

## Socio-Political Impacts of FATA-KP Merger: A Case Study of District North Waziristan

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### Abstract

*This research aims to analyze the socio-political impacts of FATA-KP merger particularly on district North Waziristan after the merger. This research is implemented to highlight the popular perception of FATA-KP merger from the local residents and how it will bring the socio-political impacts. It analyzes that how the merger reforms are being implemented and influenced the socio-political aspects of the tribal districts. It has examined the socio-political impacts particularly on health, education, political participation and their basic administrative infrastructure. The mixed method has been used to get minutely and in-depth information about the current social and political condition and prevailing issues of FATA. The study has proposed that some immediate actions should be taken concerning lack of some basic infrastructure.*

**Key Words:** Ex-FATA, Impacts, Issues, Merger, North Waziristan, Political, Social

### Introduction

Ex-FATA (Presently part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) is that tribal region of Pakistan which is in the eye of the storm since the incident of 9/11. The ex-FATA is contiguous with the Western border of Afghanistan along the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. It is a direct heritage of the British-Indian Empire and the FCR laws, through which FATA was ruled. The Frontier Crime Regulations (FCR) was sanctioned by the British Government in 1901. The central regime was practicing Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) as a set of laws to handle ex-FATA (Noor, Hashmi, & Bukhari, 2018). This region was semi-autonomous previously. These areas are bounded from south and east by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Baluchistan, while the neighbors of the tribal districts in north and west are Nangarhar, Paktia, Kunar, Paktika and Khost provinces of Afghanistan through Durand line. Total region of FATA is 27,220 Sq.km and total inhabitants according to 2016 estimate are 4,800,883 persons with density of 163 persons per/Km<sup>2</sup>. Exactly the entire population of newly tribal districts are Pashto speakers, while the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa settled areas are multi-linguistic. Although, the people of tribal areas have connected with the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as religiously, culturally, socially and economically (Hussain, 2014) & (Muzaffar, et. al. 2019).

The FATA-KP merger represents a reconstruction of Pakistan's federal structure. It affected the overall size of federal parliament and increased KP's shares

including the tribal belt into country's main politics. The merger is also a victory for the true spirit of democracy (Darr, 2018). It is being said that tribal districts were deprived from rights of the advanced world. The rules of previous black law FCR was outdated and unwarrantable. Reforms have most often been damaged by political conflicts, watering down most governments' preliminary proposals. The Maliks (elders) have always rejected the validity of the FATA reforms. They are appointed by the bureaucrats and enjoying only less local support. Jirga system was implemented through Maliks (elders) (Ullah, 2017).

This research has analyzed basic changes and socio-political impacts of the reforms, the tribal region expected to keep on an unbalanced area with a fragile management and a disempowered population who are continuously at conflict with each other, without we identify the issues and correct them. The study has analyzed implementation of reforms in tribal districts, which are directly affecting the socio-political aspects of individual life.

### **Literature Review**

Literature Review is study, which uses to have a literature gap, which hangs in the air in an area of research. The investigator studied newspapers, books, interview of the government officials, reports of NGO's and personal observation etc. An article is written by Amin Akhtar titled "*KP government has extended an ordinance " in Aid of Civil Powers in erstwhile FATA"* stated that, chapter iv of the regulation states that armed forces are authorized to enter and search any stuff or place, where any radical elements or weapons are hidden. Wisal Yousufzai 2019 on "*Ex- FATA Schools fight with missing amenities, student nonattendance*" stated that according to Independent Monitoring Unit system of KP regarding schools in the newly merged tribal areas. He stated that 550 IMU assistant visited the tribal region, during their visit, they could not visit two % of all schools. In which 27 % schools were closed, while 167 schools had been closed for over six months. According to Report of FATA Research Centre 2019 on "*Voters attendance in erstwhile Fata remain 26.2 %: ECP*" by Usama Fayyaz, that recently elections were held in erstwhile Fata for 16 seats of KP assembly. A significant growth in female voters has been observed in some constituencies. Tariq Mehmood and Mobeen Jafar Mir (2019) have the opinion in their research article namely "*Understanding the post-merger Federally Administered tribal area (FATA) challenges and it's on National security*" that, he merger reforms process is a gradual and evolutionary process towards conversion with national standards. At one side the government of Pakistan is strong-minded to bring FATA towards mainstreaming, on the other hand there is scarcity of education, economic, justice and health opportunities.

