

Hybrid Warfare in Balochistan: Examining the Causes of Unrest



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(2021)

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of MS Peace and Conflict Studies

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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICIENT,
THE MOST MERCIFUL

*'By the morning light, and the night when it is still. Your Allah Has not Forsaken Thee, nor is
He Displeased. And verily what is to come will be better than what has gone by.'*

(Surah Al-Duha: 93)

Al Quran

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Acknowledgments

Foremost, I am thankful to Allah Almighty who provided me with the ability to complete this thesis. Secondly, I am grateful to my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Tughral Yamin who helped me in every step of this research. This research would never have been possible without his assistance, kindness, valuable time, and mentorship. He was very accommodating and kind.

I am also duly indebted to all the professors at CIPS especially Dr. Imdad and Dr. Bakare for motivating us to do better ourselves each day.

I also want to thank my amazing parents (Muhammad Shaukat Khan and Nasima Shaukat Khan) who helped me to excel in life and to stay positive. Lastly, I am grateful to the respondents and all the people who helped me in getting the data for this study whose invaluable time and input helped shape my thesis into a reliable body of work.

Abstract

This research is an introspection of the problems/vulnerabilities of Balochistan within the context of Pakistan's security. This has been executed by collecting data from the Baloch students and Baloch people in general. The 'relative perceived deprivation' (RPD) of the people of Balochistan has been examined by conducting 150 questionnaires from the Baloch population. This empirical data (both primary and secondary) has helped understand how an environment has been created for hybrid warfare to exploit the vulnerabilities of Balochistan. This has been done by fanning unrest among a disaffected segment of the population, supporting an insurgency among those willing to take up arms, and creating a wedge between the people and the government through psychological operations.

The research has established a connection between the unrest in Balochistan and how it has been used to wage hybrid warfare in this geo-strategically important and resource-rich but poor province. The research concludes that problems existing in Balochistan have been exploited by the foreign hostile agencies to disrupt peace in Balochistan, sabotage China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and destabilise Pakistan.

Keywords: Hybrid Warfare, CPEC, Foreign Agencies, Insurgency, Psychological Operations

List of Acronyms used in the Text**BLA: Balochistan Liberation Army****BRA: Baloch Republican Army****BSNs: Baloch Sub-nationalists****CPEC: China Pakistan Economic Corridor****EONP: Elements of National Power****HIAs: Hostile Intelligence Agencies****LEAs: Law Enforcement Agencies****NACTA: National Counter Terrorism Authority**

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CHAPTER NO: INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Overview

Balochistan is Pakistan's soft underbelly, and its vulnerability has been exploited by several foreign-funded insurgencies (Javaid, 2010). These insurgencies have found fertile ground in Balochistan because of a sense of perceived relative deprivation (PRD) that finds traction among the people of this resource rich, sparsely populated and very poor province of the country.

Its proximity to the Persian Gulf makes it an ideal target for external machinations (Iqbal, 1992) The opening of Gwadar, the strategic deep-water harbor, as the port of entry for the CPEC has increased the significance of Balochistan (Zaman, 2017). Hostile agencies opposed to the CPEC projects have enhanced clandestine/covert operations to sabotage it to harm the prospects of Pakistan making a much-needed economic recovery (Zaman, 2017).

Since the initiation of the CPEC, Balochistan has become an epicenter of great world power rivalry. To execute their strategic interests, the regional and foreign players are involved in either fanning unrest in Balochistan or exploiting the unrest in Balochistan to make it a perfect arena to wage hybrid warfare. The Indian government has not hidden the fact that it is actively involved in supporting the insurgency in Balochistan. On August 15, 2015, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech boasted from the ramparts of the Red Fort, that the people of Balochistan, Gilgit, and 'Pakistan's Occupied Kashmir' were grateful to him for what he had done for them (Ahmed & Najish, 2017). Modi's ill-advised remarks on Balochistan may have been a ploy to deflect the attention of the Indian public from the deteriorating situation in Kashmir but it does not mask his evil intent about Balochistan. It has also been argued that Balochistan is not Bangladesh, and it would not be that easy for India in this part of Pakistan to repeat what it did in 1971 (Swain, 2016) The arrest of Kulbhushan Jhadav – has vindicated Pakistan's claim on foreign involvement in enabling, inciting, and funding the insurgency in Balochistan (Zaman, 2017). To further substantiate Pakistan's claims on Indian support of terrorism within Pakistan

including Balochistan, a complete dossier was presented to the UN Secretary General in November 2020 (Akhtar, 2021). It is surmised that Indian illicit activities in Balochistan are meant to sabotage CPEC (Khetran, 2017).

Pakistan has many enemies. One reason for this animosity is Pakistan's nuclear deterrence. Terrorism is used to destabilize Pakistan and an intense smear campaign is incessantly carried out to make Pakistan look like an irresponsible nuclear state (Cohen, 2011). This hybrid warfare threat matrix is a combination of traditional and non-traditional subversive war tactics. Terrorism just forms a part of this strategy (Simons, 2018). Unless a country understands all its dimensions, it can lead to disastrous results (Murray & Mansoor, 2012). Hybrid warfare essentially includes the collection of tactical information, deliberately spreading propaganda and disinformation to demoralize or manipulate the adversary (Damjanovic, 2017).

Pakistan has faced threats to its survival since its independence. Even though political statements and disingenuous political games are well recorded in history books but what remains smothered in is the constant attempt to undo Pakistan which is a well-managed 'Hybrid War' (Yamin, 2019). This threat is exacerbated because of internal problems such as long-standing sectarian conflicts and squabbles among political parties (Khurshid & Kiran, 2012). A new 'Great Game' is unfolding in Balochistan because of its minerals, long coast, and natural resources of Balochistan (Akbar, 2011). In today's security environment, hybrid warfare waged against Pakistan is at a new high. There has been increasing propaganda regarding alleged Balochistan's human rights abuses to incite feelings against the state (Baloch & Mustafa, 2021). The foreign interference in Balochistan has impacted adversely on the stability of the province. RAW is trying its best to subvert the masses by doling millions to the sub-nationalists to keep the seeds of separation fresh. In this case, missing persons' phenomena and kill and dump policy are used to malign the state institutions of Pakistan. (Baloch & Mustafa, 2021).

Many foreign powers are reportedly extending support to Baloch militants to sabotage the Gwadar - Quetta route (Syed, 2020). Chinese working on different projects in the province like Gwadar and Saindak are already under impending threats from the sub-nationalists and militants (Syed, 2020).

The growing Baloch nationalist movement and the rise of the Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) are obvious demonstrations of hybrid war aimed at dividing the population of Pakistan (Korybko, 2020). Moreover, the reiteration by the military leadership of Pakistan that a “24/7 hybrid war has been waged” it, shows that the leadership is aware of this menace (COAS, 2020).

Assumption

The problems in Balochistan have been exploited by foreign agencies to wage hybrid warfare to cause turmoil and instability in Balochistan and by extension to destabilise Pakistan.

Research Questions

1. What are the grievances of the people of Balochistan against the state and their understanding of hybrid warfare?
2. What are the tactics used by the militants to create insurgency in the province?
3. Which militant groups are active in Balochistan and what are their areas of influence?
4. Have the attacks shifted to the Southern side of Balochistan and closer to CPEC?
5. Is social media being used as a tool of hybrid warfare against the law enforcement agencies in Balochistan?
6. What are the interests of foreign powers in Balochistan?

Objectives

This study aims to:

- Unveil the prevalent fault-lines and existing internal and external threats in Balochistan
- Find out the troubled districts of Balochistan and why they are more prone to unrest
- Find out if the attacks have shifted closer to CPEC
- Analyze the militant organizations active in Balochistan and their area of influence

- Carry out an analysis of Hybrid warfare in the context of Balochistan

Significance

It is quite well known among the policymaking circles that the unrest in Balochistan needs a political solution. There is also cognizance of the fact that there is involvement of foreign elements by using covert hybrid warfare to obstruct CPEC. Unfortunately, these realizations about the threat to national security by destabilising Balochistan has not been given due importance in academic writings and research. Therefore, the goal of this research is to cover this gap in literature.

The literature available in terms of hybrid warfare is also limited and its full scope has not been examined in its entirety. To a very large extent, the modern concept of hybrid warfare aims to target the civilians and erode the national morale and will to fight (Yamin, 2019).

Hybrid warfare effectively mobilizes all resources (military, diplomatic, financial etc.) defeat a country both at the external as well as the internal front. If this kind of warfare continues, it can cause the breakdown of the country's political and social structure, allowing for more insidious forces to dominate. From a strategic perspective, it is important to look at how hybrid warfare is harming the national security.

Scope:

Since the initiation of the CPEC, Balochistan has become an epicenter of great world power rivalry. To execute their strategic interests, the regional and foreign players are involved in either fanning unrest in Balochistan or exploiting the unrest in Balochistan to make it a perfect arena to wage hybrid warfare. Therefore, this research aims to highlight the internal fault-lines of Balochistan and how they are exploited by foreign powers to wage hybrid warfare for their vested interests. So, this study explores the situation of hybrid warfare from the lens of the population of Balochistan. This study has also unveiled the contributing factors of hybrid warfare and what are the main issues faced by the Baloch people. The research aimed to select a sample of 150 individuals that responded against set of questions probing the situation in Balochistan, what factors led to the threat prone

environment and how the situation could be resolved. The research has depicted that Balochistan is undergoing fifth insurgency and the insurgency has shifted towards the southern side of Balochistan – closer to CPEC. Moreover, there are genuine grievances of the population that state needs to address. The possible solutions suggested by the locals include negotiation for peace, governmental efforts for developmental projects and law enforcement in the area. This research has also paved the way for the state officials to work on the solutions to steer the path of harmony in Balochistan. Now for further assessment the research is open for clarification and validation of the results by replicating the research. Necessary steps should be taken to eradicate the issues from Balochistan.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

History and Overview

The history of Baloch identity is tricky and indistinct (Ahmad, 1992). Scholars like Rawlinson, Dames, Pottenger, and Bellew link the identity of the Baloch with various ethnic groups of the Iranian origin. There is also a view that they may be of Arab-Semitic or may have a 'Chaldean' origin of the Baloch (Rawlinson, 1873). While another historian (Bellew, 1874) connects their identity with the Rajputs. Whereas the hypothesis of the Arab beginning of the Baloch is dismissed by Pottenger, who contends that they have Turkmen roots (Pottenger, 1972). Historians like Dannes believe that they are from the Aryan and the Iranian side (Dames, 1904). He believes that the individuals who communicate in the Balochi language are Baloch while those who live near Kalat and communicate in the Brahui language, are of an Indian beginning. Furthermore, the 'Brahui' is an alternate race (etymologically) to the remainder of the Baloch and attests that "the start of Brahui race is a riddle and puzzle of history," (Baluch M.S.K, 1958).

Baloch historians like Dashti, Naseer, Breseeg, and Baluch dismiss such racial hypotheses as faulty and contend that the British government purposefully partitioned the Baloch individuals based on dialects to propel provincial interests to manage them. The Brahui see themselves as a vital part of Baloch, sharing a typical culture, religion, chronicled encounters, and binding together images with them. Moreover, there is a powerful urge among the Brahuies to underline on a typical beginning with them and that is politically quite essential (Breseeg, 2004).

Indeed, we can conclude that the composition of Balochistan and the Baloch started in the nineteenth century with British Colonialism, particularly with their entrance to Balochistan. Indeed, the provincial period's history specialists following the exemplary Sandemanization — divide and rule strategy — explored the beginning of Brahui tribes and

depicted them as being ethnically not quite the same as the Balochi talking tribes. Unquestionably such an idea was not founded on dependable verifiable records and etymological and genealogical information, rather it was pointed to a greater amount of designing split and dismissal inside Baloch tribes to take breaks inside the Kalat Confederacy. This contention is fairly verified by Gerhesvitch (1962a, 1962b) where he terms the Brahui to the Bradazhui tribe.

Therefore, there is a lot of conflicting views of different historians and scholars on the Baloch identity and their origin apart from the scarcity of writing on the Baloch identity and their origin. Hence, four hypotheses can be deduced from the prevalent theories. First, they are Arabs, secondly that they are Aryans, thirdly that they are the natives of Balochistan, and fourth that the Baloch as a country is composed of various ethnic and racial groups/tribes throughout a significant time.

GEOSTRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF BALOCHISTAN

Demography

Geographically, Balochistan which is largest province of Pakistan (area wise) has 1152 kilometers of border with Afghanistan in the North, 832 kilometers long border with Iran in the West and 752 kilometers coastline in the South. The British had divided the Balochistan territories into following four political divisions (Khan, 2017).

The British Balochistan: This consisted of Pishin, Chaman, Shera Rud, Dukki and Shahrig.

The Leased Areas: This included Quetta, Bolan Pass, Nushki, Nasirabad, and a corridor that connected the British Balochistan with other territories.

The State Territories: This included Kalat, Lasbela, Kharan and Makran.

The Tribal Areas: This included Zhob, Kohlu, Marri / Bugti areas, Chagai and Sanjrani territories.

Ethnic Division

Majority of the Baloch live in Pakistan. Some of them live in other countries such as Iran, Afghanistan, and Syria. A significant number are found in the Iranian province of Sistan-o-Balochistan. A small minority lives in southern Afghanistan. Some historians claim that the Baloch came from Halb (Aleppo) in Syria (Pavla, K., & Petr, 2012).

Balochistan is predominantly a tribal society. The societal configuration is influenced by tribal peculiarities. Many big and small communities with ethnic diversities live and influence the socio-political psyche and internal dynamics of the province. The major communities of Balochistan are Baloch, Pakhtuns and the Brahvis. The Brahvis (Brohis) are smaller in number. They are ethnically from a different stock and speak a distinct language of their own. They are also considered to be the oldest inhabitants of Balochistan.

The Baloch constitute about 28 percent of the population of Balochistan and are concentrated in the Eastern areas (Kohlu, Dera Bugti, Kachhi, Sibi, Nasir Abad, Jhal Magsi, Jaffar Abad) and Southwestern parts (Makran division, Gwadar, Turbat, Panjgur, Kharan, Chagai and Washuk area) of the province. Different tribes of Balochs are Marris, Bugtis, Rakhshanis, Nausherwanis, Rinds, Magsis and Jamalis (Zofia, 2014).

Pakhtuns make up forty percent (40%) of the population and reside in approximately one fifth of Balochistan in the North and the Northeastern parts of the province i.e., Zhob, Qila Saifullah, Qila Abdullah, Pishin, Ziarat, Chaman, Loralai and Musa Khel Bazar. Different tribes of Pakhtuns are Kakars, Sheranis, Achackzais, Tareens, Lunis, Pannis, Ghilzais, Dumars, Kasis or Kansis, Zarkuns, Jaffars and Zamarais (Spooner, 2006). Brahvis make up twenty five percent of the population (Ladawalla, 2011). and are concentrated in Western and the Central parts of the province. The areas they cover are Kalat, Awaran, Lasbella, Khuzdar, and Mastung. The significant subtribes of Brahvis are Raisani, Muhammad Hasnis of Chagai, Muhammad Hasnis of Kharan, Muhammad Hasnis of Jhalawan, Mengals and Zehris and Bizenjos (Dashti, 2012). Remaining seven percent of the population constitute of mostly Hazaras and other settlers. Hazaras are Shias by sect and have migrated from Afghanistan They have also not been viewed positively from the side of Baloch, however, their minority position never translated into a big confrontation. Besides, the sectarian aspect against Hazaras by Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) has changed the ethnic

dynamics The settlers (Punjabis and immigrants from India) live in cities and are service providers. Most of them are doctors, engineers, lawyers, and teachers by profession. Unfortunately, some Baloch consider them as outsiders and are often subject to violent attacks and killings (Jahani, C., Korn, A., & Titus, 2008).

THREAT MATRIX OF BALOCHISTAN

History of Insurgencies:

There have been five insurgencies in Balochistan since independence (Bibi, 2020). The first one was started by Prince Karim in 1948 to maintain independent status of Kalat State. It lasted for 3 months only (Bibi, 2020). The second insurgency was instigated by initiation of ‘One Unit’ in Jan 1955, which led to rampant unrest which was capitalized on by the Khan of Kalat (Majeed, et.al, 2020). The arrest of the tribal Chieftains on charges of demanding dissolution of ‘One Unit’ was the main cause of third insurgency. General amnesty for Baloch leaders / Ferraris and reinstatement of Chieftains settled the insurgency temporarily (Majeed, et.al, 2020). The fourth insurgency was started after the removal of NAP Government, for its stance against settlers in government services and collusion in affecting Pakistan - Iran ties with patronage of Iraq/ USSR (Majeed, et.al, 2020). The current insurgency is going on till date which started after the killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti (Bibi, 2020).

