

**THE ROLE OF NGOS IN THE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT
SECTOR: A CASE STUDY IN THE MERGED DISTRICTS OF KHYBER
PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN**

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ABSTRACT

In the developing world, there are a plethora of development issues. All the development issues are associated with a poor education system, violation of basic human rights, poor standards of living, and deprivation of basic needs. Also, some organizations are constantly working to improve the indicators of development. These organizations are called non-governmental organizations. The research study has been conducted to explain the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A qualitative research methodology has been used to achieve the research objectives. Data Analysis has been performed through NVIVO software. This research finding has highlighted the role of NGOs and has shown that militancy, Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR), cultural norms, basic rights were the major factors that influenced the role of NGOs in the tribal districts. The research has concluded that the NGOs have played a significant role in improving political, social, and economic indicators in the merged districts. Overall, there is a positive role of a non-governmental organization in the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Keywords: Militancy, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR), Cultural Norms, Development, Merged Districts, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa.

RESEARCH INTRODUCTION

The role of Non- governmental organizations (NGOs) cannot be neglected in the development sector. NGOs are one of the important elements of the development sector. They carry the significant impact of achieving development goals and objectives. Therefore, this research revolves around the role of NGOs in non-governmental organizations in the development sector. However, the research is targeting merged districts of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa which were previously known as Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The areas require different

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developmental programs and development measures to uplift the overall standard of living in the merged districts. Therefore, the research topic's basic aim is to understand the role of Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the development sector, especially, the merged districts because they require the enormous contribution of the (NGOs) non-governmental organizations. Also, this research topic is targeting the development sector in therefore, the research will cover different dimensions in the merged districts. Further, the question mainly depends on non-governmental organizations and how can they relate their role in these identified development dimensions.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Banks and Hulme (2014) research have discussed the role of NGOs and their struggling lifespan because of national and international disturbing elements in Pakistan. He also discussed the importance of NGOs in many remote areas of Pakistan however, the study did not discuss the importance of these NGOs in the merged districts. Furthermore, many researchers have discussed the health-related issues in the remote and tribal areas but none of the previous research has exclusively targeted these merged districts. Likewise, the research study of Ejaz, Saqib, and Ahmad (2014) has discussed the health issues in many remote and tribal areas through the cooperation of government and non-government organizations in Pakistan. To increase the role of the health sector the government uses NGOs as a donor in their prescribed viewpoints and policies about the health sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Role of NGOs

The inclusion of NGOs in the frontline developmental programs has provided the world with a plethora of developmental facilities (Siddique and Ahmad, 2012). The research study of Banks and Hulme (2012) has added that the consistent failure of government approaches without any collaboration throughout history has increased the role of NGOs in the development sector. it is because the NGOs have provided unique and innovative developmental approaches in the real world. Banks and Hulme (2012) have further discussed the role of NGOs in the developing sector throughout the years. In the 1970s, a very limited number of Non-governmental organizations has played a role in the development sector. these organizations have not received any external support from the state. Also, in these times, most of the NGOs were northern organizations who also used southern donor presence, these organizations use different religious assistance because the required NGO,s support at that time was based on short-term relief (Banks and Hulme, 2012). Merged districts also missed the inclusion of non-government organizations in the region. Less development was recorded because of high militancy incidents in the Afghan war (Fiaz, 2012).

Role of NGOs in Pakistan

Chaudhary and Wazir (2012) research has argued that charitable activities in Pakistan have many shapes. Most of the communities in the country are providing safe drinking water, food, shelter, and other survival assistance to needy people. Numerous charitable

activities have been initiated in the country to fulfill the needs of poor people. All of these activities are based on financial grants, food, and shelter (Fiaz, 2012). Similarly, most of the NGOs are now diverting towards networking and social collaboration instead of social-political, and economic support. The NGOs are now focusing on strengthening the networking of similar groups who want to bring change (Rahman and Mustaghis, 2015). Kahlon (2015) has argued that the increasing growth in Pakistan has been recorded because of the massive inflow of international money due to the war on terror. Siddique and Ahmad (2012) research further added that another reason behind the number of NGOs in Pakistan is the struggle between democracy and dictatorship. The country has been suffered from several direct and indirect transfusions of military power. Noor, Ahmad, and Bukhari (2018) have included that sustainability and the role of NGOs are two opposite things. However, most NGOs in Pakistan are using microfinancing techniques to ensure sustainability.

