an unfortunate and eye-opening fact indeed (Haider & Jameel, 2017).

To control militancy problems and violence in the name of religion, the military operations carried out in the FATA region became the reason for the internal displacement of the residents (Mohsin, 2013). In a situation where military operations had to be carried out to fight the war on terrorism, the poor tribe members were forced to take refuge in other areas of Pakistan. They were internally displaced (Chughtai, 2013).

The process of Internal Displacement curbed the entire system of their economy, and the poor IDPs had to depend on donations from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the government. Leaving their hometowns and living in camps made them jobless and worthless, forcing them to work on low-paid daily wages (Mohsin, 2013).

It has been reported that children are less likely to complete their primary education in war-affected zones. Only a few children can get primary education and remain out of school. The bitter fact is that the longer they stay out of school, the less likely they will complete their education. This depravity from education has lasting effects on this educationally deprived generation, ranging from income, psychological well-being, health conditions, and quality of life that education is supposed to produce, leading to further economic decline in such society, hence further leading to un-employment, frustration and extremist behaviors in the young (Tulizo, 2022).

The South Asia Terrorism Portal states that about 5.3 million people have been displaced due to counter-militancy in merged areas (former FATA) since 2008. Some of these people have been displaced multiple times due to subsequent operations of the armed forces to counter terrorism in some areas. According to the portal, 4.8 million people have made it back to their homes; the rest still have to go back (Kakar, 2017).

Militancy and terrorism affected all aspects of life in FATA; education was no exception. Children and women suffered the most. The FATA areas' social, economic, cultural, and structural aspects were affected. People migrated to settle areas or to camps. Given the context, children's education had been so crucial that schools were closed. They were bombed and destroyed by militants in this context, and continuing education was highly different for all children and their families. Therefore, this study aims to explore all those personal and academic efforts and different problems that students were confronted with in their school, college, and university life, as well as their experiences, thus portraying their accurate academic trajectories (Embrey, 2017).

The people lost their homes, jobs, agriculture, business, livestock, and all sorts of sources of income they ever had due to militancy, and the situation got even worse when military operations were carried out. The entire area became a war zone, and they were forced to vacate the area (Chughtai, 2013). The conservative religious figures of militants presented an awful and twisted face of Islam, which changed the social, economic, and political structure of FATA (Chughtai, 2013). Having very poor socio-economic edifice and scarce amenities, the people of FATA suffer

the most. About 60 percent of people live below the poverty line and have a literacy rate greater than 29 percent of the population, leading to job opportunities (Mohsin, 2013).

This war had its worst impacts on economics, health, education, and living standards of people, unemployment, and ceasing the development of children and youth (Haider & Jameel, 2017).

The people who are forced to leave their hometown and shift to other areas of the same country due to some natural disaster(s) or war are known as Internally Displaced People (IDPs). These people are not considered refugees and are also deprived of their human and citizen rights. The state also has to face the problem of shifting such a vast number of people from one place to another. It becomes a cumbersome problem with multidimensional aspects of placing the vast population in another part of the country. The people living in FATA are already living a life below the poverty line. Hence, this internal displacement situation significantly challenges women's and children's lives (Mohsin, 2013).

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In a situation where military operations had to be carried out to fight the war on terrorism, the poor tribe members were forced to take refuge in other areas of Pakistan and were internally displaced. Hussain (2022) states that about three million internally displaced people from FATA left their hometowns. As a result, not only were these lives agitated and devastated, but the peace of the entire country was disturbed (Chughtai, 2013).

Haider and Anwar (2014) stated that there had been an enhancement in unlawful activities by the young under the influence of terrorists due to a lack of employment and educational opportunities. Among these unlawful activities, kidnapping for ransom has affected not only business people but also well-protected politicians and protuberant figures like the Vice Chancellor of Islamia College University, Peshawar, who happened to be kept hostage for many years (Ahmed & Khan, 2016). Some of the frustrated youth of FATA are getting affiliated with terrorists to take revenge for their socio-economic depravities. They are getting quite enormous amounts for such terrorist acts as the Bhara Kahu mosque attack in Bhara Kahu, Islamabad, where the facilitator was supposed to get Rs. 2.5 million (Ahmed & Khan, 2016).

