

# DOES MILITANCY AFFECT FEMALE STUDENTS? A CROSS SECTIONAL BASED STUDY OF DISTRICT BAJUAR KHYBER PUKHTUNKHWA

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## ABSTRACT

*A cross-sectional study was carried out with the sole purpose of assessing the effects of militancy on female students in District Bajuar. Using sekaran criterion, a sample size of 169 respondents was purposefully chosen. A conceptual framework consisting of a dependent variable (the nature of drop out) and an independent variable (Militancy). For primary data collection, a well-structured questionnaire was used. Furthermore, descriptive (frequency and percentage distribution) and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data (chisquare test). Thus, the study revealed a highly significant association ( $P=0.000$ ) between the nature of drop out militancy indictors (statements), namely, terrorists had destroyed schools in the study area, schools were closed due to security issues, militancy is a formidable barrier to female education, militants have threatened girl schools, local residents were displaced due to militancy, and academic session of children suffered due to militancy. As a result, the government should implement legislative and budgetary measures to reduce dropout rates, such as providing financial assistance, a safe environment, school infrastructure, basic educational facilities in schools, and employment prospects, particularly for female students. Some of the recommendations have been forwarded in light of the current investigation.*

**Keywords:** Cross Sectional Study, Education, Militancy, Female Students, Bajaur.

## INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in the development of an individual, society, and a country (Jafar et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2019). The constitution of Pakistan empowers the state to afford the basic education of each and every citizen to eliminate illiteracy. However, the dropping ratio is an alarming day by day, as National Center for Education Statistics defined the drop out disclosed that leaving school without completing a high school education or equivalent credential such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Students leaving schools is a continuous process which begins with slight opposing attitude and then slowly increases until in actual the student completely drops out from school, and it's no longer hidden. The term actual dropout refers to physical detachment of students from education system (Franklin et al., 1991; Dupper, 1993). Previous studies suggested that dropout of students from schools are involved in criminal cases and aberrant behavior (Beauvais et al., 1996).

There are different socio-cultural and economic factors which include behavior of child, family, peers, and schools, leading to dropout of students from educational institutions. Poverty and lack of parent's interest to monitor students schooling progress also leads dropout of school

children (Attaullah et al., 2018). In most part of the world dropout ratio of girls are high as compared boys. A report published by UNESCO in 2012, compared to boys the girl's dropout ratio is higher in forty-nine countries. The enrolment of boys and girls are same but cooperatively male students continue their study as compared to female students (Chimombo, 1999). Status of education in comparison to Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (KPK) and rest of Pakistan in FATA is very low, especially that of females. The record of KPK government 2005 shows that the literacy ratio is 17.42 and which male and female proportion is 30 and 3. These are the shocking and distress status of literacy rate especially of females. There are 0.1 million above schools in Pakistan, nearly 20 thousand in KPK and 2425 over there in FATA. The ratio of male and female schools is 1:2. Girls have about 1600 schools, and it can be imaginary keeping in mind anti-women education attitude of tribal area how many of them will be functional fully or partially. In Pakistan the enrollment ratio is 20 million and in KPK this ratio was 0.3 million. According to Naqvi et al. (2012), disclosed that terrorists in FATA have denied millions of kids of their right to an education, which is a basic human right. Militancy is a formidable barrier to education. The literacy rate in FATA is already low due to the region's characteristic population and topography, and militants' terrorist actions are exacerbating the problem. As a result, the situation in FATA deteriorates.