Ethnic Fault-lines

Since the formation of the province in 1970, Pashtun patriots have lamented that they are under-addressed. Their demands are consolidation of their areas with Khyber Pukhtukhwa (KP) or set up of a different province by the name of ‘Southern Pashtunkhwa’. Moreover, they want a uniform share in the appropriation of assets in the province (Roberts, 2009). They affirm that their populace is equivalent with that of Baloch in the province, yet their portrayal is insignificant. The Afghan refugees statistically expanded the Pashtun populace proportion that has upset the fragile ethnic equilibrium in the province (Grare,

2011). A huge number of Afghan refugees are residing in the province and the Baloch sub-nationalists claim that refugees' increase is a connivance against the Baloch to change the demography of Baloch by turning them into a minority (Singh, 2019). On the other hand, Pashtun nationalists posit that the refugees are expanding in their regions (Kundi, 2005). Numerous subject experts communicated worries that the consensus of 2016 is probably going to demolish the connection between the two ethnic groups and a solitary undesirable occasion can prompt a contention, which the already erratic province can't bear (Borthakur, 2017). Moreover, the Baloch are in huge parts dwelling in 22 locale/districts and the majority of the normal assets and minerals are found in those regions. For instance, gas is found in Dera Bugti District, oil in Kohlu, gold and copper in Chagai and port Gwadar, are found distinctly in Baloch regions (Bibi, 2020). While, the Pashtun, on their part don't have a lot of regular assets. Since the creation of the province in 1970, Pashtun nationalists have claimed to be under-represented (Muzaffar, M., Khan, I., & Yaseen, Z, 2021). Their demands include merger of their areas in KP or establish a separate province by the name of Southern Pashtunkhwa and equal share in the distribution of resources in Balochistan (Muzaffar, M., Khan, I., & Yaseen, Z, 2021). They assert that their population is equal with that of Baloch in the province, but their representation is far below in all the sectors. They support this argument by the fact that there has never been a single full-fledged Pashtun Chief Minister in the province (Muzaffar, M., Khan, I., & Yaseen, Z, 2021). Afghan refugees numerically increased the Pashtun population ratio that has disturbed the delicate ethnic balance in the province. The Baloch are in large parts residing in twenty-two districts of Balochistan and most of the natural resources and minerals are found in those districts (For example gas is found in Dera Bugti District), petroleum is in Kohlu, gold and copper is in Chagai and Gwadar port, are located only in Baloch areas. Whereas, the Pashtun, on their part, do not have much natural resources (Mulk, J. U., Ali, B., & Ullah, 2020).

CPEC and its Security Implications

Many foreign powers are reportedly extending support to Baloch militants to sabotage the Gwadar - Quetta route (Syed, 2020). Chinese working on different projects in the province like Gwadar and Saindak are already under impending threats from the sub-nationalists and militants (Syed, 2020). The sub-nationalists claim that the Project is Punjab Centric and depriving other Stakeholders from Reaping the Benefit. Moreover, there is

“Reputational Pre-emption like Kalabagh Dam”; the rumour is spread that CPEC coupled with Gwadar Port will create enormous economic activities, will draw job seekers from every nook and corner of Pakistan, will change provincial demography thereby turning local population into minority (Syed, 2020).

Threat of Jihadi Elements: Muslim Bagh, Killa Saifullah and Zhob areas have footprints of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and are not considered safe / secure for Chinese / other foreigners (Siddiqui, 2019). In Pakistan, separatist militants as well as jihadis are likely to target Chinese workers, knowing that the kidnapping or killing of Chinese nationals may result in Beijing pulling out of projects in Pakistan (Siddiqui, 2019). Moreover, China indicated distress over the possible collaboration of some separatist groups in Xinjiang with militants in Pakistan and intimated to reinforce the security connections. TTP has taken responsibility regarding past attacks on some Chinese nationals, and therefore, Chinese pundits have raised worries that development laborers could be seized and delivered (Abid & Ashfaq, 2015).

Sub-Nationalist Threat. The Chinese authorities have alerted Pakistan regarding the threat of the Baloch insurgents who are trying to disrupt the CPEC project and the 3,000km route across Pakistan (Syed, 2020). It has been propagated by Baloch sub-nationalist leaders that CPEC will turn local Baloch into minorities due to flux of non-Baloch into Balochistan (Javaid, 2016). Moreover, sub-nationalists are already involved in sabotage activities in Dera Bugti and Southern Balochistan (Iqbal, 2011). Hence, they remain a potent danger to the Pakistani and the Chinese working on the project as well as sabotage activities on the CPEC routes (Abid & Ashfaq, 2015). Numerous development organizations are working in Quetta and Gwadar to associate the port city with different areas of Pakistan, but these organizations are not secure in Balochistan due to the activities of Baloch militant organisations (BLA, BRA, UBA etc.) (Ashraf, et.al 2017). Sub-nationalist political powers like Paktoonkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) may also raise the issue that Pashtun of the area should be given a due financial benefit in the proposed trade corridor (Ashraf, et.al, 2017).

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In researching this topic, two subjects were explored i.e., the concept of hybrid warfare and why it has found fertile ground in Balochistan. Hybrid warfare is not a new concept. There are certain ancient treatises that give us an indication of what hybrid warfare was in the past. According to Sun Tzu the most effective approach to fight an adversary is to subjugate him without any combat (Sun Tzu, 500 B.C.E.) That is how a country or a nation can save its conventional warfighting assets by using unconventional war means by subverting and undermining the adversary's will to fight.

In the current security environment, the concept of hybrid warfare has become the regular way to defeat the enemy. Understanding hybrid warfare and hybrid threats is an ever-growing topic of discussion nationally and internationally however, there is a limited understanding of how to counter the threats emanating from this kind of warfare. Threats from hybrid warfare are coordinated use of all forms of national power against the adversary's vulnerabilities (Weissman, et al., 2021).

The term Hybrid Warfare was coined by William J. Nemeth in 2002 within the context of the Chechen insurgency against Russia. According to Hoffman, Hybrid Warfare is a mixture of state dispute's fatality with the prolonged and radical passion of unconventional war (Hoffman, 2007). Hybrid warfare has always been there but in scholarly works, it has made some sort of a comeback. It explains, how it threatens the fabric of nations (Murray & Peter, 2012). Hybrid warfare blends governmental domination and warfare with forms of warring that do not include traditional arms. Brown believes that this type of warfare will become prominent, the further we move into the 21st century because of existing and developing international capacities and technologies (Brown, 2011).

The primary definition of hybrid warfare involves a combination of different military strategies such as cyber warfare and conventional tactics. Its goal is to destabilize enemy

lines without directly intervening (Apetroe, 2016). The tailored use of different instruments of national power against the vulnerabilities/internal fault-lines of the adversary to attain maximum effects (Cullen & Kjennerud, 2017). This can be waged by both state and by employing non-state actors and is executed in such a manner that it remains below the threshold of a conventional attack and relies heavily on ambiguity and abstruseness to avoid confrontation. (Cullen & Kjennerud, 2017).

There are seven parameters of hybrid warfare: (1) diplomatic, (2) economic, (3) cyber (technological), (4) information and influence operations, (5) unconventional methods, (6) civil (non-military), and (7) military (Cullen & Kjennerud, 2017). The dimensions found in the Hybrid CoE and (IISS, 2015) definitions are present in the NATO and EU thinking on Hybrid warfare, as well as in the frameworks of MCDC and the Swedish Strategic Doctrine. Even though the informational domain is not exactly part of the five elements of national power in the MCDC framework (Cullen & Kjennerud, 2017) and not even in the European Centre of Excellence (CoE, 2017) but this definition of hybrid warfare and used by various scholars.

The Hybrid CoE model forms the solid foundation in the Western security literature. The hybrid warfare threats model is initiated by the Hybrid CoE and IISS (Weissman, 2019). It contains the following: The synchronized use of all elements of National Power to carefully target the target country's vulnerabilities by using different means starting from the military, economic, political, diplomatic, civil, and cyber domain (Weissman, 2019). Moreover, these measures are cleverly used to exploit the vulnerabilities, and finally, the goal is to affect the level of decision-making of the hybrid warfare's target country to change the aims and goals in its favor by hindering the target (Weissman, 2019).

NATO defines this type of warfare as combining clandestine and conventional military strategies, paramilitary groups, and non-combatant actions in a cohesive way (Maronkova, 2021). The enemy uses kinetic and non-kinetic methods (subversion and propaganda) to influence policymakers (Maronkova, 2021). The enemy mostly exercises covert actions to evade being associated with the actions to avoid retribution. Moreover, the phenomenon is now demonstrated by efforts at changing the government, soft coups, funding anti-state militia, funding separatist groups, and propaganda in the digital media, and proxy wars (Korybko, 2015). Korybko states that there is no denial of the fact that the insurgency in

Hongkong against China is funded by the Western powers for their vested interests. In hybrid warfare, the ambiguity and chaos in the targeted country is the success of the hybrid warfare actor since the country goes into the defensive posture (Korybko, 2015).

Russia effectively employs the tactics of hybrid warfare to tackle adversaries who they cannot counter militarily and to not exceed the threshold of the ‘use of force’ as detailed in the UN Charter (Qureshi, 2020). NATO has its own model of hybrid warfare.

Many scholars are of the view that the concept of hybrid warfare is not something new and that it had always existed. They debate that propaganda and deception has practiced in ancient times as well (Clarke & Knake, 2019). They believe that the use of monetary tools and proxy warfare like the use of little green men isn’t something new. However, what we can consider a new addition is the introduction of cyber warfare tools and social media warfare which has changed the nature of warfare altogether. To use or plant an article during the Cold War era was difficult and expensive however, today with the use of bots, even trending on social media isn’t difficult (Clarke & Knake, 2019).

The Chinese feel that hybrid warfare can be applied in different areas such as trade wars, propaganda, information warfare, and advancement of the military in technology. Chinese scholars also consider the example of Stuxnet – Israeli and US cyber-attacks on Iran’s uranium enrichment centrifuges – as a part of hybrid warfare (An Qin, 2015).

The Chinese are also countering the US technologies through highly advanced AI technologies for their weapon systems. (Lin, 2012). According to Monaghan, hybrid warfare entails several other components such as state-mandated propaganda and disinformation, even the quelling of civil disobedience (Monaghan, 2016). This can also be referred to as hybrid warfare. (Mosquera & Sascha, 2016). According to Erol & Safak, hybrid warfare became popular after NATO was established, particularly during the conflict involving Ukraine and Russia. Russia’s attempt to annex Crimea is typically explained within the context of hybrid warfare (Erol & Safak, 2015).

Hybrid warfare usually involves a weaker power recognizing that hybrid warfare can be employed to gain an advantage. Angstrom defines this as seeking an ‘asymmetry’ which means undercutting the opponent to the extent that an advantage can be created (Angstrom, 2016). The Taliban is famous for employing hybrid warfare to establish military asymmetry.

Batyuk suggests some of this asymmetry can be created through internal factors and forces, such as what happened in Crimea, or through more overt combat, such as the terrorist organizations, such as ISIL (Batyuk, 2017).

Hybrid warfare includes the funding of separatist movements and insurgency in the adversary country to cause the country to weaken politically, religiously, and ethnically. Moreover, the proliferation of ammunition and armor to the separatist elements and funding them to ignite separatist elements in the country to weaken its social fabric (Bratko, Zaharchuk, & Zolka, 2021).

Non-state actors (NSAs), insurgent groups, sub-nationalists are employed in hybrid warfare to target the vulnerabilities of the state by the aggressor who is waging hybrid warfare. This strategy was used by the US in Syria to change Assad's regime (Malas & Solomon, 2011).

The instruments used to wage hybrid warfare include employing propaganda, deliberate leaks, local media as well international media, the usage of deception in news, deliberate leaks, funding political parties and media houses (Treverton, 2018). The use of propaganda, international as well local media, social networking media, strategic leaks, use of political parties, religions, funding non-state actors, funding protests against the government or voicing human rights violations, and using asymmetric tactics to prey on the vulnerabilities or fault-lines of the targeted state to gain strategic objectives to destabilize the country are the tools to wage a hybrid war (Treverton, 2018).

Moreover, it can also include traditional power capabilities like (armed forces and firepower) along with unconventional capabilities like insurgency, employing NSAs, inducing terrorism, inciting unlawful activities like the illegal movement of goods inside or outside the country, and monetary stuff like sanctions, strangulating the economy by putting sanctions on the country or loans, sanctions, and demolishing economy, using propaganda and deception and social media to influence the cognitions of the population (Treverton, 2018).

The main goals of hybrid warfare are to elude head-on confrontation, weaken the adversary/ targeted country, and hamper its decision-making and policy-making. To carry out this, all tools are used to create instability and obscurity to avoid any sort of retribution and

confrontation. These attempts are used in sync to either substitute a government or to control or to pressurize into a state of affairs that are advantageous to the invader/aggressor.

The significant aspect of the employment of Hybrid Warfare is the use of information and propaganda to change the cognitions of the population in a way that the public develops a trust deficit against its government and the social fabric of the country starts to weaken (Hammes, 2006, p.278).

There are additional components of hybrid warfare, which include factional and sectarian, and ethnic squabbling, and migrant invasions. Middle Eastern wars can frequently be referred to as hybrid warfare because of additional components like ideological and religious insurgency, in-fighting among factions, organized networks of crime as well as tribal conflict. State-building is often hindered because of the warlords that run certain areas, leaving them unstable (Schroefl & Stuart, 2014). This type of warfare poses a threat to the world because it is new and relatively unfamiliar to most governments (Bachmann and Gunneriusson, 2015).

Since Pakistan has widespread ethnic, identity, and geographical conflicts present, external forces like India and the US are manipulating the situation in their favor by waging hybrid warfare. Most of the sub-nationalist groups are being targeted to exhibit this strategy (Korybko, 2017). The most distressing feature of hybrid war is the complexity of mounting an effective response (Yamin, 2019).

Pakistan is confronted by a wide array of multi-dimensional threats and hostile forces are trying their best to isolate it internationally. Terms like 'irresponsible state' and 'sponsor of state terrorism' are frequently used to malign it. Money and agents provocateurs are used to weaken the national determination (Yamin, 2019).

The threat to destabilize Pakistan is multi-dimensional. (Iqbal, 2018). The ethnic fault line is often exploited to divide Pakistan internally. Pakistan's enemies also want to weaken the nation economically, through instruments such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). (Iqbal, 2018).

The internal threats pose a greater challenge than the external threats. These internal threats are developed on the basis of historical, socio-economic, religious, ethnic, and geographic reasons. (Korybko, 2017).

The US effectively wants to target Pakistan because the latter still participates in economic relations through CPEC, and the US wants to control the Asia-Pacific region (Korybko, 2017).

A new 'Great Game' is unfolding in Balochistan because of its long coast, and vast natural resources (Akbar, 2011). There is a historic perspective. The Baloch have always distrusted the Centre for not giving them their genuine rights. This feeling was aggravated by the killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti during Musharaf's regime (Akbar, 2011).

Wirsing states that the resentment of the Baloch people is pivoted upon the notion that the government and state are establishing the CPEC and Gwadar port without the consent of the Baloch people and without considering its benefits for the Baloch (Wirsing, 2008). There is a near consensus among Baloch separatists against China and CPEC. Most of them believe that the Gwadar port project is further undermining the Baloch people's right to political and fiscal autonomy, which has been at the heart of the Baloch nationalist-political and insurgent movements (Recknagel & Siddique, 2013). Former Khan of Kalat, living in exile, Amir Ahmed Suleman Daud asserts CPEC is a renewed effort by the federal government to dominate Balochistan (Recknagel & Siddique, 2013).

The employment of hybrid means of warfare became most prominent after the September 11, 2001, attacks on US mainland. The US used hybrid warfare to defeat both non-state actors as well as state actors, who they considered hostile. Pakistan has been experiencing acts of terrorism (a favourite tool of hybrid warfare) since the 1970s. Much of this threat was coming from terrorist groups, operating in Quetta and Karachi (Khan & Kiran, 2012).

The hybrid threat in Balochistan comes from ideologically driven militants, radicalized, and unemployed youth as well as political conflicts. Pakistan's internal structure is weakened by the lack of swift justice, lack of water and healthcare, foreign intervention, the war in Afghanistan, and its effects on Pakistan as well as corruption and a weak

democracy. Pakistan is also deeply divided along ethnic, sectarian, and religious lines (Khan & Kiran, 2012). The situation in Balochistan is particularly grave.

Since independence, foreign powers have been meddling in the resource-rich province of Balochistan for their vested interests. New Delhi, Moscow, Washington, London, Tehran, Kabul, and Tel Aviv have always been part of conspiracies against Balochistan (Khan, Sana, Kiran, 2012). They have attempted to instigate the locals against their state by funding the insurgencies and by instigating propaganda against the establishment and law enforcement agencies (Khan, Sana, Kiran, 2012).