NGOs in Merged Districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

These Codes of Pakhtoons are playing a very crucial role in shaping the lives of these tribal people (Rehman and Mustaghis, 2015). The role of NGOs cannot be understood without knowing about the "Pukhtoonwaali" codes of life. Most NGOs have faced numerous challenges due to these unwritten laws. Any activity that is violating these laws has been opposed by the tribal people (Benson and Siddiqui, 2014). These Pakhtunwali codes have defined the way of living for the tribal people, these codes of life are divided into different aspects. All of these aspects are based on different on safeguarding the tribal people (Qadeer, 2104). Kakar (2012) research added that there are numerous misconceptions about the "Pashtunwali" codes that these codes are very hard and conservation.

NGOs Interest in Merged Districts

Kakar (2012) research study, the codes of "Pakhtunwali" is the best example. He added that most of the international communities believe that "Pakhtunwali" codes are the mother of all social evils in the merged districts. Noor, Hashmi, and Bukhari (2018) research have explained that the role of women has been underestimated in the merged districts since independence. Kakar (2012) also supported the arguments. The research has also added that the gender parity index has increased in the tribal districts. Noor, Hashmi, and Bukhari (2018) have defined added that structural issues or structural violence that happens in these tribal areas. Qadeer (2014) research has added that women in FATA have faced many issues of legal rights. Khorsand (2015) research has added that women suppression is a trend in the FATA. Khokhar, Abbasi, and Shahid (2014) have added that the culture of these merged districts is very hard and very extreme, it gives very little vacuum to the people to perform their duties.

Militancy

Militancy issue is a very pro-longed issue, Latif and Mussarat (2012) have added that the raised in militancy is because of the Afghan Taliban. Faiz (2012) research added that the militancy in these tribal areas can be traced from the 1980s. Wazir (2014) research has added that the 9/11 incident increased the probability of militancy in the

tribal areas. In 2014, there were around 7000 militants in these tribal areas (Wazir, 2014). Chughtai (2013) research has added that terrorism and increased militancy is one of the major issues in the tribal belt. Kahlon (2015) has argued that war of militancy has increased the inflow of money in the region, however, war on terror became the major obstacle in the inflow of money.

Education

Naqvi, Khan, and Ahmad (2012) have discussed that education in FATA (merged districts) has been badly affected because of militancy.

Institutions	Boys	Girls	Total
Private	90,397	5,839	96,237
Public	399,044	179,286	578,330
Total	489,441	185,125	674,567

Source: (Naqvi, Khan and Ahmad, 2012)

Usman and Khan (2018) research have also argued that the education system in the merged districts is not commendable. Awan (2013) further added that the literacy rate in the tribal region compared to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province is very low. In Pakistan, the total number of middle schools according to 2005 data was around 28 thousand, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has only 2000 middle schools, and the tribal districts with only 400 middle schools. The data also shows that among these 400 middle schools, 284 schools were for boys and only 120 for girls (Awan, 2013). The data is clear evidence of a disastrous education situation in the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Educational Indicators for Pakistan: NWFP & FATA (1998-2003-2004)			
Indicator	Pakistan	NWFP	FATA
Literacy Rate (Both male and female %)	4392	35.41	17.42
Literacy Rate male	5481	51.39	29.51
Literacy rate female	3202	18.82	3.00
Government primary schools total number	155000	18924	4189
Government primary school for boys	111100	11633	2524
Governmental primary school for girls	43900	7291	1665
Total enrolment in primary school	19781100	2041693	339793
Government middle schools total number	28700	2053	404
Government middle school for boys	22700	1319	284
Government middle school for girls	6600	734	120
Government higher schools total numbers	16100	1534	240
Government higher schools for boys	13100	1059	206
Government higher schools for girls	3000	273	27

Literacy rate 1998. All other figures 2003-04

Source Govt: of NWFP 2005b Govt: of Pakistan 1998^s

Source: (Awan, 2013)

Faqir and Fakhar (2014) research has added that the poor education situation in the tribal districts is because of different social and cultural challenges. Saqib and Ahmad (2014) have also added that increased poverty and early marriages of girls.