Naqvi et al. (2012) state that madrassa education is preferred in FATA, whereas formal schooling remains inadequate and lacks facilities. On the other hand, about 141 schools have been demolished by the Taliban. In the wake of the war on terror, educational endeavors were further affected negatively. Zaidi (2008) stated that militants were against education, hence destroying girls' schools all around the FATA region. Tariq (2011) writes that about 35 percent of girls' schools in FATA, whereas militants hit 61 percent of girls' schools in KP, whereas 114 schools were wrecked in only Mohmand Agency (Mohsin, 2013).

Sheikh (2013) states that due to the destruction of schools by militants in FATA has made the status of education more miserable. The literacy rate was already low, whereas such insecure conditions have made the future of these children darker and, due to fear and psychological trauma, have pushed them away from education (Haider & Jameel, 2017).

Jamal (2019) advocates that children worldwide have a fundamental right to education, whereas children in FATA are dispossessed of their due rights. In the current situation, children have underdeveloped mental growth and started to remain in a state of depression. If not appropriately tackled sooner, the future of these children is sure to be at stake in the future (Haider & Jameel, 2017).

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Naz (2013) stated that only a fundamental level of madrassa education was provided to the IDP children; however, due to poverty, the parents preferred their children to work and earn their living instead of education. On the other hand, some children were sitting in IDP schools without a teacher idly (Mohsin, 2013).

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Naqvi and Shah (2012) stated that a total of 458 schools were destroyed during militancy in the FATA area, where the literacy rate is already meager. About 317 boys and 141 girls schools were shut down during the process of militancy and later on by military operations, which is an unfortunate and eye-opening fact indeed (Haider & Jameel, 2017).

### **Problem Statement**

As the entire infrastructure of the erstwhile FATA was devastated by militancy, their very life was at stake. As the ex-FATA citizens were in search of shelter, in such a situation, education cannot be the primary need of life. They needed the basic amenities of life. The prolonged encampment also compelled them to visualize the educational future of their offspring. This was a pressing and challenging situation in which to continue education. University students originating from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in Pakistan encounter distinctive challenges directly linked to the prolonged militancy in their region. This study aims to investigate how the experience of growing up in militancy-affected zones influences their educational trajectories and personal development. Specifically, it examines the impact of militant activities and related disruptions on academic performance, the psychological effects of exposure to violence and instability, and the socio-economic barriers exacerbated by ongoing conflict that hinder access to educational resources. Additionally, the research explores the coping mechanisms these students employ and the role of community and institutional support in mitigating the adverse effects of militancy on their academic and personal growth. By comprehensively understanding these experiences, this study seeks to inform the development of targeted interventions and support systems to enhance student's educational outcomes and well-being in militancy-affected areas.

### **Study Objectives**

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Explore university students' experiences of militancy affected in former FATA areas.

2. Investigate personal and academic issues and problems of students that they encountered in their journey to University education.
3. Please find out the problems that university students faced as IDPs during militancy in their areas.
4. Explore university students' socio-economic and familial problems during militancy in former FATA areas.

### Significance of the Study

By exploring some of the dimensions of the students' experiences regarding militancy, the study will help students become aware of how to cope with unusual and unfavorable situations. They will be enlightened through this study to transform their disaster into opportunity. This study will imbibe in their minds how to manage life in a war situation.

This study will make the reality uncertain: the policymakers and educational authorities need to tailor-make their policies for the rainy days following the needs of the society that has been through a war situation. So that they could understand the psychological status of the pupils and the kind of war experiences they had been through and minimize the horrors of the wars. So that these students could keep up with the rest of the students and be well-facilitated and equipped to pursue their higher education at university.