New Delhi has aggressively initiated a disinformation campaign against Pakistan by using electronic and social media platforms. The 'Balochi radio service' in the Balochi language is an effective propaganda tool to subvert the poor and illiterate masses who do not have internet access. The radio service incites the general Baloch population to take up arms against the state of Pakistan. (Maqbool, 2018).

The Indian intelligence agencies with the help of their media are forever spewing fabricated stories regarding human rights violations in Balochistan (Ahmed, 2020). This is India's hybrid warfare tactics to weaken Pakistan (Kamran, 2018).

India used the hybrid model to defeat Pakistan in the 1971 war. The Indians employed psychological and coercive tools to subvert the masses before launching the military offensive in December 1971. (Korybko, 2017, p.212).

The militant landscape of Balochistan is based on feudal and sub-nationalist inclinations. The militants have found willing sponsors because the province is rich in resources and has a geo-strategic importance (Korybko, 2017). Hostile agencies flagrantly portray the human rights' violations in Balochistan depicted by sub-nationalist militant organizations and consider them as 'freedom fighters' seeking independence from Pakistan (Bugti, Qazi, & Lijian, 2018).

Indian fingerprints are all over the militancy in Balochistan. Indian Research & Analysis Wing (RAW) agent Commander Kulbushan Jadhav, was apprehended in Balochistan in 2016 and confessed to inciting militant attacks in the province to sabotage CPEC (Korybko, 2017). The concrete evidence of RAW's involvement in disruptive

activities in Balochistan after the arrest of Kalbhushan Jhaadav comes as no surprise (Mirza & Babar, 2020). Several statements by US and Indian officers and defence analysts point to the fact that India and US are involved in disrupting CPEC.

There are worrisome signs that Washington is also destabilizing Pakistan by instigating an armed uprising in Balochistan. This is being done by exploiting the identity-driven fault-lines to damage or stop work on CPEC and curtailing China's prospects of being an economic power. Washington's malaise stems from the fact that it is opposed to the CPEC project in Pakistan.

Pakistan is under the threat of becoming as now another battleground in the New Cold War between Beijing and Washington. This strategic competition is visible all over the world. And different parts of Asia and Africa. It is its most significance because the Chinese stakes in the strategic port of Gwadar located in Balochistan. Hence the largest province of Pakistan has become the battle lab to experiment the US strategy of Hybrid Warfare. (Korybko, 2017).

Indian Involvement in Balochistan - Kinetic & Non-Kinetic Domains:

On India's Independence Day – from the ramparts of the Red Fort in Delhi – PM Modi raised the issue of Balochistan (Ahmad & Najish, 2017). Yadav in a “video confession” professed that RAW was involved in weakening Pakistan by creating insurgency in Balochistan. Moreover, India had been using its embassy in Kabul and consulates in Kandahar, Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif, and Herat as jump-off point for anti-state activities against Pakistan; US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel once said, “India has always used Afghanistan as a second front against Pakistan” (Pakistan Herald, 2016). According to reports, RAW had established nine training camps along the Pak-Afghan border for training of Baloch sub-nationalists; their activities in Afghanistan included recruitment of Baloch for killing foreigners in Pakistan (reward is US \$ 2000 – 3000), transferring Baloch students to India for training, training Baloch and Pashtun anti-Pakistan militants, Providing arms and ammunition (Pakistan Herald, 2017).

Ajit Doval (former RAW officer and present National Security Advisor to Indian Prime Minister) during a speech at the SASTRA University in February 2014, threatened Pakistan by saying, “You do one more Mumbai, you may lose Balochistan” (Inside, 2020).

In October 2015, The Hindu Newspaper confirmed presence of Hyrbyar Marri (BLA leader) in New Delhi. Though it was later refuted by Baloch leader himself, Vikas Swarup – India’s EAM spokesperson – said, “India has always been home to the persecuted people from all over the world,” (Bhattacharjee & Suhasini, 2015). Senator Kabir Muhammad Shahi, from National Party, claimed in a newspaper interview that despite being a member of Parliamentary Committee on CPEC and Senate Committee on CPEC, he did not have any information about CPEC agreements. (Aamir, 2017). Nationalist leaders say the Gwadar plan should be made public, and the project ToRs should be debated in Parliament and media. For some observers, the lack of transparency on CPEC projects in Balochistan is also linked to vested interests of Baloch political ruling elites, who are more concerned about being in power and making money, in collusion with the federal government, instead of caring for the rights of Baloch people. Moreover, Balaach Pardili, a representative of the Hyrbyar Marri-led BLA/ Free Balochistan Movement, begun campaigning in India (New Delhi) for the secession of Balochistan from Pakistan. Harbyar Marri, who is living in London, confirmed to that Pardili has been assigned the task of representing him in public events in India (Bhattacharjee & Suhasini, 2015). Tarek Fatah, a Pakistani origin Canadian journalist, is reported to have links with Indian RAW. On 28 March 2015, Fatah addressed the Jaipur Counter-Terror Conference hosted by India Foundation, and said, “India should not wait for a second Mumbai to create an independent Balochistan. Delhi should start assisting the brave men and women of Balochistan today,” (Fatah, 2015).

Amarjit Singh Dulat – ex RAW chief – disclosed on 4 June 2015, that intelligence agencies of India funded militants and insurgents in the IOJK and Pakistan to compete for influence with Inter Services Agencies (ISI) (DAWN, 2015). Moreover, Indian (former) Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar and Indian PM Modi confessed that they assisted anti-Pakistan forces in the separation of East Pakistan (The News, 2015).

EU Disinfo Lab has exposed India’s efforts to use fake news websites to build a hostile narrative against Pakistan by raising issues of human rights’ violations in Balochistan. Besides, Wiki-leaks also confirm that the intelligence officials of UK are sure of India's clandestine assistance for insurgents in Balochistan (Pakistan Herald, 2017). On 17th October 2015, Dunya TV in its programme namely “Mahaz by Wajahat Saeed Khan” telecast

the interview of an arrested Indian spy namely Deepak Kumar (resident of Kalat, Balochistan). He informed that, during his visit to India in 2014, he was spotted/ cultivated by two Indian RAW officers (an Army Captain & Inspector); thereafter, he had been spying for RAW on security forces in Kalat area (Pak Media, 2015).

In September 2015, Frontier Corps Balochistan arrested seven militants from Dalbandin. There was a Communication Centre operated in Dalbandin established by these seven militants in which the insurgents from the banned outfits worked including Al-Qaida, Jundullah and others who had connections with the Indian and Afghan groups.

In November 2018, a Chinese consulate was targeted by BLA (Basit, 2021). More recently, six Chinese nationals and three safety officers were killed by BLA (Basit, 2021). The assault was the fourth high-profile episode of the year, and it additionally affirms the stressing pattern of self-explosive devices and suicide bombs used by Baloch sub-nationalists to target the Chinese workers (Basit, 2021). On 20th August 2021, a suicide bomb exploded near a car carrying Chinese nationals in the Baloch Ward area at the Gwadar East Bay Expressway project. The BLA's Majeed brigade funded by RAW accepted responsibility. This road is a vital part of CPEC (The Print, 2021). Other than the Chinese, targeting Pakistani security forces is a normal routine activity of the Baloch sub-nationalists and terrorists e.g., on 22nd August 2021, the vehicle of the army personnel was targeted by using IED by the terrorists in Gichik, Balochistan. In this explosion, a captain was killed and two soldiers were wounded (The News, 2021).

Demographic Changes' Concern

There is a fear that economic migration will bring about demographic changes in the port city making the indigenous Baloch people a minority. Almost all nationalist leaders interviewed said that people coming from outside should not be issued identity cards, and local domicile certificates. There is also a demand to restrict the land ownership and voting rights of the migrants in Gwadar and elsewhere in the province including through introducing legislation. Employment, jobs and business opportunities: Many ask if Chinese will respect labour rights and recruit local people instead of bringing Chinese labour but they also acknowledge that locals don't have the required qualification and training to get employment and jobs.

INTERESTS AND ROLE OF FOREIGN POWERS IN BALOCHISTAN

US Interests

China's access to the Indian Ocean through Gwadar/ CPEC is being viewed by US against its China containment strategy; 'Rebalancing to Asia, therefore this inflates US interests in Balochistan (Wang, 2017). Balochistan also figures out high on US priorities due to its proximity with Iran (Wang, 2017). There are vast natural mineral resources especially Reko Diq and carving for a stable route to transfer the energy resources of Central Asia to US (Wang, 2017). Moreover, the US suspects presence of the leadership of Afghan Taliban in Balochistan. (Bhatti, 2020). Furthermore, US desires that Balochistan – due to its vast mineral resources – should not come under the control of China; suspect that China could station some of its naval ships to provide security to its cargo, which is anathema to US interests in the region (Wang, 2017). CPEC is not in the interest of US. US concept of 'blood borders' or altering the geography is also a cause of concern (Umar, 2017). Besides, natural resources of Balochistan are also being considered as a point of interest of US. Since CPEC is not in the interest of the US therefore US inflates the issues on human rights' violations in Balochistan by funding the Baloch insurgency and US bid to open consulate in Quetta has been turned down by Pakistan (Umar, 2017).

Indian Interests

The exploitation of internal fault-lines of Pakistan is part of Indian greater design to weaken Pakistan internally and Balochistan is not exception in this regard (Khetran, 2017). India uses sub-nationalism in Balochistan to counter the freedom struggle in Indian Occupied Kashmir to keep Pakistan under pressure while concurrently embroiling Army in internal security duties (Khetran, 2017). India sees Pak-China convergence on CPEC vis-à-vis huge economic dividends as threat to its national interests in the region; hence greater interests in Balochistan to scuttle CPEC (Khetran, 2017). India views that its investment on Chahbahar Port (Iran) and Project of North-South Corridor will receive a setback sequel to

development of Gwadar port. Moreover, India still holds interests in Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Pipeline project (Shah, 2017).

Russian Interests

Historically, Russia always worked to weaken Pakistan due to its alliance with the US/West; the Baloch Sub-Nationalists were welcomed in Russia for studies, and many were indoctrinated in communistic and socialistic ideas besides imparting them militant training. Russia considers Balochistan as the shortest route to reach Indian Ocean (warm waters), therefore, it endeavours to have influence over this area. Gwader can undermine Russian control on the energy resources of Central Asia; hence is being viewed with suspicion (Bhatti, M.N & Ahmad, 2020).

Iranian Interests

Iran suspects that the Jundullah (a militant organization working creating unrest in Iranian Balochistan) has its hideouts in bordering town of Balochistan (Rehman, 2014); therefore, besides cross-border firing, it undertakes covert operations inside Balochistan to neutralize/ target these militants. Iran views Gwadar as counterweight to Chahbahar port (Ahmed & Shah, 2017). Moreover, Iran has economic stakes in Balochistan due to Iran-Pakistan Pipeline (IP) Project. This project has been suspended due to American pressure on Pakistan but can be revived in the future. Iran has 'Khanna-e-Farhang' in Quetta; also supports Shia community in Quetta (Khan, 2020).

Afghanistan's Interests

Since Afghanistan is a landlocked country, Balochistan provides opportunities to Afghanistan for trade with outside world. There are voices support for of Pakhtunistan to absorb the part of Balochistan in Afghanistan. There are also voices against the issue of Durand Line that involves part of Balochistan (Javaid & Jehangir, 2020). Moreover, a sizeable number of Afghan refugees live in Balochistan, which draw Afghanistan's interests in Balochistan. Besides, Afghanistan alleges that Afghan Taliban's leadership is hiding in Balochistan (Javaid & Jehangir, 2020). However, with the change in the leadership and with Taliban taking over, things will be different. Taliban have already closed Indian consulates in Kandahar and Herat (Business Standard, 2021). Therefore, the current change in regime in

Afghanistan will make things difficult for India to continue with its terror activities in Balochistan as Taliban have told Pakistan that Afghanistan will no longer be used against any country specifically Pakistan.

Chinese Interests:

China has huge economic interests in Balochistan in the shape of CPEC. China intends to establish oil refinery facility at Gwadar Port, from which oil would be transported through a pipeline to Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Moreover, Beijing will have ingress into Middle East through Gwadar because of its vicinity to the Arabian Sea. The global powers are interested in Gwadar Port because of its vicinity to the Strait of Hormuz (Perveen, 2015).

United Arab Emirates (UAE):

UAE views Gwadar Port as a challenger to its economic interests in the region (Yousaf, 2012). Moreover, Middle East also has interests in Gwadar Port due to its closeness to the strait of Hormuz. The conflict of junctions is the primary reason for UAE to be threatened by the Gwadar Port (Conrad, 2017).

Role of Foreign Powers in fueling Unrest in Balochistan:

Several Western countries have given political asylum to Baloch Sub-Nationalists leaders (Siddiqi, 2010). Besides consciously allowing their anti-Pakistan political activities to internationalize the Balochistan issue, some of these countries are providing moral and covert monetary support to these elements; a brief detail of activities of Baloch Sub-Nationalists in different countries is as under, which flick their direct and indirect support for insurgency in Balochistan (Khan, 2019).

United States of America (USA):

Indian lobby had been active in US against Pakistan on Balochistan issue. US Congressman Dana Rohrbacher has been a vocal supporter of Baloch Sub-Nationalists in Balochistan and authored/ co-authored several articles expressing support for an independent Balochistan. In 2012, he along with few other Congressmen, had formally tabled resolution supporting independence / right of self-determination for Balochistan (Ahmad, 2017).

On 22 July 2015, US Congressman Chris Smith (Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee of the US Congress) hosted an event at Capitol Hill, Washington. Among the prominent speakers were Russ Hiebert (Canadian MP and Jura Chairman), Elisabetta Gardini (Italian Member of the European Parliament), Tarek Fatah (Executive Director of Balochistan House) and Baloch activist Mehran Baloch. In his remarks, Canadian MP Russ Hiebert highlighted the injustice and oppression faced by the people of Balochistan at the hands of their own Government (PR News Wire, 2015).

On 30 September 2015, Baloch community USA held a protest in front of UN General Assembly. The protest was aimed to highlighting the alleged occupation and HR violations in Balochistan (Singh, 2016).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Conceptual Framework

A Questionnaire was developed based on the review of relevant literature which was extracted from available online literature e.g., journals, monographs, books, research articles, newspapers and other relevant documents printed and disseminated by government or private institutions. The questionnaire comprised of both open and closed-ended items so for the open-ended items thematic analysis has been carried out. The open-ended items were related to the issues faced by the population of Balochistan and their respective solutions for the problems. For the number of respondents, students belonging from Balochistan were selected from six Balochistan universities and students from two universities from Islamabad. They were Baloch students from Quaid-e-Azam University and Islamic International University. The questionnaires were sent to the following Balochistan universities: University of Balochistan (UoB), Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS), University of Loralai, University of Turbat, Sardar Bahadur Khan University, Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water and Marine Sciences, and Balochistan University of Engineering and Technology Khuzdar campus. The universities were contacted through their concerned departments for the filling of the questionnaires.

Moreover, Baloch who belonged from different professions were also given the questionnaire online. They were mainly based in Kech, Mastung, Turbat, Quetta, Awaran, and other districts of Balochistan. Various steps were ensured before starting data collection. Respondents were selected with the help of convenient and purposive sampling methods. Questionnaires were taken from the local community because they are the most vulnerable part after implementation of a pro-security policy of government and increase in insurgency and other destructive events. For collection of data two methods were utilized. One was the online submission of the questionnaires with some directions to fill the form which was sent to the respondents through email/WhatsApp . After getting the responses, an analysis was carried of the responses. The collected data was translated and re-translated into English and analysed under themes or sub-themes for a better understanding of the structure and chronology of results. Moreover, primary data regarding attacks and nature of attacks

was acquired from law enforcement agencies and counter-terrorism organisations like NACTA. Results were analysed along with existing literature.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods are employed in the research methodology, in order to address the research questions. For the relevance of this study, the data collection through questionnaires is important for the validity of the existing problems in the Balochistan faced by the public. Thus, few significant questions are conducted to extract the viewpoints of the local people of Balochistan.

150 questionnaires were conducted from different age groups in Balochistan which consisted of Baloch belonging from different professions and students who understand the ground realities of their province and can contribute to the change.

Research methods:

The research was a type of descriptive research to explore the causes and effects of the dependent and independent variables. The descriptive research explored the vulnerabilities existing in Balochistan and the concept of hybrid warfare and how Balochistan is susceptible to hybrid warfare. Moreover, this research aims to find out a correlation between the insurgency-prone environment, problems in Balochistan and susceptibility to hybrid warfare. This research also unveils the possible solutions to the situation in Balochistan. Besides, the threat to CPEC has also been evaluated vis-à-vis the the frequency of threats in the Southern side of Balochistan.