In FATA, militancy and conflict have severely harmed education. Thousands of youngsters have been left out of school because of the large-scale displacement in the area. Militants have destroyed or threatened many boys' and girls' schools. Female pupils have ceased attending classes in numerous tribal districts. Under the leadership of Mullah Fazlullah, the group resurfaced in 2005, although with a more terrorists focused, bolstered by militants escaping drone assaults in FATA. The movement drew support from the underclasses and disgruntled youngsters because of its populist language, fast justice, and antagonism to the old feudal elite (Jafar et al., 2021; Ali et al., 2012) by mid-2008; all females' schools in Bajaur had been demolished or closed. 180 girls' community schools, built with international support in North and South Waziristan, were forced to close. In the face of militant activity in whole tribal region, the government of Pakistan seemed to be a legitimate rival for tribal people's loyalty. After the invasion of US troops in Afghanistan Pakistan deployed its army in FATA to resist Taliban from making its bases in FATA. The first military operation against the militant groups was launched in Wana and then in the strategy was followed in South Waziristan in 2004. These military operations brought enormous impacts on educational system of the region. Hundreds of civilians have been massacred by the Taliban, who have also killed thousands of Females and adolescents are not safe either. Educational institutions are bombed, and heads of the tribes are targeted arbitrarily. People have forced to flee their houses by extremists. The Pakistan army tried to bring the situation back to normal cannot be dismissed. Through a process of dialogues and agreements, the state attempted to curtail the militants' actions at first. This, however, did not work, prompting the government to resort to force. After these initiatives failed, the political, administrative and military leadership agreed to begin a military operation in early 2009. This operation resulted in massive internal migration from the besieged areas, about 2million people were displaced because of the crisis. Keeping in view the above stock of literature the present study was designed to overlook the nature of dropout students from schools in district Bajaur through militancy perspective. Moreover, a quantitative research technique was used to asserting

the association between nature of drop out and militancy through application of chi square test statistics.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was carried out in district Bajaur (previously known as Bajaur agency). Further, district Bajaur comprised of 7 tehsils where 3 tehsils namely Khar, Utmankhail and Slarazi was purposively selected. As per pilot survey which was carried out in March 20<sup>th</sup> 2021 to April 21<sup>st</sup> the total enrolled students were 3381, whereas the dropout students were documented as 379 in class 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> respectively (Tables 1 & 2). Thus 169 sample sizes was driven as per Sekeran criteria (Sekaran & Bougie, 2003). Further, the selected sample size was allocated proportionally to each strata (tehsils based distribution) through the formula given by (Chaudhry, 2009) Moreover, for taking primary information regarding the study dynamics (militancy and nature of dropout from schools) structured questionnaire was used for data collection from potential sampled respondents i.e., household head. Lastly, the data was coded into SPSS (25 version) for further analysis i.e., descriptive and inferential statistics.

Name of school [Government Girls High Schools]	Tehsil	Enrolled students	Dropout Students
Inayat kali	Khar	253	45
Raghgan	Khar	204	38
Khar	Khar	1424	88
Nawagai	Nawagai	36	09
Bandgai	Utaman kheil	621	83
Pashat	Salarzi	164	22
Nari tangi	Salarzi	59	17
Kamal dara	Arang	496	47
Sharbatai	Arang	124	34
Total		3381	379

Source: Pilot Survey, 2021

Tehsils	Schools Name of GGHS	Dropout Ratio	Sample Size
Khar	Inayat Kali	45	26
	Raghgan	38	22
	Khar	88	51
Utman khel	Bandgai	83	48
Salarzi	Pashat	22	12
	Nari tangi	17	10
	Total	293	169

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Descriptive Statistics

Table 3 depicted that socioeconomic characteristic of respondents in terms of marital status, household head, family type and other factor to determine the nature of dropout in terms of familial members or others. Thus, among the total 169 respondents, 94.7% were married, 100% households head were male, 78.7% of respondents belonged to joint families and 60.4% of respondents know the other family daughter or daughters who were dropped of school. It could be deduced from these findings that due to rural hinterland in nature the study area (Bajaur) was based on patriarchal norms which is prevailed since the dawn of Pukhtunwali (Pashtun code of conduct) (Jafar et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2019). Women in general while girls in particular were limited to domestic work which is sometime come under the domain of private sphere resulted into higher drop out from schools. On the other hand sons were preferred to go to schools or come under the domain of public sphere resultantly evoked to involvement in greater jobs in future than female in the study area (Khan et al., 2018).