### Research Methodology

This research study used a mixed-method approach, a contemporary methodology emphasizing the compatibility of quantitative and qualitative investigations in a single study. The researcher first went through the mixed method research designs through the quantitative phase of data collection and analysis, followed by the qualitative phase (Creswell, 2013). Considering the nature of the study, an exploratory sequential mixed-methods research design was followed. The study population comprised all university students of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who belonged to the merged area (former FATA). There are 04 universities in the province comprising 1065 students that belonged to the merged area (former FATA), which was the total population of the study. The current study was about the students who faced problems due to militancy in merged areas (Former FATA); hence, the sample was selected from the population of students who belonged to the FATA area and were affected by the militancy in one way or another. For quantitative data, a stratified random sampling technique was used. However, purposive sampling was chosen for qualitative data among the selected individuals, units, and settings. The sample size was calculated with the help of the Rao soft online calculator; the study's sample size was 300.

**Table 1: Sample details**

S/No	Universities	Population			Stratified (a x d) ÷ b	Sample
		Boys	Girls	Total		
1	Peshawar University	80	60	140	(300X140)/1065	39
2	Islamia College University	220	60	280	(300X280)/1065	79
3	Agriculture University Peshawar	380	45	425	(300X425)/1065	120
4	UET, Peshawar	80	20	100	(300X100)/1065	28
5	FATA, University, Dara Adam Khel	100	20	120	(300X120)/1065	34
	<b>Total</b>	860	205	1065		300



For quantitative data collection, a five-option Likert scale questionnaire was distributed among 300 students through a stratified random sampling procedure. After data collection, different SPSS tests were applied for the analysis of the views of respondents.

A semi-structured interview was designed with open-ended questions according to the needs of all the minute dimensions of the study. The questions were structured in such a way that may allow the respondent to tell a story about his experiences. A purposive sampling technique was used for interviews of the students. 15 students were selected from each university thus the total number of students was 75. Every interview was recorded, and transcribed followed by a proper thematic analysis based on the main themes.

A close survey questionnaire consisting of 123 items with a five-point Likert scale type for the collection of quantitative data and a semi-structured interview for the collection of qualitative data were the instruments of data collection.

The quantitative data was collected by self-designed close survey questionnaires from the students of sampled universities. The researcher collected the whole data personally by visiting the universities. The qualitative data was gathered by using semi-structured interviews with the students belonging to Ex. FATAT enrolled in the sampled universities.

## Results and Discussion

The data collected from the survey questionnaires were put into a computer for analysis by using SPSS- version, 25 software. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools were applied i.e. descriptive statistics yielded the frequencies and percentages whereas inferential statistics helped to apply the Chi-Square test on the collected data after the consultation of statistical experts and the tests were interpreted accordingly. The obtained results were presented in tabular form by applying frequency, percentage, and Chi-Square tests.

**Table 2: Family-Related Problems**

S#	Statement	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA	X2 P-value
1	Militancy led many families into abject poverty	2 (.7)	7 (2.3)	8 (2.7)	144 (48)	139 (46.3)	233.6 (0.000)
2	Due to militancy, your family suffered exponentially	1 (.3)	13 (4.3)	9 (3.0)	195 (65)	82 (27.4)	248.4 (0.000)
3	Militancy leads to unemployment in your family	1 (.3)	12 (4)	12 (4)	191 (63.7)	84 (28)	332.3 (0.000)
4	All of your family members were displaced during militancy	7 (2.3)	21 (7)	19 (6.3)	195 (65)	58 (19.4)	88.5 (0.000)
5	Due to militancy, even the extended family could not support you and your family	(0.0)	24 (8)	33 (11)	198 (66)	45 (15)	416.9 (0.000)
6	Due to militancy, many students were forced to discontinue their education and started part-time jobs to support their families	4 (1.3)	23 (7.7)	19 (6.7)	180 (60.0)	73 (24.3)	336.7 (0.000)