### **Materials and Methods**

In the said research, the method of study is used both or mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative). Quantitative approach is used to interpret the facts and figure, while qualitative method is used to explain the impacts in brief on population. Also the secondary data is collected from different journal and official websites of different department in KP. To get a useful and mindful result and conclusion, the descriptive method is used. Primary data is collected through multiple choice of questionnaire.

## **Strategy for Study**

Descriptive method of analysis has been used as an approach of data analysis in this study. The strategy includes double hermeneutics, means the interpretation process is of two layers firstly, the participants has individually tried to make judgment of their opinion about the socio-political impacts of FATA-KP merger, secondly while the researcher has tried to make sense of the all participants. An attempt has made to collect data from those students, which belongs from tribal district of North Waziristan. Because the researcher belongs to the same area, and a case study is also can find here in research.

## **Sampling**

To look for the experience of resident of Erstwhile FATA, the simple descriptive analysis method has involved, therefore the sample has taken purposively and is in size consisting of about 230 respondents. According to the nature of research and research problem, several things are taken into consideration while choosing the sample, (i), the respondent must be conscious with the merger reforms and the previous draconian law. (ii), while all people of newly merged tribal districts are related directly or indirectly to the research problem.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The concept of modernization theory formulates the basis of this study. It is extremely multifaceted theory, which has been debated from a variety of angles within the social sciences. It mirrors the progressive social-political indicators of a particular community, which goes through a social transformation. The essentials of modernization comprise the scientific, economic, social and political processes which have released exceptional powers of development (Anderson, Donnermeyer, Longhofer, & Reschly, 2019).

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Introduction to Socio-Political Impacts**

The year of 2018 brought many changes in the federal structure of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. On 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2018 the President of Pakistan signed the 25<sup>th</sup> amendment of the constitution, after that ex-FATA has merged officially into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The tribal regions merged with the settle areas of KP province via constitutional development. Before merger, the ex-FATA was under the control of federal government (Boon, Huq, & Lovelace, 2018). After the merger, the tribal belt came under the direct supervision of KP province. This all happened due to change in system, political development occurred, when there happened change in written constitution and in the federal structure of the country. The change in the system may bring a lot impacts on the society of the regions, tribal belt and settled areas. The social and political impacts of the FATA-KP merger are complex in nature. Social aspects of a society can be divided in variance factors, including the health, education, security and social & Political Behavior. So keep in mind these aspects the researcher has adopted the simple descriptive method to analyze the data. There are different questions with different variables in the questionnaire. Every answer has

different variables according to their nature. For the realization of the primary data, the backup of secondary data has been taken into consideration, which would justify primary data.

The questionnaire forms were distributed equally among the male and female representatives of the District North Waziristan, to ensure the gender equality. Total 2000 questionnaires were distributed among the both gender equally. The surveys forms had distributed with the help of family members, friends, relatives and teachers community. Surprisingly the researcher has collected only 8.70 % respondents, from female. The questionnaire was organized in simple Urdu language.

### **Analyzing the Primary Data:**

#### **Understanding of Respondents Regarding Merger:**

A question was asked **“Do you know about the Ex-FATA-KP merger reforms?”** the response was that, 96.52 % of that question’s respondents say that we have the basic information and knowledge regarding the newly tribal districts. While 3.47 are saying, that we don’t know. Now the questions is that, the collected data is whether a reliable data or knowledgeable. The data shows that the respondents gave answer of the following questions positively and confidently.