With the help of this research, we came to explore the underlying factors and causes of hybrid warfare. Moreover, the possible solutions to the insurgency.

Qualitative Quantitative analysis:

Quantitative analysis:

The survey was conducted from a total sample of 150 individuals from different areas of Balochistan. Out of the 150 sample, 88 were males and 47 were females. The rest of the 15 respondents did not reveal their gender. The mean age of the participants was 28. 25 respondents belonged from Turbat which is the highest percentage of participants belonging from any district. Moreover, majority of the respondents were in their mid-adulthood. The

data was conducted from the following Balochistan's universities: BUIITEMS, University of Loralai, University of Turbat, Sardar Bahadur Khan University, Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water and Marine Sciences, Balochistan University of Engineering and Technology Khuzdar campus. Moreover, the two universities selected from Islamabad were Quaid-e-Azam University, and Islamic International University. They were selected based on having Baloch students and Baloch council.

Data collection was done through a questionnaire composed on google forms. The participants had the right to withdraw from the research whenever they wanted. Data collection was done by a self-made questionnaire which highlighted different issues faced by the locals of Balochistan and the reasons behind them. The questionnaire contained both open-ended and close-ended questions. The open-ended questions focused more on their understanding of the hybrid warfare, grievances, and solutions to the problems.

The data was collected from Baloch students and Baloch belonging from different professions mainly teachers, engineers, doctors. The participants were sampled through convenient sampling and the criteria for the inclusion of the participant within the research was the individual should be the local of Balochistan.

What is the main issue of Balochistan according to you?

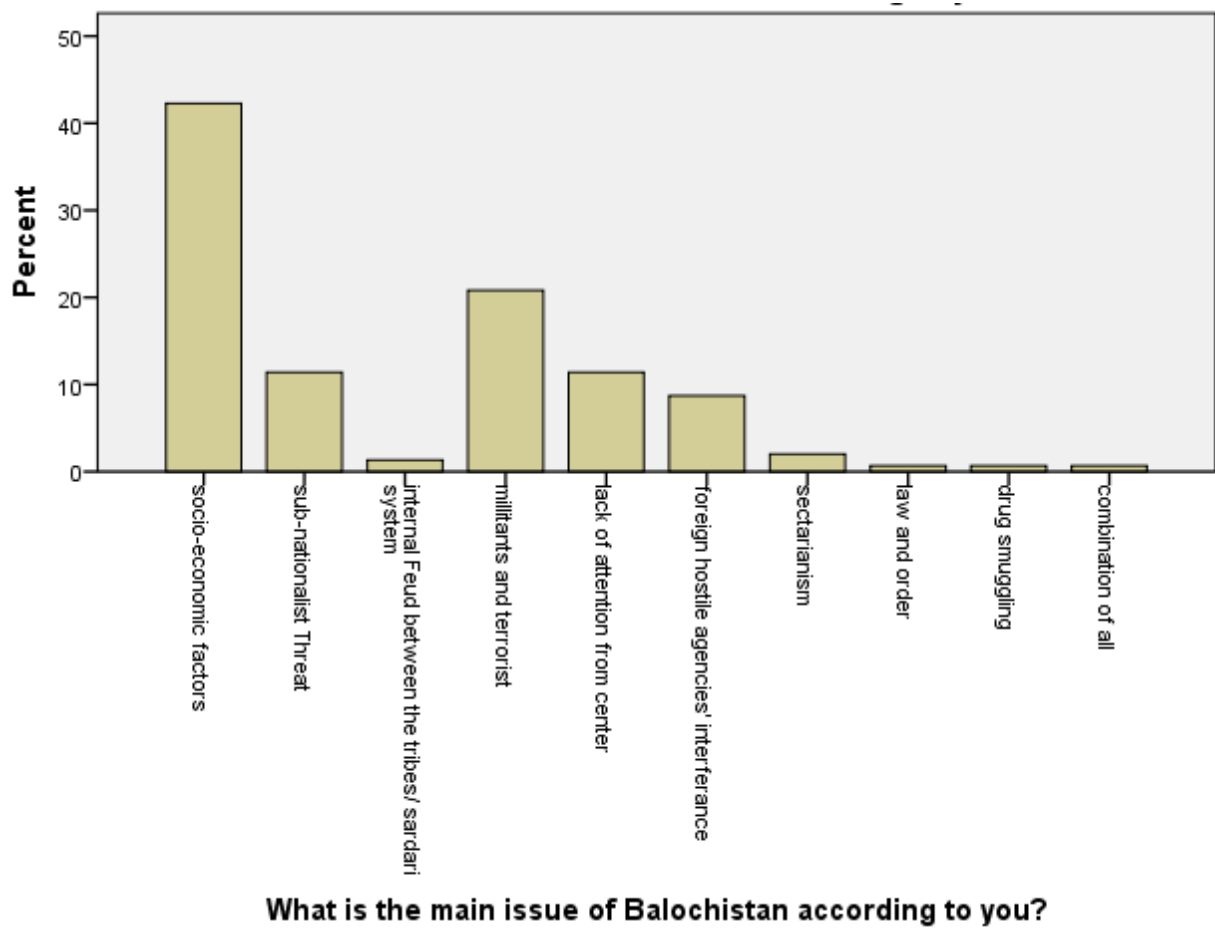


Figure 3.1 Main Issue Of Balochistan

What is the main issue of Balochistan according to you?

152 responses

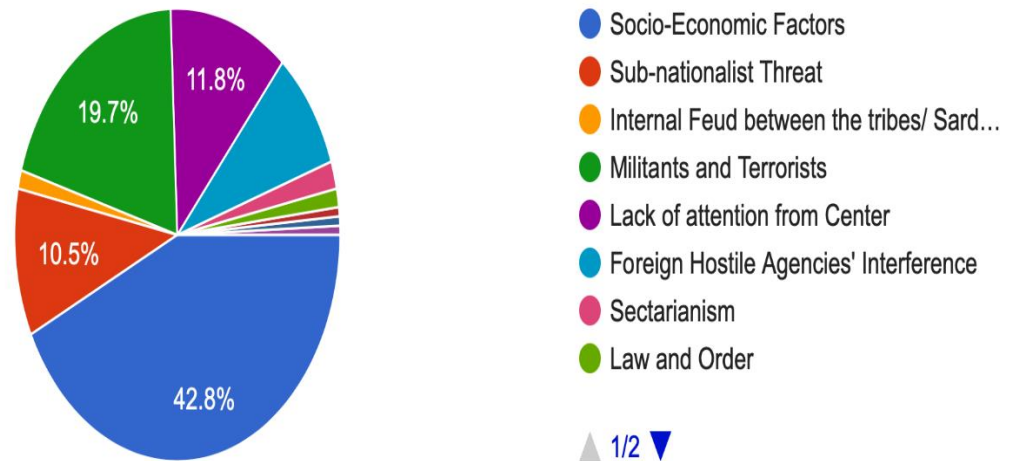


Figure 3.2 Main Issues of Balochistan

According to 42.8% of the respondents, the main issue of Balochistan is the lack of socio-economic development in the province. Whereas 19.7% believe militancy and terrorism as the main issue of Balochistan. 11.8% believe that lack of attention from the center is the main factor for instability in Balochistan. Whereas rest of the respondents believe foreign interference, sectarianism, law and order situation, smuggling, and ethnic division as the contributing (5%) factors to the issue. Another contributing factor that aggravates the issue is the use of social media to spread propaganda against the law enforcement agencies working in Balochistan. Moreover, few respondents believed the feudal system/Sardari system and drug smuggling are also the contributing factors of instability in Balochistan.

According to the locals of Balochistan which include both the Baloch and Pashtuns, the main cause of problems faced by the locals is due to the interference of foreign powers for their vested interests in CPEC, ethnic divisions, and social media propaganda. The mean is 0.91, 1.15, 0.93, 1.09, 1.07 respectively. This means that the development of the CPEC

project is the main reason that Balochistan is under attack by the hybrid actors and that the frequency of attacks has increased after the initiation of the CPEC project.

Statistics

		Do you think foreign powers are trying to disrupt the CPEC projects?	Have the attacks in Balochistan increased after the announcement of CPEC?	Are there insectarian, ethnic, and economic divisions/problems in your area?	Do you think the leaders of the Baloch insurgency are being funded by the foreign powers for their interests?	Do you think social media is being used to spread propaganda against Law enforcement agencies (Police, FC, security personnel) working in Balochistan?	Is the border fencing having any positive effect?
N	Valid	150	149	91	127	149	150
	Missing	11	12	70	34	12	11
Mean		.91	1.15	.93	1.09	1.07	1.03
Std. Deviation		.454	.363	.291	.437	.565	.497
Sum		136	172	85	138	159	155

The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were assessed. Reliability was found by the alpha Cronbach. The reliability of the similar item pointing to the cause of the issue shows

0.417 as shown by the Cronbach alpha. The inter-item correlation was found to be ranging from 0.667-0.866.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.417	.434	3

The reliability of the questionnaire was found by Cronbach's alpha which is 0.866. which means that the scale used has reliability in terms of items and their item correlation. The quantitative analysis includes only 9 items, so the questionnaire is reliable for the research.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.866	.754	9

Validity of the questionnaire is found using internal consistency which is found by Pearson correlation which has shown that the items are significant, and the correlation is 0.349 which is above the critical value. For the sample of 150 individuals, the Pearson correlation critical value is 0.159. this means that the questionnaire is internally consistent and is valid for the research.

Correlations

	Do you think the leaders of the Baloch insurgency are being funded by the foreign powers for their interests?	Are there sectarian, ethnic, and economic divisions/problems in your area?	Do you think foreign powers are trying to disrupt the CPEC projects?	Do you think social media is being used to spread propaganda against the Law enforcement agencies (Police, FC, security personnel) working in Balochistan?	Have the attacks in Balochistan increased after the announcement of CPEC?
Do you think the leaders of the Baloch insurgency are being funded by the foreign powers for their interests? Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 127	.602** .000 88	.450 .092 127	.663 .068 126	.749** .000 126

Are there sectarian, ethnic and economic divisions/problems in your area?	Pearson Correlation	.602**	1	.432**	.645	.504
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.172	.054
	N	88	91	91	91	90
Do you think foreign powers are trying to disrupt the CPEC projects?	Pearson Correlation	.450	.432**	1	.228	.548
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.092	.000		.736	.565
	N	127	91	150	149	149
Do you think social media is being used to spread propaganda against the Law enforcement agencies (Police, FC, security personnel) working in Balochistan?	Pearson Correlation	.663	.645	.228	1	.410**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.068	.172	.736		.000
	N	126	91	149	149	148
Have the attacks in Balochistan increased after the announcement of CPEC?	Pearson Correlation	.749**	.504	.548	.410**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.054	.565	.000	
	N	126	90	149	148	149

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.51 level (2-tailed).

The mean of the items in the questionnaire is found to be 0.9-1.5 which means that most of the people have agreed that problems are caused by propaganda on social media, feudal system, insurgency funded by foreign agencies, hybrid warfare, ethnic and economic division.

The results have shown a strong correlation between the insurgency in Balochistan and the hybrid warfare being waged/ or the susceptibility of hybrid warfare being waged in Balochistan. The research highlighted the factors (lack of socio-economic development, terrorism, militancy, foreign interference, sub-nationalists, etc.) which triggers and makes Balochistan a fertile ground to wage hybrid warfare. This has been strongly related to the threatening environment in Balochistan. Moreover, the threats have increased since the initiation of the CPEC projects which means that CPEC is one of the triggering factors. It has been seen that the ratio of attacks in the southern side of Balochistan have increased since the establishment of CPEC. A comparative analysis of attacks in Balochistan from the second half of 2020 and the start of 2021 has also been shown below.

Qualitative analysis:

The questionnaire comprised of both open and closed-ended items so for the open-ended items thematic analysis has been carried out. Open-ended items were related to the issues faced by the locals in Baluchistan and their respective solutions for the problems.

Coding of the themes:

Coding of the themes was done by analyzing each category of the questionnaire. Total 6 items in the questionnaire were open-ended and each of the items target a different aspect of the problems faced by the Balochistan locals. Deductive coding was employed to specify the codes. In the first place, the interpretation was started by familiarization with the data collected and then generalized codes were made. These generalized codes help in generating the themes. Similar codes made up for a collective theme. The data collected from the Baloch students and locals have unveiled the major themes as lack of socio-economic development, illiteracy, lack of equal opportunities, militancy, and foreign powers' interference and funding to the sub-nationalists. Open-ended questions in the questionnaire targeted different issues in Balochistan and the perceptions of locals regarding the issue.

Main Theme: Strategic Interests of Foreign Powers in Balochistan

The aim of this question (Question 5), suggests, was to gather the standpoint and perspectives of the sample respondent regarding the interests of foreign powers in the province of Balochistan. Out of the total 150 Baloch respondents, most blamed the successive governments for causing the unrest in the province. They were of the view that Pakistan consistently blames foreign powers especially India for the unrest in Balochistan, although the truth is that “*Pakistan itself is at fault*” due to its “*harsh*” and “*discriminatory treatment*” with the people of Balochistan. One respondent answered, “

“India has no interest in Balochistan. The government is putting wrong allegations on Balochi people to limit their movement, economy, cover their resources, occupy their land, burn their houses, abduct their young ones, torture their old and respectful ones, and show Balochis as terrorists”.

This viewpoint is of the educated elite from Balochistan and neither includes the government’s stance on Balochistan nor that of the common man in the province.

Do you think the leaders of Baloch insurgency are being funded by the foreign powers for their interest?

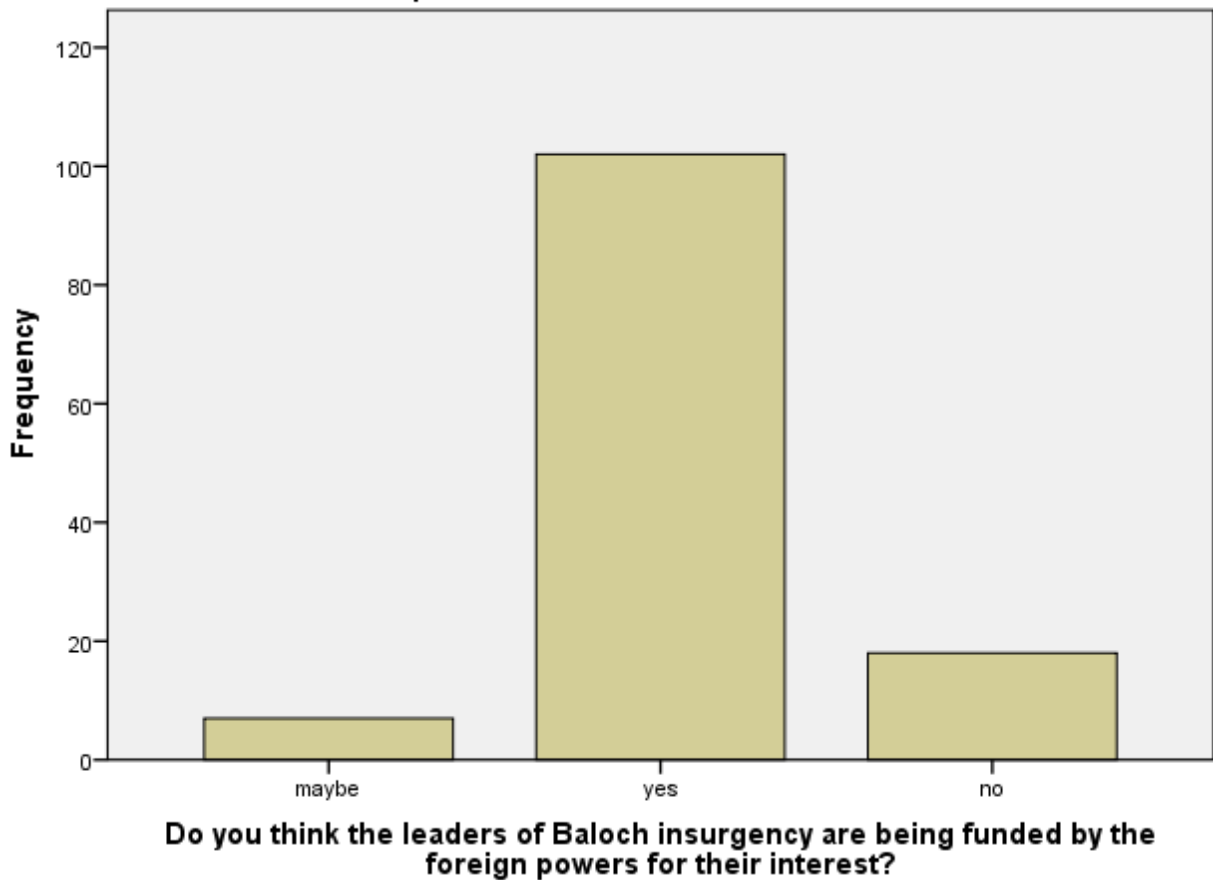


Figure 3.3 Baloch insurgency are being funded by foreign power of their interest

Six (6) out of 150 people had no idea about it. Most of these people simply responded with the answer, *“I have no idea about it”*. 3 out of these 6 people were males and the other 3 were females. All of them were students.