7	Following militancy, your family members were forced to start their own business for livelihood	2 (.7)	57 (19)	44 (14.7)	148 (49.3)	49 (16.3)	254.5 (0.000)
8	Due to militancy, everyone's routine was impacted, leading to anxiety and frustration	16 (5.3)	98 (32.7)	90 (30.0)	68 (22.7)	28 (9)	332.3 (0.000)

Item 1 in the table above indicates that 94.3% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Chi chi-square value for the statement is 233.6 with a p-value of 0.000, which shows that the statement is significant at level 0.05. Item 2 in the table above shows that 92.4% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi square value is 248.4 with a p-value of 0.000, which shows that the statement is significant at the level of 0.05. Item 3 in the above table portrays that 91.7% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi square value is 332.3 with a p-value is 0.000 which shows that at levels of 0.05, the statement is significant. Item 4 in the above table shows that 84.4% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi square value is 88.5 with a p-value is 0.000 which shows that at levels of 0.05, the statement is significant. Item 5 in the above table depicts that 81% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi square value is 416.9 with a p-value is 0.000 which shows that at levels of 0.05, the statement is significant. Item 6 in the above table depicts that 84.3% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi-square value is 336.7 with a p-value is 0.000 which shows that at levels of 0.05, the statement is significant. Item 7 in the above table depicts that 65.6% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi square value is 254.5 with a p-value is 0.000 which shows that the statement is significant at levels of 0.05. Item 8 in the above table depicts that 32% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi square value is 332.3 with a p-value is 0.000 at a significance level of 0.05.

**Table 3: Seeking Admission: Application Process**

S.#	Statement	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA	X2 P-value
1.	You faced difficulties while applying for admission to university	0 (0)	24 (8.0)	33 (11.0)	198 (66.0)	45 (15.0)	271.9 (0.000)
2.	The admission form was very confusing and difficult to complete	4 (1.3)	23 (7.7)	20 (6.7)	180 (60.0)	73 (24.3)	344.5 (0.000)
3.	There was no proper guidance during the admission procedure	2 (.7)	57 (19.0)	44 (14.7)	148 (49.3)	49 (16.3)	191.5 (0.000)
4.	The admission fee was quite costly for you due to low economic status	16 (5.3)	98 (32.7)	90 (30.0)	68 (22.7)	28 (9.3)	89.4 (0.000)
5.	Arrangement of presentable dress for the university was a challenge for you	3 (1.0)	35 (11.7)	58 (19.3)	161 (53.7)	43 (14.3)	239.4 (0.000)
6.	There was no provision to cater to the needs of militancy-affected students	4 (1.3)	50 (16.7)	41 (13.7)	161 (53.7)	44 (14.6)	234.2 (0.000)

Item 1 in the above table pointed out that 81% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi-square is 271.9 with having p-value of 0.000 showing that the statement is significant at the level of 0.05. Item 2 in the above table specified that 84.3% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Having a 344.5 chi-square value 344.5 with a p-value of 0.000 proved that the statement is significant at 0.05 level. Item 3 in the above table indicated that 65.7% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Having 191.5 chi-square value whereas p-value at 0.000 established the statement is significant at 0.05 level. Item 4 in the above table signified that 32% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi square value at 89.4 with a p-value of 0.000 demonstrated the statement is significant at a level of 0.05. Item 5 in the above table pointed out that 68% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi-square value of 239.4 with having p-value of 0.000 proved the statement significant at a level of 0.05. Item 6 in the above table specified that 68.3% of the respondents agreed with the statement. Having a 234.2 chi-square value with a p-value at 0.000 confirmed the statement is significant at 0.05 level.