#### **Education and other Important Factors towards Development:**

A question was asked regarding quality education in tribal belt that, **“The people of tribal districts have access to quality education.”**The response was, 68.24 % of the opinions that, people have no access to quality education in ex-FATA, particularly in District North Waziristan, because the study has been conducted in the said tribal district. While 10 % has the opinion that they have accessed towards quality education. And 21.73 % has no opinion. Another question was asked that, **“What measures can be taken to improve the quality of education in tribal districts?”** The response was, 13.91 % of the view that construction of new schools is best way toward the advancement of quality education. 44.34 % of the opinion is that check and balance is the most significant point in promoting quality education. 30.43 % of the view is that proper training of the already existed teachers is a super significant to develop the standard of education. While 11.30 % has mixed reaction to the question.

The researcher has asked the question, **which what is important factor towards development, what are major hurdle in the way of development?** According to the people of newly tribal district North Waziristan, the most important factor toward development is education. While 24.78 % people is the answer, that Political awareness is most important factor towards development. 7.82 % is the view, that health plays an important role in development. There was another question regarding hurdle in the way of development, that **What was the major hurdle in the way of development in ex-FATA?** The response was given by the people as, 16.08 % people say that the major hurdle in way of development is lack of health facilities. 73.91 say that the greater hurdle is lack of education. Some of the 6.52 % opinion is that major hurdle is lack of social awareness in the way of development of newly tribal districts.

### **Women Educational Status in NMDs**

The women of society can play a major role in the development of any society. The status of women in tribal region was just a household worker. The extreme traditions of tribal society don't allow the women to step out from their houses without male. But at the start of 21<sup>st</sup> century, with the era of globalization, the tribal structure is changing with the passage of time (Naveed, 2018). Hence there are a lot of issues for women in tribal belt, as right to education, right to job, right to step out without a male, right to business, but the circumstances are changing now (Ali, 2017).

A question was asked from the people of tribal district that, **more prospectuses to women in the field of \_\_\_\_\_ can change the course of tribal districts.** The response was given very positively. 83.04 % of the opinion is that education a key tool to provide to women and will play an important role in the advancement of tribal districts. According to 8.69 % respondents, that provision of job is a key towards ex-FATA development. Provision of health facilities is an important factor, which can change the future of newly merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. While 5.21 % has mixed reaction to the question. According to the survey the most important factor towards women development is education in tribal districts.

### **Current Situation and Role of Police in maintaining Peace in NMDs**

The major role of merger is that, that it will bring the country judicial courts and Thana Culture into the tribal districts. Formerly, the Levies, Khasadar, FC, and Army forces were involved in maintaining peace in tribal region. In settle areas the peace maintainers were police force. While the disputes are resolved through judicial courts. Dispute resolution in tribal region are done with their traditional Jirga system (Shinwari & Gauhar, 2013). So it is the opinion, that after merger, the establishment of courts, and policing system would minimize the role of Jirga system in tribal areas. Two different systems are in contradiction. Government is trying to make basic infrastructure for police and courts system (Israr & Malik, 2019). So, the question arises, that the current condition is suitable for bringing development and peace in the region. The researcher has asked the same question from the residents of newly tribal district North Waziristan.

To check out the current situation in the tribal areas a query was asked that, **Is the current environment is suitable for bringing prosperity and development in tribal districts?** 79.13 are the respondents are satisfied with the current situation of newly tribal districts, that it is suitable for bringing prosperity and development in the region. 17.39 % has not satisfied with the current scenario of the tribal region. While 3.47 % respondents have no opinion. The response shows that most of the individual are well aware and satisfied with the current peaceful environment after some major military operation against extremists.

Police plays a major role in maintaining peace. A question was put forward before the tribal people regarding Thana Culture that, **Thana Culture (Police Station) would be helpful to maintain peace in tribal districts.** 52.17 % respondents have the opinion, that bringing police into tribal areas would be suitable

for maintaining peace. 17.39 % has the opinion, that police could not help in maintaining peace. While the 30.43 % respondents have no opinion regarding this question.