The rest of the 94 participants was of the view that foreign powers like India are indeed involved in causing unrest in the province. Upon asking the ways that these foreign powers execute their plans of causing unrest, the sample responded with different answers.

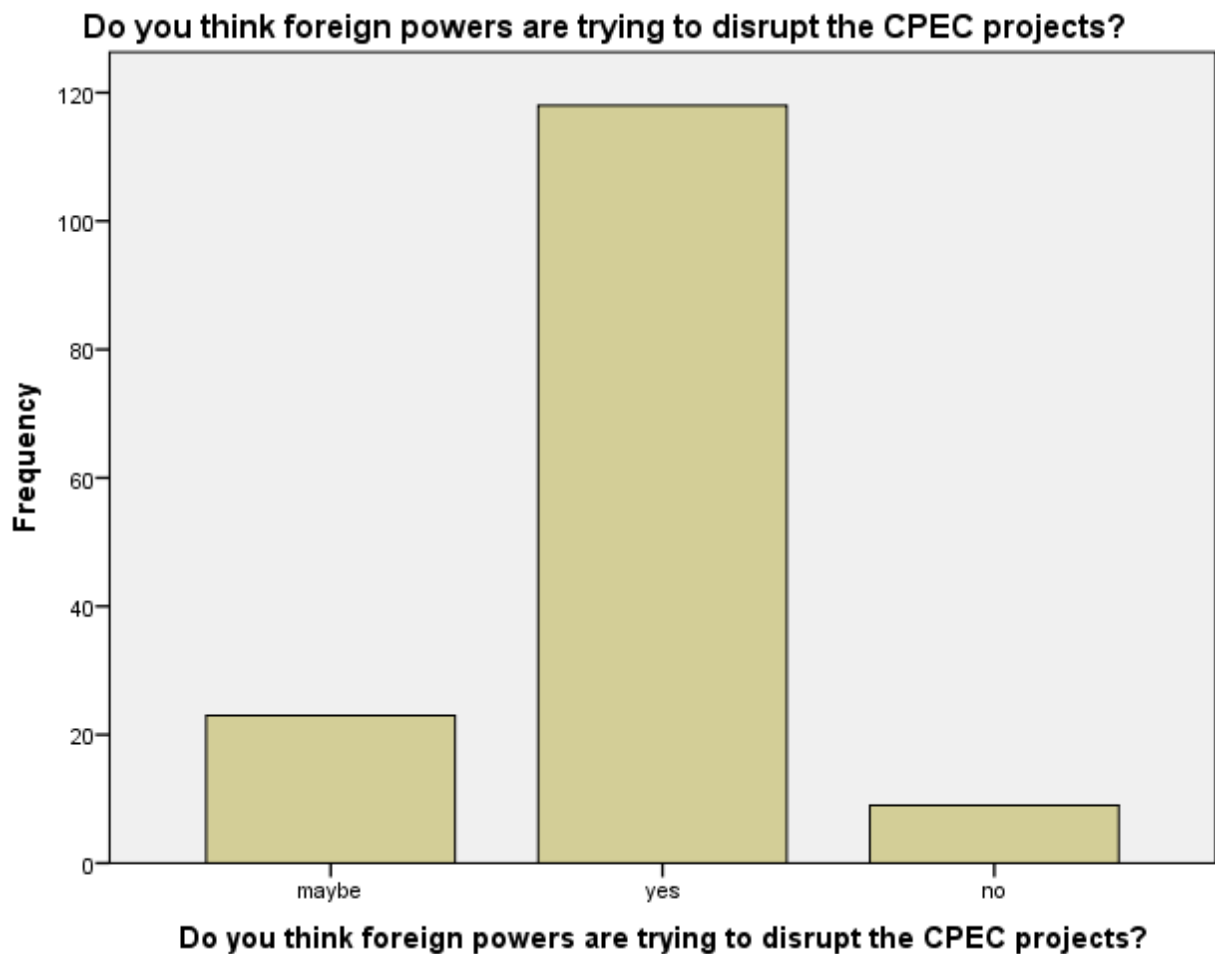


Figure 3.4 Foreign powers are trying to disrupt the CPEC project

Sub-theme: Foreign interference in Balochistan

The sub-theme mainly explored how foreign powers are exploiting the unrest in the province of Balochistan to wage hybrid warfare.

Funding sub-nationalist groups

Out of the total sample, 128 believed that foreign powers are exploiting the unrest in the province of Balochistan, more than 70 people were of the view that foreign powers execute their plans of exploitation through funding insurgent organizations like Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) and sub-nationalist groups. One of them responded that “They provide funding to the militant groups like BLA etc. There have been cases where they have tried to lure the youth into picking up arms against the

state”. “Foreign powers provide funding to the Balochi sub-nationalists by using Afghanistan border” and

“New Delhi is supporting the insurgency in Balochistan since 1948. This has led to Pakistan’s poor economic and security. They had also close contacts with the with the Balochi rebels. This speaks about how they are assisting the rebellion” were some of the other answers.

Most of the respondents of this sample were males.

The active role of spies and secret agencies (Covert means)

Others believed that foreign powers execute their nefarious designs with the help of spies and their covert intelligence agencies. “Their agencies play an active role in spreading propaganda and misinformation” and “They spread terrorism with the help of their spies and agents” were some of the responses. Most of these people mentioned the arrest of the Kulbhushan Jadhav as a concrete evidence of India’s subversive activities in the province. They believed that there is an active involvement of hostile agencies’ covert tactics in Balochistan by employing the spies who incite the people and disenchanted youth to take up arms.

Main Theme: Awareness About Hybrid Warfare

Question 7 explored the sample’s awareness and views regarding hybrid warfare and how it is applicable in the context of Balochistan. Out of the total sample of 150 people, 49 had no idea about what hybrid warfare meant. One of the respondents was of the view that “*I have no idea about it. I just know that they are providing support to terrorists and by different means, they are creating instability within the province*”. Most of these respondents belonged to Khuzdar, Killa Abdullah, and Turbat and most of them were of female gender. Around 10 people knew what hybrid warfare meant but didn’t know how to explain it. One male student responded with the answer, “*Yes but I don’t know how to explain it*”.

About 50% of the participants were well aware of hybrid warfare. Some of these respondents defined hybrid warfare as “*strategic planning*”, a combination of both “*regular and irregular warfare*”, “*an endeavor to accomplish objectives without employing considerable force*”, and “*measures used to supplement military operations*”. Most of the the

sample who had an awareness about hybrid warfare were male. Most of them belonged to the capital of Balochistan i.e. Quetta.

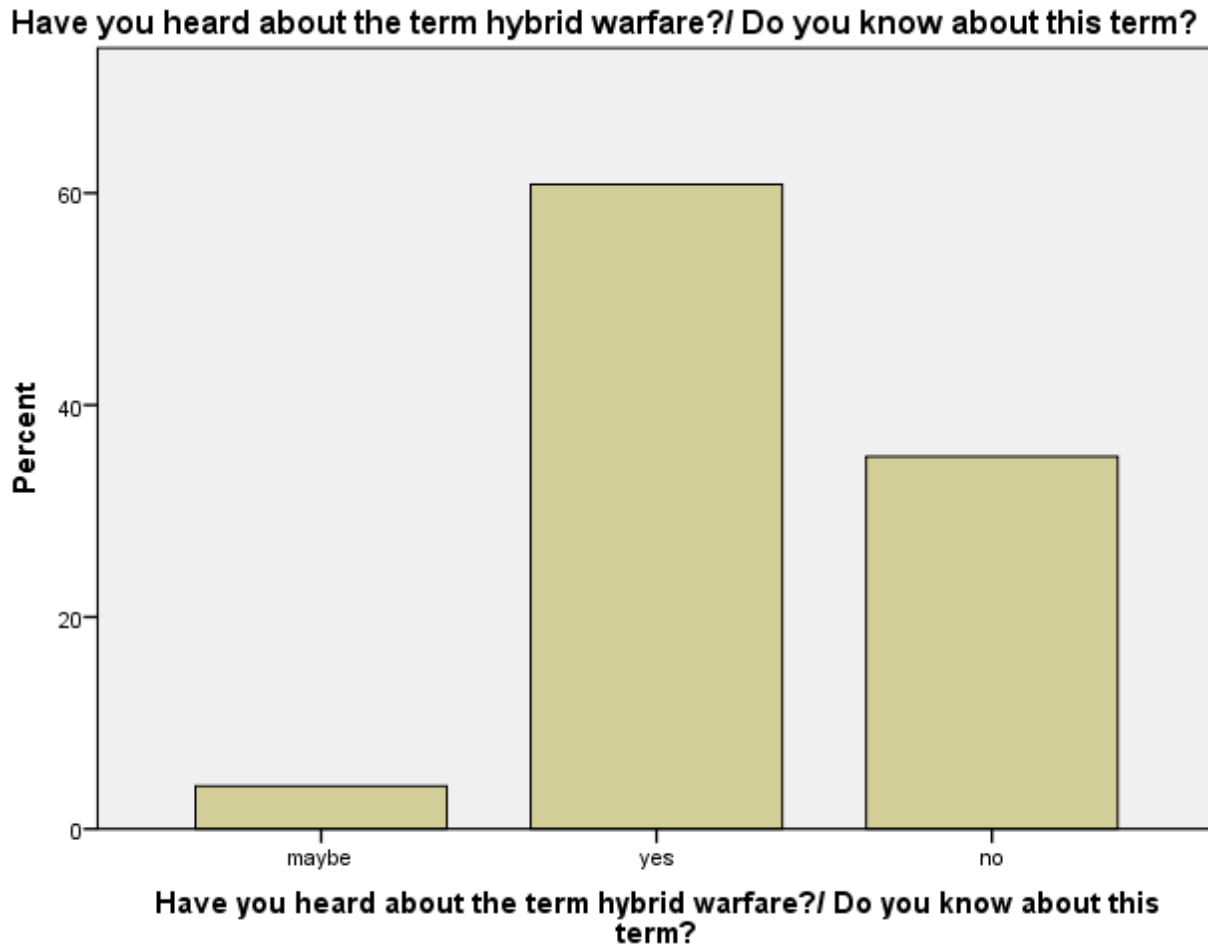


Figure 3.5 Hybrid warfare

Sub-theme: Hybrid Warfare in the Context of Balochistan

When asked regarding their understanding of hybrid warfare in the context of Balochistan, a wide range of answers were received from the respondents.

Propaganda and misinformation through media

38 respondents from the sample of 150 respondents believed that propaganda and misinformation are spread both by Pakistani and foreign media. One of them said, “Foreign powers and the state propagate and spread negative and false information against our people by using media, etc.” Another responded that “Balochistan is the playground of the hybrid

warfare by many external powers which use propaganda in the province mainly through media outlets”. He further added, “It’s done to enhance their sentiments and creating uncertainty in Balochistan”. “They have used media in the past to propagate against us”, “Foreign powers are using different ways to destabilize our province”, and “Media is being used to propagate against Pakistan by spreading false news about Balochistan” were some of the other responses. Some of these people blamed India for hybrid warfare in Balochistan by stating, “Media is a tool which is mostly used by India to create uncertainty in this area”.

Foreign support to anti-state groups

International and regional hostile powers have wreaked havoc in the province by supporting militant organizations and non-state armed organizations to achieve their strategic goals. According to most of the sample population, Balochistan has become a “target” of these anti-state militant groups. As one respondent stated, *“Foreign powers in Balochistan are reaching their strategic aims without fighting Pakistan, instead of sponsoring sub-nationalists and agitating civilians against the country and for a separate state”*. Another responded with, *“Particularly India is using hybrid warfare in Balochistan by providing funds, weapons, and other support to different groups present in Balochistan. It is trying to raise hostile elements among people”*. The person further added, *“Financing armed groups in Balochistan is the priority of Indian policy”*. One of the students gave an example of his friend and stated,

“RAW and CIA is funding the Balochi leaders to incite the people to take up arms. Some of my friends were also brainwashed into taking up arms against the state. Their purpose is to show people that the law enforcement agencies especially Frontier Corps (FC) are evil and here to invade their land”.

Main Theme: Role of Law Enforcement Agencies in the Establishment of Peace

Question 9 investigated the sample’s opinion about the role of law enforcement agencies in the establishment of peace. Out of the total 150 people, 47 were of the view that law enforcement agencies’ role in the province has been satisfactory.

The rest of the 30 responses were of the view that law enforcement agencies are trying to control the adverse circumstances of the province and can play a positive role if supported. The rest believed that their role has not been upto the mark.

Sub-theme:

Saving the province from militants

The sample was of the view that law enforcement agencies are trying everything in their capacity to ensure peace. One of the respondents said,

“By not letting the foreign agencies and militants operate or use our land for their malicious purposes. Law enforcement agencies are helping their people from the militants’ group and also provide them save environment to carry out daily routine work”. “It is positive and a lot of situation has been under control. The militant activity has somewhat decreased” and “The role has been important as they are trying to bring back the peace”

were some of the responses.

Development projects

Others believed that the law enforcement agencies have contributed to the successful inauguration of certain “*development projects*” in the province. One of the participants called these projects a measure of “*social improvement*”. The respondents said that these development programs are aimed at promoting peace and stability in one form or another. They believed that by focusing on these development projects, the Baloch’s trust in the government and the law enforcement agencies can be regained. Some were of the view that the military has contributed largely to the safe introduction of these projects. One of the participants said, “*FC and army have done a lot to bring peace specifically with cadet collages and development projects*”. Another responded with the answer, “*The role of Law enforcement agencies is sub-optimal. They have done many development projects however they need to do a proper operation against these terrorists*”. Most of these people belonged to Quetta.

Main theme:

The grievances of the locals:

The focus of this question revolved around the grievances of the Baloch people and how the government and their local leaders are adding to their plight. So, the item was used to assess the grievances of the population regarding Balochistan. Out of the 150 people, 10 participants responded that they have no grievance related to their province but the rest of 94% of the participants shared different concerns regarding lack of equal opportunities and discriminatory treatment to the Pashtuns and the Baloch, lack of socio-economic development, illiteracy, unemployment, and lack of peace. The respondents demanded that the government and state should ensure equal rights and opportunities for them. The right to equal opportunity and to have the privilege to use their resources is the main concern of the locals. As one of the participants responded in a way “Our people have no opportunities to improve their lives. They don’t get equality from others. They stayed backward as no development has been made for long. They don't have access to the natural resources of this province.” Similarly, another participant wrote “Yes. There is a lack of proper resource management. The opportunities for the people of Baluchistan are very minimum. They have fewer facilities as compared to the other provinces.”. They thought that the increase in opportunities will decrease the issues like unemployment, illiteracy, etc.

Sub-themes: Lack of Attention from the Centre:

The federal government is the sovereign authority for the threats and issues faced by the locals in Balochistan. The responses by the locals and students reveal that the federation has almost forgotten Balochistan as a province of Pakistan. As one of the respondents said “No, Because I know Baluchistan is the land of beauty and minerals. But the Pakistani government is not taking any kind of positive response for the local people of Balochistan.” Major issues faced by the locals are poverty, unemployment, lack of awareness, and illiteracy. Southern areas of Balochistan specifically Awaran and Kech are continuously under threat. The establishment of stable peace is the responsibility of the Pakistani

government, and it must take positive measurements to protect the rights of the people of Balochistan. The population of Balochistan expect that counter-terrorism operations will bring peace.

Another respondent said “Grievances, yes. There should be a proper military operation against the miscreants in Balochistan.”

Sardari System

The most dominant factor in Balochistan's internal security situation remains the exploitation of human resources by the age-old “Sardari System” which is in the negation of the development and prosperity, a reflection of bad governance in the society. One of the respondents said, “To safeguard their interests the Sardars have launched ethnic groups and rebels to exploit the sentiments of resentment of the local populace.” According to the data collected, people believed that their sardars deliberately keep their locals illiterate and unaware so that nobody can threaten their authority. On the other hand, the exploitation of the province includes the mismanagement of resources. The resources of Balochistan are not properly utilized. “Yes, my province is the richest in Pakistan concerning Natural resources, but we are the poorest people in Pakistan. This is because of our corrupt politicians.” A common Baloch is still alienated from the center due to the lack of resources in the province. Their grievances are that in comparison to the other provinces of Pakistan, they are not given any attention and their own resources are not used on their province rather on other provinces.