**Table 4: Personal and Psychological Adjustment: Issues and Problems**

S.#	Statement	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA	X2 P-value
1.	You faced an inferiority complex in the university and classroom	7 (2.3)	22 (7.3)	19 (6.3)	192 (64.)	60 (20.0)	389.3 (0.000)
2.	You felt nervous about getting exposure to co-education for the first time	0 (0)	27 (9.0)	34 (11.3)	193 (64.3)	46 (15.3)	250.0 (0.000)
3.	You felt insecure, incomplete, or unworthy due to anxiety and depression	4 (1.3)	26 (8.7)	24 (8.0)	173 (57.7)	73 (24.3)	308.7 (0.000)
4.	You felt nervous about being unable to use library resources at university	2 (.7)	54 (18.0)	46 (15.3)	148 (49.3)	50 (16.7)	190.6 (0.000)
5.	You faced cultural and personal adjustment problems at the university	16 (5.3)	93 (31.0)	88 (29.3)	74 (24.7)	29 (9.7)	82.7 (0.000)
6.	You faced language and communication problems at university	3 (1.0)	22 (7.3)	42 (14.0)	177 (59.0)	56 (18.7)	312.0 (0.000)
7.	You faced difficulties in making new friends at university	4 (1.3)	42 (14.0)	34 (11.3)	169 (56.3)	51 (17.0)	268.3 (0.000)
8.	You felt embarrassed while asking questions	1 (.3)	24 (8.0)	19 (6.3)	110 (36.7)	146 (48.7)	272.5 (0.000)
9.	You had anxiety about university education	0 (0)	16 (5.3)	28 (9.3)	191 (63.7)	65 (21.7)	256.6 (0.000)
10.	Relationship with students and teachers was a challenge for you	0 (0)	22 (7.3)	24 (8.0)	216 (72.0)	38 (12.7)	355.4 (0.000)
11.	Education was badly affected during militancy and internal displacement	2 (.7)	15 (5.0)	19 (6.3)	194 (64.7)	70 (23.3)	418.7 (0.000)
12.	Because of the effects of militancy, many youngsters and teenagers became drug addicts	0 (0)	17 (5.7)	15 (5.0)	214 (71.3)	54 (18.0)	356.3 (0.000)



Item 1 in the above table illustrated that 84% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi-square value of 389.3 with a p-value of 0.000 is suggestive that the statement is significant at a 0.05 level. Item 2 in the above table pointed out that 79.7% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Having a chi-square value of 250.0 with a p-value of 0.000 proved the statement significant at 0.05 level. Item 3 in the above table indicated that 82% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Having a chi-square value of 308.7 with a p-value of 0.000 suggested the statement was significant at 0.05 level. Item 4 in the above table showed that 66% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Having a chi-square value of 190.6 with a p-value of 0.000 showed that the statement is significant at 0.05 level. Item 5 in the above table determined that 34.4% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The Chi square value standing at 82.7 with a p-value of 0.000 confirmed the statement significance at 0.05 level. Item 6 in the above table illustrated that 77.7% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. A Chi square value of 312.0 with a p-value of 0.000 suggested the statement is significant at 0.05 level. Item 7 in the above table specified that 73.4% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. A Chi square value of 268.3 with a p-value of 0.000 confirmed the statement significance at 0.05 level. Item 8 in the above table indicated that 85.4% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. A Chi square value of 272.5 with a p-value of 0.000 proved the statement significant at 0.05 level. Item 9 in the above table illustrated that 85.4% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. A Chi square value of 256.6 with a p-value of 0.000 proved the statement significant at 0.05 level. Item 10 in the above table specified that 84.7% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Having a chi-square value of 355.4 with having p-value of 0.000 confirmed the statement significant at 0.05 level. Item-11 in the above table pointed out that 88% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. A Chi square value of 418.7 with a p-value of 0.000 confirmed the statement's significance at level 0.05. Item 12 in the above table indicated that 89.3% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. A Chi square value of 356.3 with a p-value of 0.000 suggested the statement is significant at level 0.05.

## **Qualitative Data Analysis**

### **Militancy VS Poverty**

Most of the respondents were of the view that their area was already backward and poor with a very low economic status. In a situation like that when the area was struck upon by militants and Talibanization, all sources of income i.e. business, agriculture, livestock, and import and export of goods through smuggling (which was considered legal in the area) were badly affected leading them to face extreme poverty. In such a case where there was an acute shortage of basic human needs, education became a quite literal necessity. Some respondents said that even though having so much poverty they wished to send their kids to schools and colleges, whereas some respondent students said that they took loans for the education of their children and did part-time jobs to support their education. On the other hand, one of the respondents said that he had a tough choice between choosing a university education over fulfilling family needs and hence remained deprived

of a university education for a few years.