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Respondents response</b>		
Marital status of the respondents	<b>Married</b>	<b>Widow</b>	<b>Divorced</b>
	160(94.7%)	7(4.1%)	2(1.2%)
Family head of the respondents	<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>
	169(100.0%)		00(0.0%)
Family types of the respondents	<b>Joint</b>	<b>Extended</b>	<b>Nuclear</b>
	133(78.7%)	16(9.5%)	20(11.8%)
Any other family who daughters are dropped out from school	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
	102(60.4%)	31(18.3%)	36(21.3%)

Source: Authors, 2021

Table 4 showed that majority of the respondents 76.9% agreed that distance from school is the key factor of dropping out from school for female students. This statement was supported by Juneja (Juneja, 2001). Who disclosed that, distance from the school is the key factor of dropping out from school for female students? Likewise, the table further revealed that 47.9% of the respondents were the opinion that pregnancy is the significant cause of school dropout for girl. This statement was also supported by Dunne and Leac dismantled that the one of the main causes of female dropout is pregnancy and some of the state give permission to the student's re-enter to school after getting pregnant however this ratio is very less. However, this is not applicable in the Pakistan's context (Khan, 2016). Similarly, 55.0% of the respondents were the opinion that domestic work of girls at household level becomes dysfunctional the school performance which resulted into dropout. These results were also in line with Khan et al (Jafar et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2019). Abena (1991) & Atayi (2008) who disclosed that parents in Africa were more worried about the role of girls at home, because this role does not require schooling because girls are expected to care for children and make food. In addition, Brock & Cammish also studied that girl sometimes begin working at an earlier age than boys especially

in rural areas and girls also tend to do more work in the household than boys (Brock & Cammish, 1997). Studies indicate that female students tend to drop out of school to take care of their younger siblings.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
Distance from school is the key factor of dropping out from school for female students.	130(76.9%)	29(17.2%)	10(5.9%)
Pregnancy is the significant cause of school dropout for girl.	81(47.9%)	68(40.2%)	20(11.8%)
Domestic work of girls at household level dysfunctional the school performance which resulted into dropout.	93(55.0%)	64(37.9%)	12(7.1%)
Parents' illiteracy cause dropout of girls from school.	110(65.1%)	50(29.6%)	9(5.3%)
Fear of failure in exams enforces dropout of girls from school.	56(33.1%)	99(58.6%)	14(8.3%)
Peer pressure of course mates cause to dropout of girls from school.	60(35.5%)	91(53.8%)	18(10.7%)
Long distance and unsafety on the way to girl's school encourages dropout.	127(75.1%)	32(18.9%)	10(5.9%)
Timely marriage for young girls is a priority as compared to schooling.	110(65.1%)	43(25.4%)	16(9.5%)
Lack of awareness regarding female education is also reason for female school dropout.	130(76.9%)	29(17.2%)	10(5.9%)

Source: Authors, 2021

Moreover, 65.1% of the respondents agreed with statement that parents' illiteracy cause dropout of girls from school, 58.6% did not agree with the statement that fear of failure in exams enforces dropout of girls from school, and 53.8% of the respondents disclosed that peer pressure of course mates cause to dropout of girls from school. Additionally, the Table further showed that majority of the respondents 75.1% agreed with the statement that long distance and unsafely on the way to girl's school encourages dropout. According to Nekatibeb, 2002 distance from the school is the most significant barrier to females' education. Many studies in African regions report that school distance can discourage girls from being educated for two major problems. One of them is the amount of time and energy required to cross a distance by youngsters who are hungry. Another factor is parental concern about their daughters' sexual safety. In addition 65.1% of the respondents were in the favor that timely marriage for young girls is a priority as compared to schooling. Based on various studies suggested that when the girls reached to maturity the family tends to arrange their marriage instead of continuing their study (Molteno, 2000). Moreover, most of the respondents 76.9% were in the opinion that lack of awareness regarding female education are also reason for female school dropout.