Socio-economic development:

Development has many forms including socio-economic development, political development, and the development of resources of Balochistan. According to 20% of participants who responded to these items grieve about the exploitations of the resources that the Baluchistan is being deprived of the basic resources like Gas although the origin is in Baluchistan. This province lags behind the other provinces in terms of megaprojects and other short-term and long-term developmental plans. The government should uplift socio-economic conditions so that they can make any progress in the province. Resources of Baluchistan are being used by other provinces while leaving Baluchistan improvised. As the participant has said “Yes a lot of grievances. First, the gas of Balochistan is used by other

provinces but not Balochistan, and all the natural resources are used federal government in other provinces” Due to the lack of development of Balochistan, there is a lot of mismanagement of resources, and people here are compelled to think of Balochistan as a “neglected province”.

Another major problem faced by the population is illiteracy. Due to the influence of the tribal culture, the youth are not encouraged to pursue education and higher studies and hence they are prone to subversion. The sardars are also a factor in keeping their people uneducated. Moreover, the locals of Balochistan also point out that there is unemployment and no job opportunities for them.

Equal Rights’ issue

More than half of the participants have shown their concerns regarding the lack of equal rights and opportunities. They demand equal treatment of Baloch and Pashtuns. Locals of Baluchistan presume that all the resources are cherished by the rulers instead there should be an equal division of resources among the locals and the nationalists. According to the participants, Baluchistan is the only province that has vast minerals and resources however it is being used for the vested interests of the government and non-Punjabis. “Our resources are being given to an outsider. Common Baloch don’t have access to the facilities that sardars enjoy, they keep them illiterate”. The exploitation of the people can be seen in the unequal treatment given to the locals. They do not have adequate opportunities and access to necessities like “pure water”.

A solution to the problems:

Thematic analysis has yielded a variety of themes regarding the shorter and the long-term solutions to the problems faced. The solutions are given by the students and the locals vary from the governmental attention to the military invasion. The solutions have yield 6 different themes that are: law and order enforcement, need for an army and military operations, developmental projects, negotiation for the peace, cherish its resources. Verbatim of the locals have also been quoted. The main purpose of this study was to highlight the different aspects of a problem and different aspects of the solution for the issue.

1. **Law and Order Enforcement:**

Law and order enforcement means ensuring peace and stability in the province. Since independence, Balochistan has seen varying degrees of insurgency. The locals and students demand strict rules to provide the law-and-order situation in their area. Many of the participants have responded to this question that they need “law enforcement” and “law implementation”.

2. **Development:**

Developments include educational development, social development, economic development, political development, educational development, and other developmental projects. For educational developments, the locals demand better educational opportunities and the demand for equal rights and opportunities for every individual, and this could only be done when the political, social, and economic sectors are progressing only in that way the sector can move ahead. With the help of economic and educational development, we can get rid of unemployment. Development in the educational sector also demands the educational awareness of the locals. Furthermore, developmental projects involve the main and the highlighted project of the CPEC. As CPEC is nowhere to end the locals demand the government to make more developmental projects as Baluchistan is full of resources so we can make more developmental projects.

3. **Governmental efforts:**

Participants demand governmental efforts needs to control the situation A lot of universities are in process of developing in major cities of Pakistan, but the people of Baluchistan need universities there and other developmental projects there so that Baluchistan would have equal respect as other cities of Pakistan have. As one of the responded:

Yes, there is only one solution for this issue that the Pakistani government must take positive measurements not only in Gwadar but in the whole province as the government does in Punjab and other provinces. They shouldn't be any military involvement of Armed forces at the local level because the armed forces are created for the protection of borders not to sit

in parliament and to run the government. If this happens then Baluchistan will In Sha Allah soon rise and shine.

4. Negotiations for peace:

Majority of the respondents believed in Negotiations with the Baloch sub-nationalists. From other responses it has been revealed that the negotiation could be done by the governmental officials with the oppressors as one of the participants responded as: “Government should negotiate to establish peace in the area”

5. Exploitation of Resources

The issues reflected by one-third of the respondents were the exploitation of resources of the province by the non-Baloch, the sense of deprivation, and the issue of gas royalty. Regarding the solution to it, they demand that the usurpation of their resources by non-Baloch and other provinces should end. As responded by one of the participants: “yes if nations have power on their resources”. Baloch locals are in dire need of the development of their resources for their benefit not for other provinces of sub-nationalists. Another participant suggested the solution of the issue as “The only solution of Balochistan issues is to give the of every natural source of from here to its residents.”. Moreover, they demand the utilization of local resources for the locals. Another respondent said “The only solution of Balochistan issues is to give the of every natural source of from here to its residents. And to give all their basic rights of life”. They want that the resources taken from Balochistan should be used on Balochistan at priority.

Data collection:

A Questionnaire was developed based on the review of relevant literature which was extracted from available online literature e.g., journals, monographs, books, research articles, newspapers, and other relevant documents printed and disseminated by government or private institutions. The questionnaire comprised of both open and closed-ended items so for the open-ended items thematic analysis has been done. The open-ended items were related to the issues faced by the locals in Baluchistan and their respective solutions for the problems.

Data analysis:

Several questions were asked in the questionnaire from the targeted population of the province. The initial questions are about the individual's age, gender, and profession and the area they belong to because it is important to know the diversification of the answers from different people of different age groups, professions, and areas. After the initial information of the individual, the questionnaire addresses several concerns which are pertinent to the situation of Balochistan. The several significant questions asked by the individuals are discussed below.

The survey was conducted with a total sample of 150 individuals from different areas of Balochistan. The demographics of the sample are shown in the table. Out of the 150 sample, 88 were from the male gender and 47 were from the female gender (as shown in the figure 3.6) whereas the rest of the participants didn't reveal their gender. The mean age of participants was 28. About 25 of the participants were from Turbat which is the highest percentage of participants there is a maximum number of individuals lie between mid-adulthood. Moreover, the sample consisted of 81 students and 69 locals from Balochistan belonging from different professions. The sample size chosen is the educated class of the Balochistan.

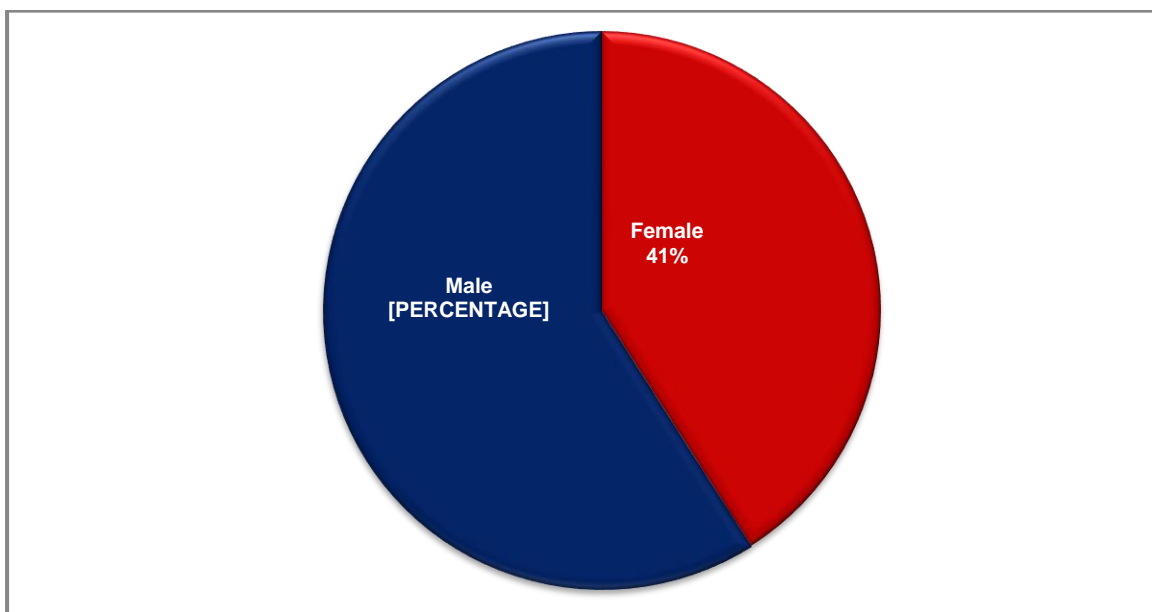


Figure 3.6 Male/ female participants

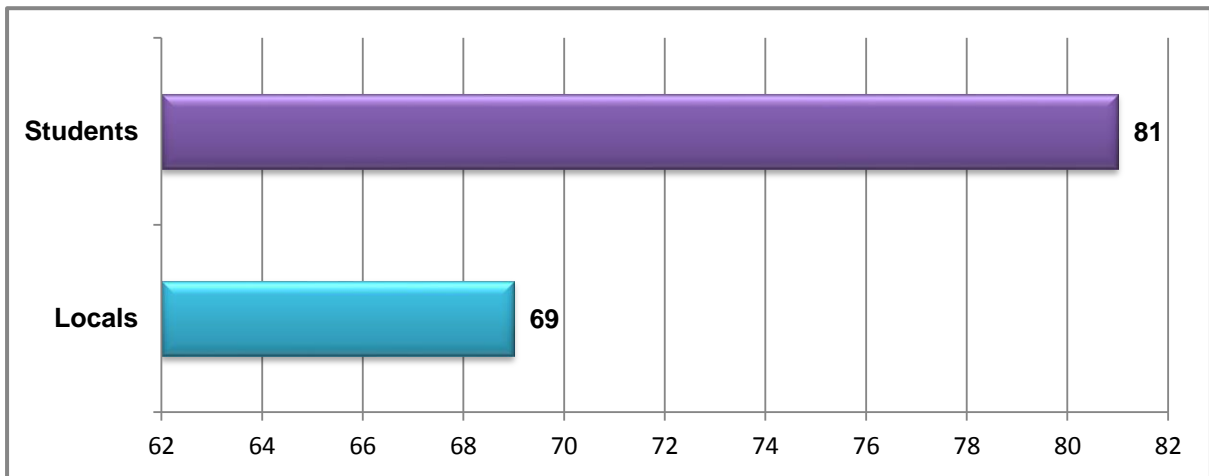


Figure 3.7 student and local participant ratio

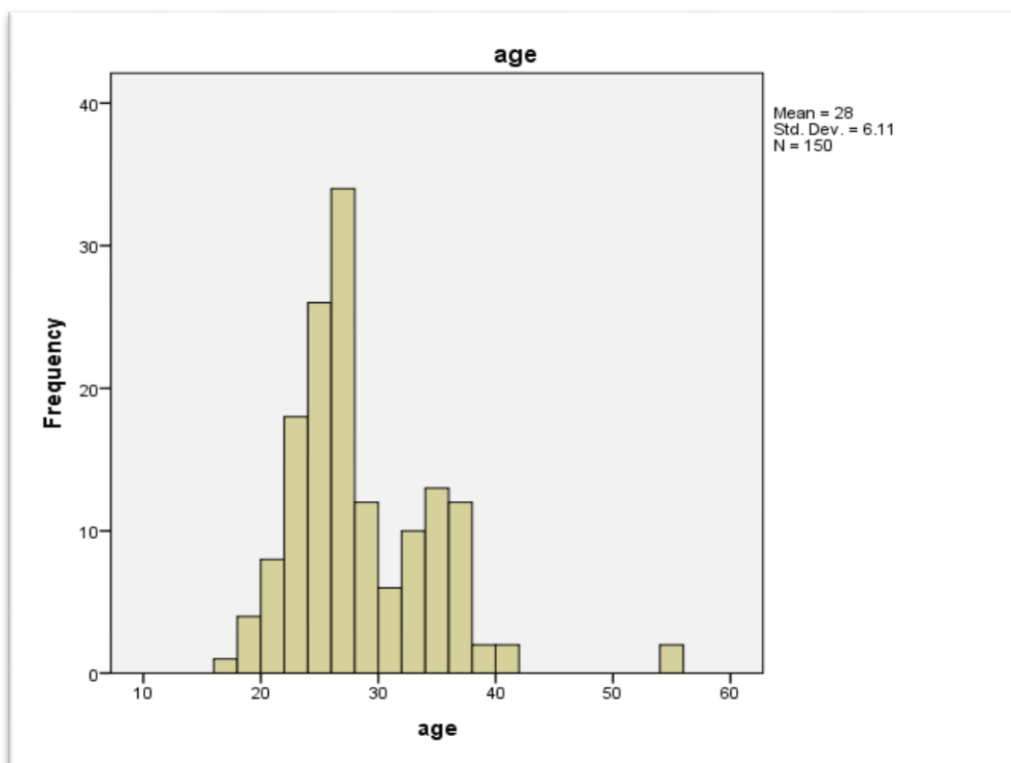


Figure 3.8 Age of participants

Data collection was done through a questionnaire by google forms for further convenience. The participants had the right to withdraw from the research whenever they want.

The data was collected from Baloch and Pashtun teachers, engineers, doctors, and locals of Baluchistan to get a true picture of Baluchistan's problems. There were no specific criteria for the inclusion of participants therefore, the sampling was convenient. The items in the questionnaire started by stating the main issues in Baluchistan according to people and what are the contributing factors towards the issue. According to 39% of individuals, the most contributing factor was socioeconomic status. These issues are aggravating the insurgency in Baluchistan. The pre-existing threats of militants and terrorism has also contributed to hybrid warfare. The sample of the research were educated individuals mainly locals and students of different universities. Half of the sample were aware of the hybrid warfare and the contributing factors of hybrid warfare. Therefore, it has been proved that the threatening environment and problems in Balochistan have helped foreign agencies to interfere and instigate hybrid warfare in it.

Q-1 What is the main issue of Balochistan according to you?

It is important to ask every individual about the basic understanding of the issue related to their province. Hence, they were asked about the main problems in Balochistan which leads to the instability in the province.

The individuals from all age groups, different professions, and areas are of the point of view that the main issues in Balochistan are socio-economic development, sub-nationalist threat, and foreign interference and their support to insurgent elements in the province. The distribution of the answer is discussed in figure 3.9 below.

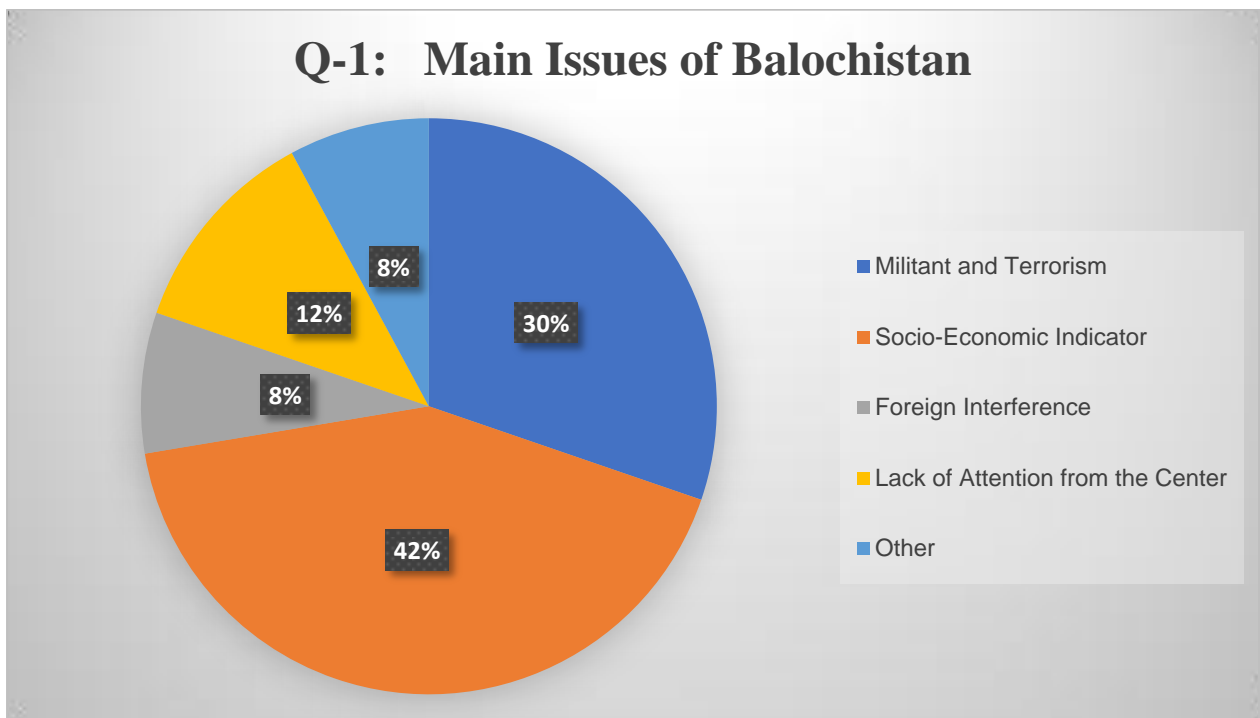


Figure 3.9 Main issues of Balochistan

Out of 150 individuals, 42% of respondents believe that the main reason for the instability in the province is the lack of socio-economic development due to which the overall progress of the province is very slow which has caused the instability in the province. The socio-economic indicators are very weak in the province which has to be addressed to stabilize the developmental activities in the province. 30% of the respondents believe that terrorism, militancy, and sub-nationalist threats from hostile elements are the main problem. 12% of respondents attribute the lack of attention from the center as the main problem in Balochistan. 8% of respondents are of the point of view that foreign interference is also the key factor of the issues in Balochistan. The remaining 8% of respondents believe that sectarian violence, drug smuggling, Sardari system as the causes of unrest.