*In spite of having a large family only one person was earning the living, hence, it was very difficult for me to afford my educational expenses...Already we were financially very weak as our crops destroyed, our businesses stopped during militancy. After internal displacement due to war on terror, we migrated and were living in rented houses so the rent of the house, electricity bill, gas bill, managing food etc. were some of the issues that made us poorer and more helpless.*

### **Destroyed House VS University Admission**

The majority of respondents replied that their houses were damaged during militancy and then the war against terrorism made the area a war zone where buildings were badly damaged. This caused the people to face great hardships as they had no resources to rebuild the damaged houses. One of the respondents said that in such a scenario university education seemed a secondary option.

*I felt ashamed to be in university while my family going through a hard time building the damaged house so I left my education for the time being and saved the money which was supposed to be spent on my semester free and gave it to my father for house construction, although he was angry with me on that.*

### **Internally Displacement VS University Admission**

Most of the respondents viewed “Internal Displacement” as a traumatic experience, which had a significant negative impact on their lives. They went through physical, emotional, and psychological distress. They viewed that during the process of displacement, there wasn’t any settled arrangement of education for the students of IDPs, moreover, there weren’t any facilities or scholarships available to support university students. One of the respondents said that it was quite late when our university announced waiving off fees of Ex-FATA students who suffered from militancy and war against terror.

*My family was displaced and we were forced to live in KP in a rented house. It was very difficult for my family to arrange for my semester fees and everything. It was quite later on it was announced that our university shall waive off our fees.*

### **Selection of University**

Most of the respondents opined that the selection of educational institutions for Ex-FATA students was very difficult. They encountered so many problems and limitations due to which such students would be compelled to select a less expensive government institution. Most of the respondents selected public universities in KP for the reason that the native language of most of the people in KP was Pashto and it was easy to communicate with teachers, officials, and peer students. Some of the respondents stated that they opted for the University of Peshawar for the reason that it was in KP it is the most reputable institution in the region and is very much accessible to them. Only a few respondents said that they opted for other public universities in KP for admission. As per one respondent “I preferred to study in University of Peshawar for the reason that it is the most reputable university and all my cousins were studying there”. The other respondent said “I am a native Pashto speaker; it would be odd for me to go to other regions of Pakistan for my higher studies when we have University of Peshawar in KP”. The third respondent claimed “I took

admission in Kohat University as my brother was also studying there” where the last respondent said “There is a great variety of subjects offered by University of Peshawar so I was not confused about selection of university and was rather confident to proudly select University of Peshawar for my higher studies.”

### **Confusion in the Selection of Discipline / Subjects**

Most of the respondents replied that they were confused while selecting of subject and discipline. Only a few of the respondents were determined to get admission in a specific discipline of their choice as one said “I was confused as there was a huge variety of subject in the University, whereas there was no guidance available”, the other respondent said “I was getting admission in Masters programme and I had no clue to select the subject of my choice due to lack of guidance from the teachers or educated elders.” The third and fourth respondent added respectively “My father was a lawyer and I was thinking about getting admission in Law Department” and “I always wanted to become an engineer so I got admission in mechanical department of Engineering University Peshawar.”

### **Concluding Remarks**

The vast majority of people who took part in the study thought that militancy had serious detrimental effects on families. Because of militant activity, many families were compelled to abandon their houses and all of their things to find safety with other members of their extended family in other locations. The majority of families were forced to abandon their houses to find safety in one of the camps. Because of this, it harmed the education of children, as families were forced to place a higher priority on surviving than on their children's education. Furthermore, because many children were forced to live in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs), their education either suffered or was completely terminated. In some instances, families were forced to live with their relatives in rented housing, which put an additional burden on an already difficult financial situation. Findings of the study same as the findings of (Ahmed & Khan, 2016).