### **Association between Militancy and Nature of Drop Out**

Based on indexation and cross tabulation method chi square test statistics was ascertained to expose the association between dependent and independent variable attributes. Therefore, Table 5 depicted that a highly significant association ( $P=0.000$ ) was found between nature of drop out and terrorists has destroyed school in your area. It could be inferred from these findings that, due to terrorism and violence in the study area all the infrastructure of schools specifically

female were targeted which had devastating impact on girl's education after normalcy. A report published by FATA Research Centre on The Impact of Militancy on Education in FATA stated that In Bajuar Agency, 57 fully damaged institutions include 35 primary boys' schools, 6 high schools for boys, 3 middle schools for boys, 10 primary schools for girls, 1 high schools for girls, 2 middle schools for girls, and 1 higher secondary school for girls. 38 partially damaged institutions include 2 colleges for boys, 1 boys' hostel, 10 primary schools for boys, 6 high schools for boys, 5 middle schools for boys, 11 primary schools for girls, 2 high schools for girls, and 1 middle school for girls.

<b>Table 5</b>					
<b>ASSOCIATION BETWEEN MILITANCY AND NATURE OF DROPOUT</b>					
<b>Militancy</b>	<b>Nature of Drop Out</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>Chi-square P=Value</b>
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>		
<b>Terrorists have destroyed school in your area</b>					
Yes	94(55.6%)	28(16.6%)	3(1.8%)	126(74.0%)	X <sup>2</sup> =35.538 P=0.000
No	25(14.8%)	8(4.7%)	4(2.4%)	37(21.9%)	
Don't know	1(0.6%)	2(1.5%)	4(2.4%)	7(4.1%)	
<b>Schools in your area were closed due to security issues.</b>					
Yes	74(43.8%)	22(13.0%)	4(2.4%)	100(59.2%)	X <sup>2</sup> =21.355 P=0.000
No	45(26.6%)	14(8.3%)	4(2.4%)	63(37.3%)	
Don't know	1(0.6%)	2(1.2%)	3(1.8%)	6(3.6%)	
<b>Militancy is formidable barrier to female education in your area.</b>					
Yes	90(53.3%)	16(9.5%)	4(2.4%)	110(65.1%)	X <sup>2</sup> =26.651 P=0.000
No	25(14.8%)	11(6.5%)	4(2.4%)	40(23.7%)	
Don't know	5(3.0%)	11(6.5%)	3(1.8%)	19(11.2%)	
<b>Militants have threatened girl schools in your area.</b>					
Yes	88(52.1%)	21(12.4%)	1(0.6%)	110(65.1%)	X <sup>2</sup> =22.975 P=0.000
No	23(13.6%)	10(5.9%)	8(4.7%)	41(24.3%)	
Don't know	9(5.3%)	7(4.1%)	2(2.1%)	18(10.7%)	
<b>Physical access to schools is risky in your area.</b>					
Yes	68(40.2%)	18(10.7%)	4(2.4%)	90(53.3%)	X <sup>2</sup> =18.161 P=0.001
No	48(28.4%)	14(8.3%)	3(1.8%)	65(38.5%)	
Don't know	4(2.4%)	6(3.6%)	4(2.4%)	14(8.3%)	
<b>You were displaced due to militancy.</b>					
Yes	86(50.9%)	21(12.4%)	2(1.2%)	109(64.5%)	X <sup>2</sup> =38.041 P=0.000
No	33(19.5%)	15(8.9%)	5(3.0%)	53(31.4%)	
Don't know	1(0.6%)	2(2.1%)	4(2.4%)	7(4.1%)	
<b>Academic session of children suffered due to militancy.</b>					
Yes	89(52.7%)	22(13.0%)	2(1.2%)	113(66.9%)	X <sup>2</sup> =22.370 P=0.000
No	26(15.4%)	12(7.1%)	5(3.0%)	43(25.4%)	
Don't know	5(3.0%)	4(2.4%)	4(2.4%)	13(7.7%)	
<b>Was education resumed after militancy?</b>					
Yes	84(49.7%)	22(13.0%)	4(2.4%)	110(65.1%)	X <sup>2</sup> =15.450 P=0.004
No	30(17.8%)	9(5.3%)	3(1.8%)	42(24.9%)	
Don't know	6(3.6%)	7(4.1%)	4(2.4%)	17(10.1%)	