Q-2 What is affecting your area in terms of instability?

The respondents were asked regarding the factors that contributed to the instability in the province. Figure 3.10 below describes the overall responses of the individuals.

Figure

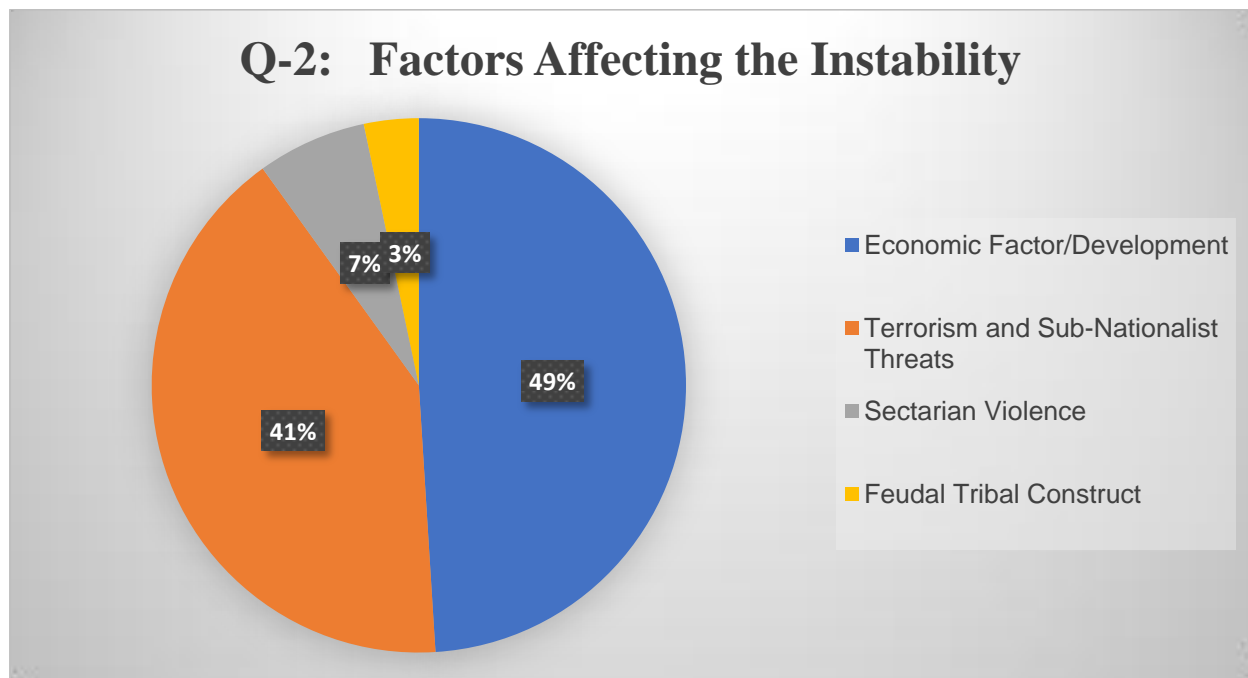


Figure 3.10 Factors affecting the instability

As per the responses, 49% of individuals believe that the main factor which is affecting the instability of the province is the economic factor. The province lacks economic and developmental activities which remains the main reason for the instability. Terrorism sub-nationalist threats remain the second major reason for instability in the province as 62 individuals (41%) mentioned it in the questionnaire. Sectarian violence and feudal tribal construct are the least factors affecting the instability of the province as 10% (7% and 3% respectively) respondents are of the view.

The main source of instability in Balochistan is due to terrorism. Data was generated to find out the ratio of terrorist attacks in Balochistan concerning the districts.

This data helped in answering the following things: the troubled districts of Balochistan, the type of attacks employed by terrorists to disrupt peace, district wise number

of casualties, comparison between the second half of 2020 and the first half of 2021's attacks and to corroborate if the attacks have increased in Southern side (CPEC) or not.

Awaran	24
Barkhan	4
Bolan	3
Chagai	3
Dera Bugti	1
Gwadar	5
Harnai	10
Kalat	2
Kharan	9
Khuzdar	4
Kohlu	8
Lasbela	3
Chaman	4
Loralai	3
Mastung	2
Nushki	2
Panjgur	10
Pishin	2
Quetta	5
Quetta	25
Sibi	15
Sohbatpur	1
Turbat	39
Washuk	2
Zhob	8
Total:-	194

Figure 3.11 Results from cities

Graph 1: Distribution of Terrorist Attacks in Balochistan in 2021

Awaran	51
Barkhan	3
Bolan	6
Chagai	6
Dera Bugti	34
Gwadar	4
Harnai	21
Kalat	5
Kharan	10
Khuzdar	6
Kohlu	11
Lasbella	1
Lehri	1
Loralai	3
Mastung	8
Naseerabad	4
Nushki	2
Panjgur	25
Pishin	1
Qilla Abdullah	12
Qilla Saifullah	1
Quetta	21

Sibi	21
Sohbatpur	4
Turbat	88
Washuk	7
Zhob	3
Total	359

Table 3.1 District Wise Incidents Second half 2020 (June-Dec)

As many as 194 terrorist attacks took place in Balochistan in the first six months of 2021 which is a decline of about 54% percent from the year 2020. As can be seen from the graphs, 359 terrorist attacks took place in the second half of 2020. These attacks were launched by various terrorists, Baloch sub-nationalist organizations, and violent sectarian groups. These terrorists' attacks claimed all 104 lives which consisted of 41 martyred from the civilians, 8 from the FC, 48 from the police, and 7 from the army. However, there was a decline from those killed in such attacks in the second half of 2020 – which claimed 143 lives comprising of 77 civilians, 6 police officers, 46 FC personnel, and 14 army officers.

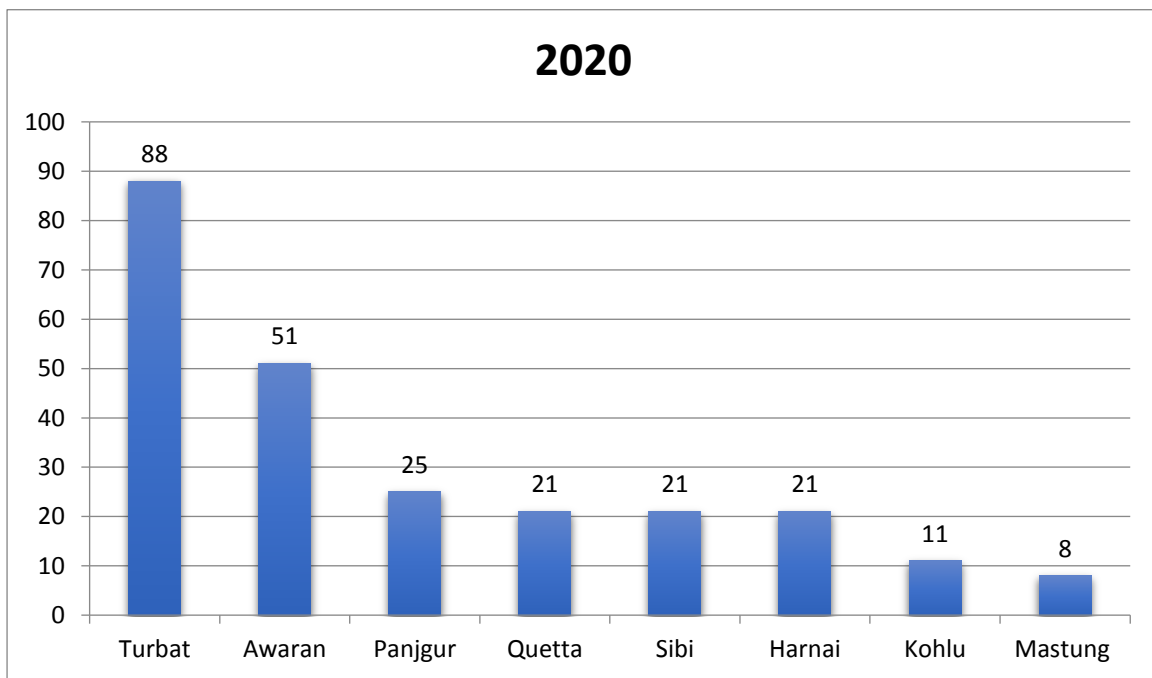


Figure 3.12 District Wise Terrorist Incidents in the second half of 2020

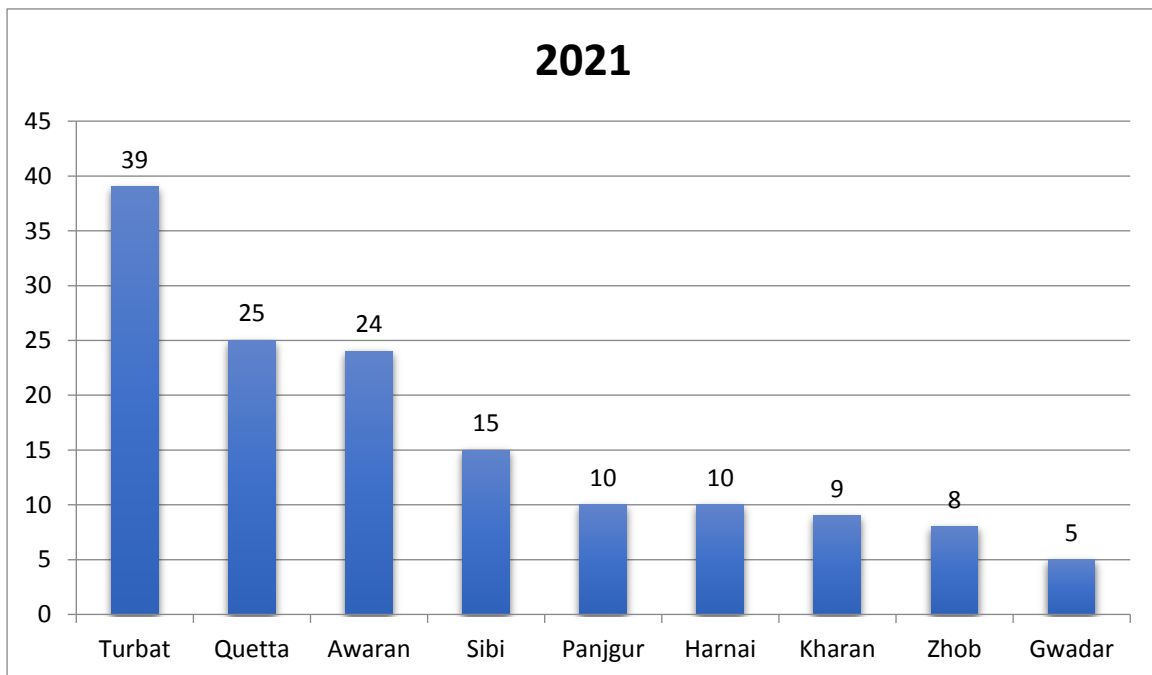


Figure 3.13 District Wise Terrorist Incidents in First Half of 2021

In figure 3.13, the data collected from 25 districts of Balochistan regarding terrorist attacks in the first six months of 2021 show that Turbat (40), Quetta (25), Awaran (24), Sibi (15), Panjgur (10), Harnai (10) Kharan (9), Zhob (8), and Gwadar (5) are the most affected in terms of terrorist attacks. This shows that these districts are the most troubled ones in recent times.

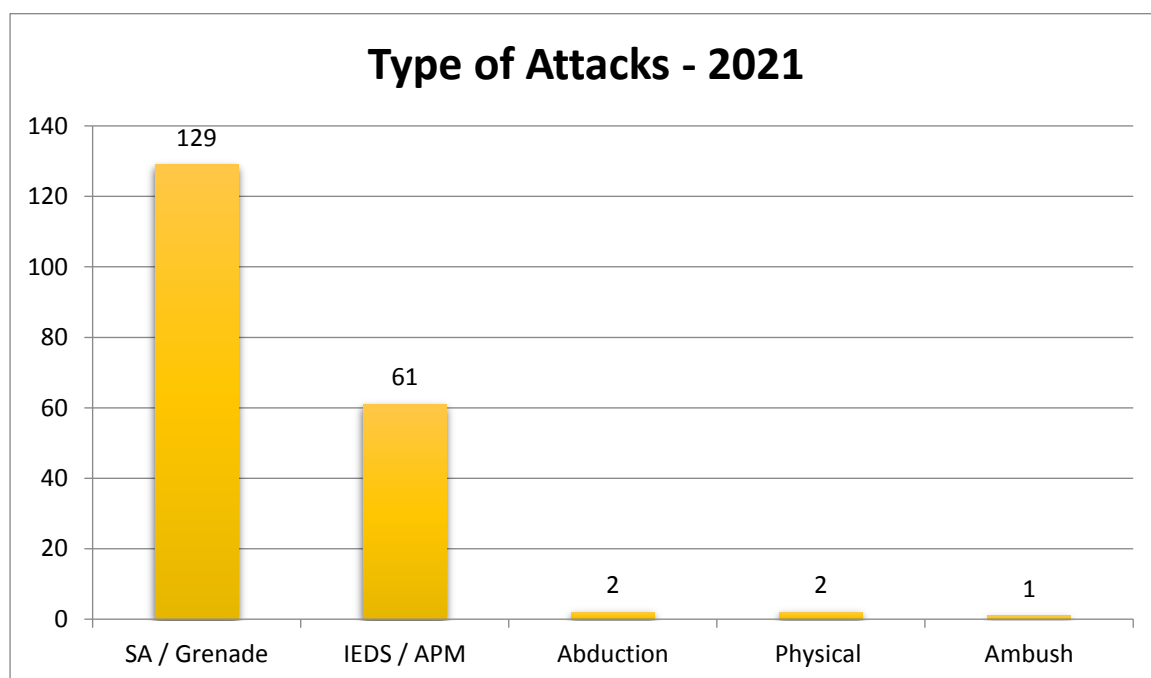


Figure 3.14 Terror Attacks

Table 3. 2

District	Total Terrorist Incidents	Attack Tactics				
		Grenade	IED/APM	Abduction	Physical	Ambush

Awaran	24	17	6	0	0	1
Barkhan	4	0	4	0	0	0
Bolan	3	2	1	0	0	0
Chagai	3	2	1	0	0	0
Dera Bugti	1	1	0	\$0	0	0
Gwadar	5	4	1	0	0	0
Harnai	10	6	3	1	0	0
Kalat	2	0	2	0	0	0
Kharan	9	9	0	0	0	0
Khuzdar	4	4	0	0	0	0
Kohlu	8	3	4	0	0	1
Lasbella	3	3	0	0	0	0
Chaman	4	3	1	0	0	0
Loralai	3	3	0	0	0	0
Mastung	2	2	0	0	0	0
Nushki	2	1	1	0	0	0
Panjgur	10	8	2	0	0	0
Pishin	2	1	1	0	0	0
Qilla Abdullah	5	3	2	0	0	0
Quetta	25	6	18	1	0	0
Sibi	15	5	10	0	0	0
Sohbatpur	1	0	1	0	0	0
Turbat	39	38	1	0	0	0
Washuk	2	2	0	0	0	0
Zhob	8	6	2	0	0	0

Total	194	129	61	2	1	1
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Q-3 Do you think foreign powers like India etc. have interests in Balochistan and are exploiting the unrest? If yes, then how are they executing it?

The question about the foreign interference or interests in the province was of utmost significance to determine the foreign players' interference as an integral part of hybrid warfare. Figure 3.15 has explained the response of the individuals on this critical question.