People who were forced to live in IDP camps frequently had a negative experience due to the numerous obstacles and problems they faced. Students who had their schooling disrupted as a result of militancy in FATA faced difficult conditions when applying to universities. They struggled with choosing the fields or subjects they wanted to study, locating appropriate colleges, and coping with the effect that militancy had on their test scores. Transportation, finding suitable lodging, and maintaining meaningful social relationships were also extremely difficult. Due to their low socioeconomic situation, it was difficult for them to effectively manage their finances, which included paying admission fees, purchasing books, and accessing the internet. Result of this study supported the study the of (Khan et al., 2018).

The decision of a university was deemed to be challenging by many of the respondents, with financial concerns being a big part of selecting government universities due to their reduced costs being a significant component in the choice. Another problem was finding suitable lodging, as there were insufficient dorms and hostels on campus, and many parents were concerned about their

children's safety in private dorms and hostels located off campus.

The experience of militancy in their region had left them mentally disturbed, and as a result, they were reluctant to confront people they did not know, which resulted in many of the respondents reporting fear of engaging in social interaction. It was also highlighted as a challenge because there were high merit standards since some respondents were unable to gain admission in the department or subject that they wished due to the surprisingly high merit requirements. Findings of the study same as the findings of (Ahmed & Khan, 2016).

The respondents' socioeconomic situation was noted as another problem, with some of them having to deal with limited prospects and financial difficulties as a direct result of their socioeconomic background. In general, the findings of the study showed that students from Ex-FATA encounter financial constraints, difficulties with language and adjusting to new environments, perplexity in the choice of academic fields, difficulties with transportation and accommodation, anxiety about engaging with other people, and high merit requirements.

Many of the respondents found that adjusting to a system that allowed for co-education was difficult for them because it was a novel concept for them and at first, it seemed odd. A significant number of respondents stated that they had limited computer literacy, even though they did not own personal computers or laptops and were unfamiliar with new technology such as multimedia projectors and PowerPoint presentations. However, the majority of respondents owned cell phones, while only a minority were aware of the possibility of employing them in educational settings. Result of this study supported the study the of (Siddiqa, 2011).

The summary, taken as a whole, highlights the difficulties and experiences faced by students from Ex-FATA areas as they begin their studies at universities, such as difficulties in adjusting to their new environments, interacting with their classmates and teachers, adjusting to a system that allows for co-education, and having inadequate computer literacy.

### **Recommendations**

1. It is strongly suggested that additional research be conducted on the subject of "University Students' Experiences of Militancy-Affected Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Their Personal and Academic Trajectories." This research has the potential to provide useful insights into the impact that militancy has had on the lives of university students in FATA, a region that has been deeply affected by wars and bloodshed.
2. As a researcher who specializes in the fields of education and conflict studies, I strongly encourage using a mixed-methodologies approach that blends qualitative and quantitative research methods to gain an in-depth understanding of the subject matter.
3. In addition, I suggest investigating a variety of aspects of the students' lives, such as their emotional health, academic accomplishments, personal and professional goals, and social support networks. By gaining a grasp of how militancy influences different facets of students' lives, one can obtain a more nuanced comprehension of the student's personal and academic paths. Additionally, taking into account the intersecting nature of the identities of the students, such as their gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class, can provide light on the myriad of experiences that are shared by the many student groups in FATA.
4. In addition, I suggest taking into consideration the various contextual elements as well as the difficulties that university students in places afflicted by militancy have to deal with.

5. In addition, I strongly encourage the researchers to think about the implications their discoveries have for real-world applications. The findings of this study, which provide evidence-based recommendations for enhancing the personal and academic trajectories of university students in FATA, have the potential to have an impact on both policy and practice of education and conflict studies. Additionally, it has the potential to serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, educators, and practitioners who are working in situations that are analogous to the ones being studied.

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