### **Natural Resources in Tribal Region**

A geological survey has been conducted by FATA Research center, that 85 % of tribal region has immense mineral resources. The KP government has approved all standard operating for exploration of mineral resources in the newly tribal district of KP. The SOPs will be an historical step towards the exploration of minerals. According to SOPs the merged district's miners and contractors would have preference in the exploration of natural resources. Local population has a tradition "Jalsa-e-aam" in which they distribute the revenue according to their tribal traditions. The government must into consideration the local traditions and Jirga. The local people, which have possession of mineral lands, must be give the preference and other developmental project must start in the concerned areas (Mehsud, 2017).

The people of tribal belt asked a question that, **what is the major issue to utilize the ex-FATA natural resources?** 57.82 % respondents say that major hindrance in the way of utilization of ex-FATA natural resources is the inefficiency of administration. According to 15.62 % of the respondents, that there is no proper discovery system for natural resources in tribal districts. While 20 % of the respondents say that the current system is responsible for not utilizing the natural resources. While 15 % respondents have mixed reaction.

### **Politics in NMDs after Merger**

Political development is the first change towards social change. By social change we mean, that when a society replace her old values with new values and traditions (Pye, 1979). The process of merger would also bring change in the political nature of tribal people. It may be change in political participation, behavior, legitimacy of system, or any other. So let's have a look with the help of primary data, if after merger the populations of tribal districts have any advancement in their political nature.

**Who can play the major role in socio-political advancement of tribal districts?** The response was that 53.04 % have the opinion that political leadership can play a better role in the progress of tribal Districts. While 23.91 respondents have the opinion that teacher community is a tool of change, 20 % respondents have of the view that tribal leadership (Malik) can play role in bringing development. While 7 % has mixed reactions. **The main reason behind the turn out in elections (particularly in women) is \_\_\_\_\_.** 59.13 % respondents have opinion that main reason behind the less turn out in elections by women is tribal traditions, while 27.39 % have the view that lack of education is a main reason for less turn out. 24 % has the opinion that egoism is the main reason, while 7 % have no opinion in these regard.

### **Overall Satisfaction of People regarding merger reforms**

The researcher has discussed some social and political impacts of merger on the people of ex-FATA, particularly on North Waziristan. Now the investigator highlighted the overall satisfactions of the respondents, that are they satisfied with the merger reforms or not.

Overall 19.13 % respondents are satisfied with the current status of development in tribal districts. 72.26 % respondents are not satisfied with the current developmental process of the merged districts. While 6 % respondents are the view, that they have no opinion.

Although a high level meeting is headed by PM Imran Khan, on 15 March, 2019, in which he was briefed with current security and administrative issues relating to NMDs. The major decision in this meeting was that 3 % of the NFC award would be spent on tribal areas. He also added that Levies and Khasadar forces will not be expelled from their jobs. Khasadar and Levies would be merged with police forces. He further stated, that make sure all the projects should free corruption free process. On 18 March, 2019, he did a tweet that government will spend Rs100 billion annually on NMDs. The decision was taken after three weeks of consultation (Correspondents, 2019).

### **Conclusion**

The study was an inquiry about the actual impacts and condition of tribal districts especially after the merger. This article has been discussed the relations between the theory of modernization and impacts of FATA-KP merger on the socio-political factors of the newly tribal districts, which are providing basically basis for modernization of the tribal belt. What are the major hurdles, and significant factors for the development and modernization of the newly tribal districts? It has considered also the features, which are developed and working as a tool of change for the tribal people. The article also discussed the application of modernization theory to the actual happenings of the merger reforms.