1. Research Methodology

This research is following the “Interpretivism” philosophy. One of the reasons for the selection of this philosophy is the nature of the research question. Also, a qualitative research approach has been adopted for the study. Likewise, the research has opted for “interviews” and major data collection methods and the technique is to collect data is through "Open-ended questionnaire: Data has been analyzed through NVIVO.

1.1. Analysis

Table 1: Frequency table

Word	Word length	Frequency	Rank
Militancy	9	88	1
Education	6	87	2
Cultural Norms	5	58	7
FCR	3	44	9
Merger	6	54	8
Rights	6	70	6
Political	9	86	3
Social	6	75	4
Economic	8	77	5

Table 2: Emerging themes

S. No.	Themes Name
1	Militancy affecting Development
2	NGOs positive role
3	Cultural Norms issues

4	FCR dissolution
5	Post-merger Development
6	Basic rights
7	Political development
8	Social development
9	Economic development

KEY FINDINGS

Following are the key findings of this research article.

- This research finding explains that militancy has been the major element that created several obstacles for the NGOs in the merged districts of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa.
- The themes have explained that NGOs have played and are still playing a significant role in the development of the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- Cultural norms are playing a significant role in defining the role of NGOs in the merged districts. The research findings explain that the region has some rigid norms that restrict many non-government organizations (NGOs) to perform different activities in these merged districts.
- The dissolution of Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR) is an important element in defining the role of NGOs in the development of merged districts. The research findings explain that FCR dissolution has provided ease to the non-governmental organizations to work more efficaciously
- NGO,s role has been enhanced after the merger of these tribal districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The research findings have shown that there is a significant development post-merger.
- It has been found that the basic rights of both men and women have significantly improved because of the presence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- the political situation in merged districts has improved through NGOs, it is because the inclusion of NGOs has a significant impact on the political attitude of the local people.
- The research findings have shown that NGOs have a significant impact on the social situation.
- The economic situation has improved through the NGO activities in the merged districts. The analysis also shows that NGOs have provided different economic opportunities to the local people.

DISCUSSION

Latif and Mussarat (2012) have added that the raised in militancy is because of the Afghan Taliban. Faiz (2012) research added that the militancy in these tribal areas can be traced from the 1980s. Wazir (2014) research has added that the 9/11 incident increased the probability of militancy in the tribal areas. This research finding also provides support to their researches. This research finding has further added that it is factual that transfusion of militancy power made it very difficult for the NGOs to work effectively but they also provided military assistance to many NGOs to work in these merged districts. Military power provided security to most of the NGOs and government personnel to sustain their work. Siddique and Ahmad (2012) have argued that the overall role of NGOs in Pakistan is positive because it works for the welfare of human beings. On the other hand, the research of Rahman and Mustaghis (2015) has also added that NGOs are playing an important role in Pakistan. This research finding has also added that the role of NGOs has been and is still important in the development of Pakistan. However, the role becomes much important in these merged districts because there is minimal progress. The NGOs have initiated different projects to increase the livelihood and improve the standard of living of all the tribal people. The poor infrastructure, poor education system, women empowerment issues, and worst economic situation makes it very difficult for the people to uplift their standard of living, it is the NGOs that stipulate local people.

Khokhar, Abbasi, and Shahid (2014) have added that the culture of these merged districts is very hard and very extreme, it gives very little vacuum to the people to perform their duties. Their cultural norms are based on Pukhtoonwali codes of life, they are unwritten laws formed by the local people to ensure social, economic, and political stability in the region. These research findings explain that one reason behind the ineffective performance of NGOs is that cultural obstacle, the perception of spreading liberalism and westernization among the local people is bringing massive trouble for the NGOs personnel, however, despite the cultural issues numerous NGOs are working for the betterment of these merged districts. Chughtai (2013) argument that most of the activities in the merged districts is been dominated by men, however, the inclusion of NGOs has changed the perception in most parts of the tribal areas. There is a massive change in people's minds about the role of women in society.

Noor, Hashmi, and Bukhari (2018) have argued that from 8 to 28 all articles are based on the provision of human rights and basic rights to the citizens of Pakistan. Hashmi and Bukhari (2018) further argued in their research that articles 21, 22, 23 provide freedom to the citizens of these merged districts but their rights have been violated in every possible way courtesy of Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR), the clause of FCR specifically clause 21 was based on unkind and inhuman approach towards the tribal people. This research study has highlighted that the dissolution of Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR) allowed the local people to become more confident and louder for their basic rights. The dissolution of Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR) improved the human rights situation in the merged districts. It was the major political development in the merged districts, the development not only improved the lives of its people but also provided political freedom to the tribal people. The investigative process has improved in the merged districts; the dissolution of FCR also provided ease in the entire merger

procedure.