Source: Author (2021)

Subsequently, a highly significant ( $P=0.000$ ) relationship was found while analyzing the association between the statement, stating that School in your area were closed due to security issues and nature of drop out. According to Naqvi et al. (2012) explored terrorists in FATA sabotage education system of the whole region to establish its own agenda. Many schools were demolished by militants however some schools were closed due to security issues. Likewise, a highly significant association ( $P=0.000$ ) was found while analyzing the relationships between nature of drop out and Militancy is formidable barrier to female education in your area. The study was supported by the work highlighted that terrorists has denied millions of kids of their right to an education, which is a basic human right. Militancy is a formidable barrier to education. The literacy rate in FATA is already low due to the region's characteristic population and topography, and militants' terrorist actions are exacerbating the problem.

The study further highlighted that, a highly significant association ( $p=0.000$ ) was found between Militants have threatened girl schools in your area and nature of drop out. According to Naqvi et al. (2012) in FATA Militants have destroyed or threatened many boys' and girls' schools. Female pupils have ceased attending classes in numerous tribal districts. Under the leadership of Mullah Fazlullah the group resurfaced in 2005, although with a more terrorists focused, bolstered by militants escaping drone assaults in FATA. A significant ( $P=0.001$ ) association was found while analyzing the relationships between nature of drop out and physical access to schools is risky in your area. It could be deduced from these findings that access to schools for girls is threatening day by day due to uncontrolled violence and terrorism lead towards girls drop out in the study area. Moreover, the study exhibited the presence of a highly significant association ( $p=0.000$ ) was found between you were displaced due to militancy and nature of drop out. A report published by Asian Development Bank and World Bank' Reported that infrastructure were cradle due to the persistence nature of militancy in tribal areas impede the girls education at macro and micro level. Lastly, the table 5 further revealed the presence of highly significant ( $p=0.000$ ) association between nature of drop out and academic session of children suffered due to militancy. Keeping in view the above results it could be inferred that the academic calendar were dysfunctional due to the application of militancy in Pakistan in general while in the study area particularly which further worsen the girls education at macro and micro level.

## CONCLUSION

The present study was conducted in a cross sectional manner to assess the nature and extent of drop out among female in district Bajaur (formally known as Bajuar agency). Thus the study revealed that the prevalence of militancy is the root cause of higher dropped out of female students as militants destroyed schools in the area. Likewise, due to security issues schools were closed, militants have threatened girls' school, local residents were displaced, and the academic sessions of the children were suffered due to militancy had a severe impacts on the study area. Thus, to control the worse situations of students' dropouts from educational institutes relevant stakeholders should take some remedial measure, such as;

1. Government should ensure provision of "*Free, equitable, inclusive & Compulsory schooling*" to all students especially girls as per the constitution of the country (Article A-37). Government should arrange provision of all desired education supplies to students inside the school.

2. Government should consider building new schools in proximity of areas/villages so that girl's students shouldn't travel immense distances to go to schools. Priority should be given to rehabilitation of damaged institutions due to militancy.
3. Establishment of schools with availability of all basic facilities such as adequate teaching staff, boundary wall, furniture, electricity, drinking water and computer/science lab.
4. Community awareness should be encouraged to develop the interest of parent and students towards study and avoid school dropout. Political Representatives, Religious Leaders, Local Influential, Local District Administration, Volunteers, Civil Society Organizations & Print, Electronic and social media should be utilized to create awareness among the masses towards girl's education.
5. The school should provide favorable environment for students and makes school the place of interest for the students. Environment of school would be interesting, and students feel it as a place of learning as well as relaxation and liberation.

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