The people of newly merged districts have a progressive approach towards the development. They want an immediate change to bring prosperity in the region. According to the modernization theory the change takes a lot of time and it's a gradual process. No one can imagine a quick and positive change in any society. The primitive societies also react in a DE modernization way to the new custom and values. It will take a long time and also a complex process. The modernization itself a multi-dimensional process, every society deals it with on own way. According to some scholars that political development is the first stage towards change. The merger process was a significant step in the history of tribal region. Overall change in system would bring change in all sectors of individual life. Change means, that a society is willing to his way of life, they are trying to change the societal norms and traditions. Replacing the old norms and traditions or modification within existing system is a sign of modernization.

The modernization also encourages the gender equality in a society. The modernization encourages the equal opportunities for both gender in economic,

political, social and education sector. During the provincial election, two female candidates were contesting election on general seats. While some reports has been issued, that number of girls enrolling are increased in educational institution.

The term of legitimacy is in term of law has a huge importance towards recognition of any system. The term of legitimacy means, that people are recognizing the system as lawful and acceptable to them. Recent turnout of voters in national and provincial assemblies is a sign of accepting the current system of government. So the legitimization is also a basic feature of modernization theory in today democratic world. In today world the major point for legitimization is democratic values. The government of KP announced a ten years development program for NMDs, in which the institutional arrangement would made step by step and gradually. In survey, Overall 72 % respondents were satisfied with current scenario of development. The modernization is always a gradual process, if someone wants an immediate change in society, then the process may be failed.

### **Recommendations**

The following are the some recommendations that are based on the finding of the research study and some personal observations of the researcher. It indicates the specific measurements and directions for the government that can be taken, to promote and develop the newly merged districts.

1. **Utilization of mineral resources:** The utilization natural resources should manage in proper way. In tribal districts, there is the concept of land owner. That the mineral land belongs to someone; all the natural resources belong to property owner. Government must take in consideration the local traditions and values.
2. **Building Higher educational Institutions:** The entire tribal belt has higher institution namely FATA University. Surprisingly it is located outside tribal region. No single university is located in the entire seven districts. Alongside with universities, medical colleges, the most important technical educational institution must be arranged without any delay.
3. **Political activism:** The extremist activities emerging again in the tribal belt instead after huge military operations. The political awareness can mitigate these threats. Due to this, people would not try even to remain in touch with these radical elements. For this purpose the stuck local government elections must held with immediate concerns.
4. **Role of Media:** The role of media cannot be avoided in this regard. The major cause of the insurgency in the area, that media is not present on ground. Government should provide an opportunity and protection to media, that media would be able to bring all realities on ground.
5. **People Involvement in Public Affairs:** Previously the tribal people are used to war crisis, economic crisis. And have a hundred years old traditional values. It's not easy to grip them easily. Government must take into

consideration the local population, while before any legislative. It may be in form of referendum, plebiscite etc.

6. **Root out Religious Extremism:** In past, the religious Madrassas are used for violating against the spirit of Islam. Majority of Madrassas are not registered and are regulated by local Mullas. It may be cause again in creating the radical minds. So government should take immediate actions, to register and regulate all those Madrassas, which are currently working in tribal areas. It could be help helpful in mitigating the religious radicalism.
7. **Hiring local people:** The people from settle areas are well aware of the tribal traditions. Government must bring the tribal governmental officials into the tribal areas. Government would also feel easiness in running the affairs of the NMDs.
8. **Conducting Seminars and Workshops:** The mostly tribal people are not convinced to send their female to schools, colleges and universities. Government should initiate a step like “Safeer-e-Balidiyat” program. Government should take into favor the religious, tribal elite, after that must held seminars and workshops in every village of tribal region, regarding the importance of female education.
9. **Promotion of Tourism:** The tourism can boost economy of any country. The investigator has observed, that during June, July thousands of people were coming from settle areas, to visit the beautiful sites of South & North Waziristan. But the tourist had some grievances regarding lack of facilities. Only promotion of terrorism can boost the economy of the entire region along with KP settle areas.

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