Latif and Mussarat (2012) have previously argued that before the merger, there were a plethora of militancy incidents in the merged districts, the federal government, and incompetent political representation did not contribute efficaciously. All these incidents restricted many NGOs to work for the development of the local people. Faiz (2012) also has previously highlighted that militancy was the major issue before the merger. On the other hand, a previous research study of FATA Research Centre (2019) has also mentioned that the post-merger situation has improved and there has been a 44% decline in terrorist incidents. This research finding supports the FATA Research Centre (2019) study because the post-merger situation has shown different results. The research findings explain that the merger has also increased the role of NGOs in the merged districts. Also, both the federal and the provincial governments of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provide political and economic support to the non-government sector to improve their performance. This research also adds that the increase in developmental activities has also influenced terrorism because the local people are now more educated and more productive towards their country.

Hashmi and Bukhari (2018) discussed the provision of human rights in the constitution of Pakistan. Their research has previously argued that some articles in the constitution of Pakistan which include articles 21,22,23 and up to 28 are based on human rights. The basic rights include freedom of choice, movement, safety, and security from the state, basic education, and basic health. However, despite these provisions, the tribal region has faced major deprivation of basic rights. Here, in this research finding, it has been identified that NGOs have played a major role in providing basic rights to the people of merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Also, the fact cannot be denied that these previously administered areas have been deprived of basic rights since independence. However, despite major deprivation, the NGOs have played a significant role in improving the lives of these tribal people.

Ahmad (2012) and Naqvi, Khan, and Ahmad (2012) have highlighted the political instability and transfusion of power among military and political forces, they also highlight that poor and corrupt administration systems badly influenced the political development in these merged districts. Most of the NGOs have voluntarily performed different duties to effectively monitor all the political activities such as transfer of development funds to the poor and needy people or spending on education and health. Likewise, the NGOs have raised awareness among the people in making them politically educated to loud for their political rights under the constitution of Pakistan. Noor, Hashmi, and Bukhari (2018) have previously mentioned the importance of "Pukhtunwali" and its impact on social development, however, in present studies has been found that social development has diminished the importance of "Pukhtunkhwali" codes. Now, the people's acceptance of modernism and quality of life has much improved. There is a minimal shift in cultural norms; the local people are now more modernized. Also, the constant struggle of NGOs has improved women's rehabilitation process, the women have now more freedom to work publicly and become independent. Noor, Hashmi, and Bukhari (2018) have argued that the overall economic condition of these merged districts has shown less progress, the situation is much bleaker, local people find it very hard to find generate economic opportunities. This research finding

has added that despite the bleaker economic situation in these merged districts, most NGOs have contributed positively to raising the economic well-being of the tribal people. Most of the development and non-governmental organization has provided micro-financing loans and SMEs platform for the people to generate income.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Some of the major research limitations have been explained below.

- The rise of the global pandemic "COVID-19" has been one of the major and most influential elements during this research study. Overall, it was hard to research in these hard times. The covid-19 restricted us during the research days to collect data from different participants
- Managing financial resources was another major issue that influenced the performance during the research. This research provided refreshments to the participants to improve the quality of the interview conversation and generate relevant information.
- Time management was another important factor that influenced this research study. The COVID-19 badly influenced time management. The entire project was disturbed because of government-enforced lockdown and restriction over gatherings.

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude these research findings, it can be argued that the role of NGOs in the development sector has shown a positive impact especially in the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In most parts of the world, the role of NGOs is positive because the inclusion of NGOs in the development plan has shown a significant impact. It is because the objectives of NGOs in the development sector are very important, the importance can be evident from the NGOs objectives. Likewise, in the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the role of NGOs is very crucial because the area has been the battleground for most of the countries and insurgent groups. In the last 4 decades, these tribal districts have had a catastrophic situation because the region has never experienced any developmental plan projected by the government as well as the international communities. Despite huge ignorance, the NGOs have played a significant role in these merged districts. Most of the NGOs are working to raise the standard of living of these tribal people.

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