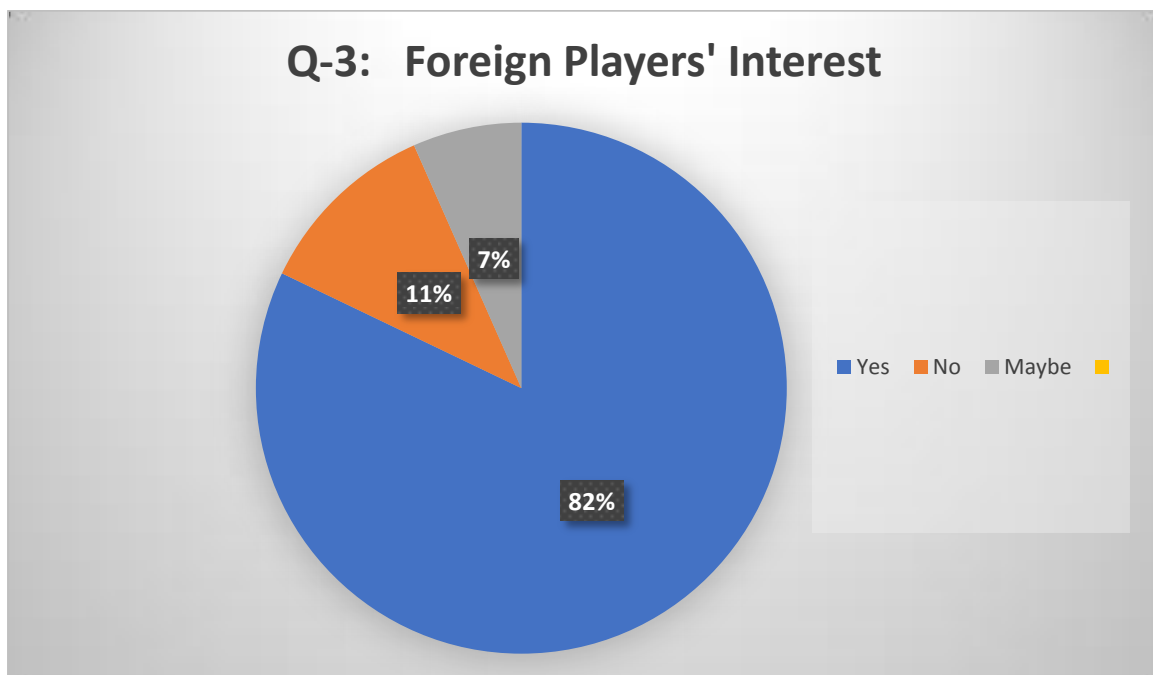


Figure 3.15 Foreign player's interest

The responses from the questionnaires corroborate that a significant number of individuals believe that foreign powers (especially India) interfere in the province. 124 individuals have mentioned that foreign actors especially India have a major role in the

province in exploiting the weak indicators and sponsoring terrorism in the soil of Balochistan. These individuals responded that India has been supporting the sub-nationalist and hostile elements in the province and creating instability in Balochistan. India has been using propaganda and information warfare as well in Balochistan to change the cognitions of the youth and to evoke the negative elements in the province. 17 individuals mentioned that due to critical factors like weak state machinery, the role of LEAs, and media perception there is no role of external actors in the province. However, 10 respondents are not sure about the external role in the province, and they have less knowledge about it.

Q-4 Do you think social media is being used to spread propaganda against the Law enforcement agencies (Police, FC, security personnel) working in Balochistan?

Social media is an important tool used by hybrid warfare actors against the targeted country's vulnerabilities to influence the population against the state. Figure 4 elaborates the responses of the individuals on the role of social media as a tool for propaganda.

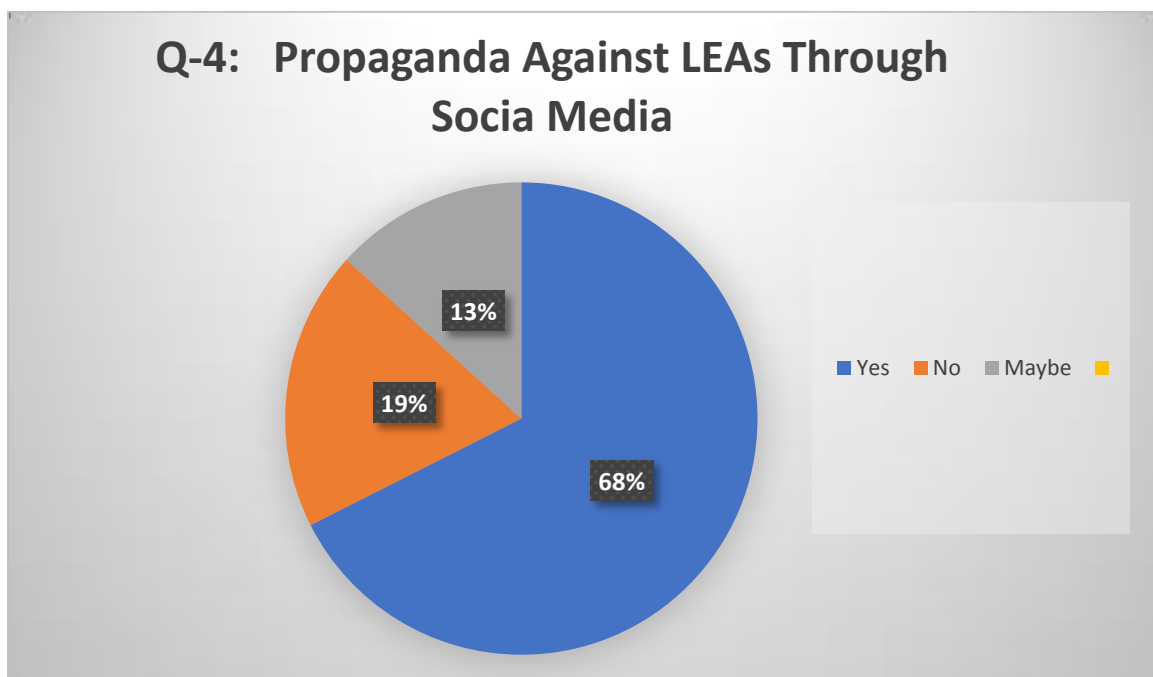


Figure 3.16 Propaganda Against LEAs Through social media

As per the data obtained from the questionnaire, 102 individuals agree that social media has been used to propagate propaganda against the Law Enforcement Agencies

working in Balochistan whereas, 29 respondents believe that there is no use of social media as propaganda tool against Law Enforcement Agencies. However, 20 respondents are not sure about the use of social media against Law enforcement agencies.

To cross-check the social media's role as a tool of hybrid warfare, an incident was also examined on social media.

Social media as a weapon:

SOCIAL MEDIA AS A WEAPON IN HYBRID WARFARE IN BALOCHISTAN

Psychological operations are an important part of hybrid warfare waged by hybrid warfare actors against an adversary state. It is carried out using media specifically social media to change the cognitions of the people. To assess this, an incident that took place in Kech Balochistan on May 26th, 2020, popularly known as Bramsh incident is taken as a case under observation. The incident was a robbery case in which a mother – Malak Naaz – was killed while resisting the robbery attempt by the robbers whereas her daughter Bramsh was injured during the robbery attempt (News Intervention, 2020). However, the incident was quickly shared on social media as Army was involved in the killing of the mother and it was a direct attack on Baloch honor. This was done to incite the people of Balochistan. On social media, Baloch sub-nationalists and their supporters blamed the state institutions for the incident. The hashtag #JusticeforBramsh became the leading trend on Twitter as shown in figure 3.17

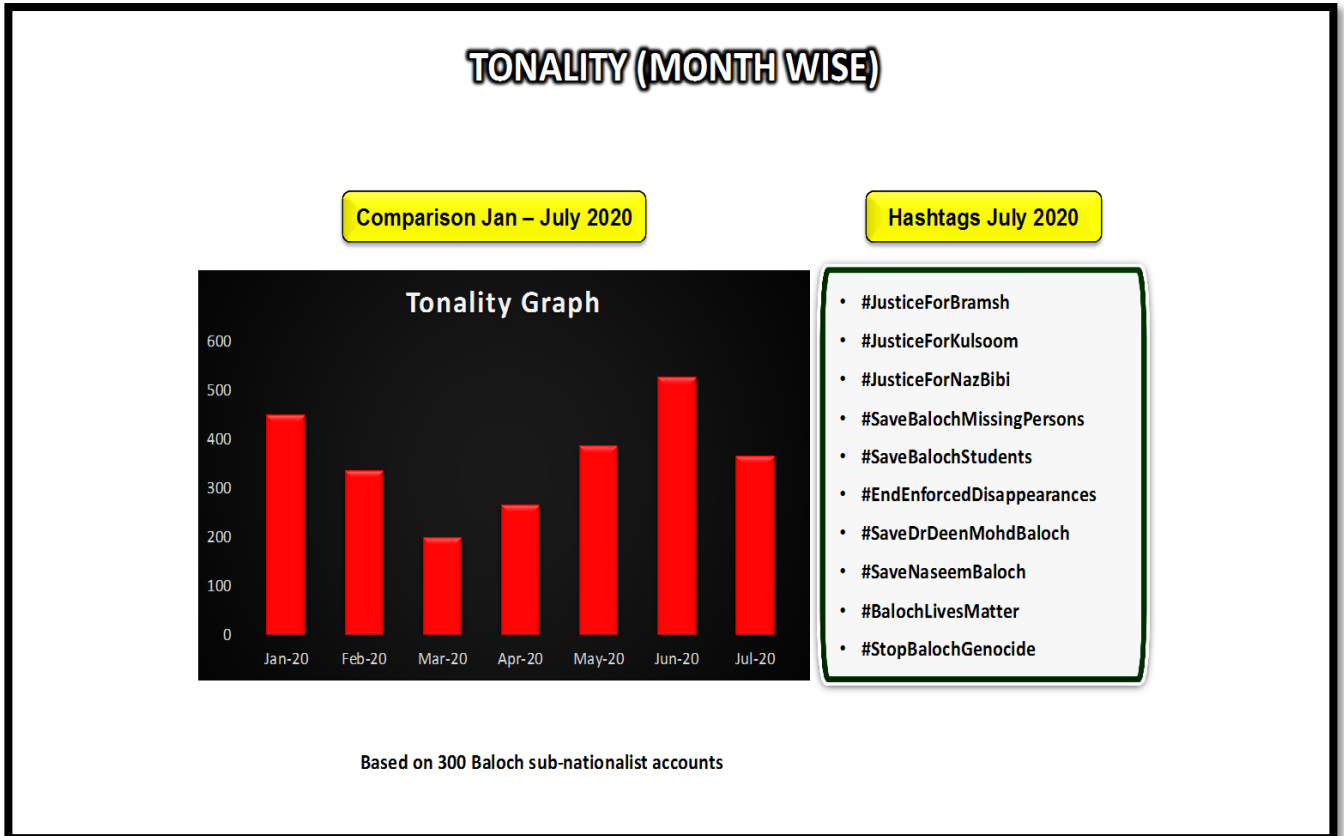


Figure 3.17 Tonality Graph



Figure 3.18 Prominent tweets

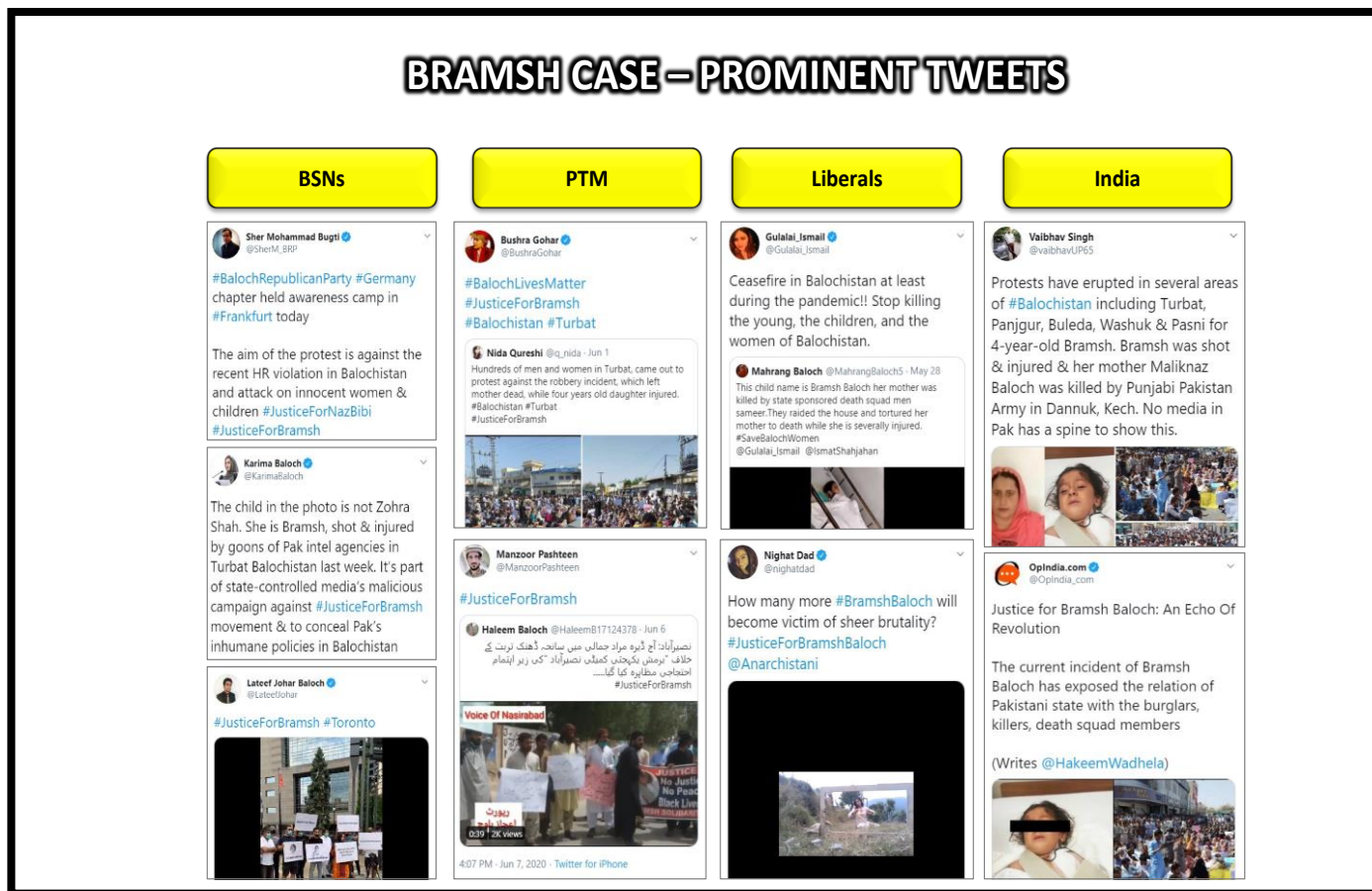


Figure 3.19 Tweets on Bramsh Case


As shown in Figures 3.17, 3.18 and 3.19 Baloch sub-nationalists like Sher Muhammad Bugti and Lateef Johar Baloch tweeted about the Pakistan army's involvement in the killing and the protests of Baloch dissidents in faraway places in Toronto and Germany. There were also tweets against Pakistan's intelligence agencies against the alleged killing of Bramsh's mother that were also covered. Moreover, Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) activists also actively participated in propagating the same narrative against the state institutions. Many Indian newspapers and Indian spokespersons participated in the same narrative which was that the killing of Bramsh's mother was executed by Pakistan's army.

This is an example of how social media was used as a weapon to tweak reality and to deceive the population against the state.

BSNs Trends/Tweets


Sohrab Baloch @SohrabBaloch

Justice should be universal regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity and nation. We should not allow anyone to be selective on human rights violations while ignoring others. It create chaos which we are witnessing today around the world. Balochistan demands #JusticeForBramsh




Basham Baloch @Basham_Baloch12

Intensive ground and air operations continue in Mastung and surrounding areas More than 40 people Went missing after arrest
#ReleaseAllMissingPersons
#SaveBalochMissingPersons




Shari Baloch @mm_shari

Being silent on Baloch students abduction by pakistani forces,will have impact on upcoming youths life.
#ReleaseAllMissingPersons
#SaveBalochMissingPersons




Faiz Baluch @Faiz_Baluch

Another masterpiece by talented artist Attaullah Baloch depicting Police torture on protesting Baloch students in Quetta.
#RestoreInternetInBalochistan
#SaveBalochStudents #Balochistan




MehlabNaseer @MehlabNaseer

#JusticeForBramsh
Listen to her pleas!
"Wahdê Cha é nonnokkâni dapâ poems pach gerag o, "I WANT JUSTICE" dayag bit! It hurts"
[Translate Tweet](#)




Peerak Baloch @PeerakBaloch3

Riyaz S/O Ibrahim R/O #Tump , kohad has been Abducted by Pakistan Security forces forcibly on 13 july 2020 at midnight time.
#SaveBalochMissingPersons @UN




Fareeda Baluch @Fareeda_Baluch

Stop criminalizing and torturing Baloch youth They have the right to live a peaceful life. No power on the Earth is authorized to abduct people and put them in the black hole of missing persons.
#SaveBalochStudents
#SaveFerozBaloch



Sami Parvez @BalochSami

Baloch families seek answers from Pakistan as more disappear amid insurgency via @Reuters #BalochMissingPersons #StopBalochGenocide #EndEnforcedDisappearances



Baloch families seek answers from Pakistan as more disappear amid insurgency
For over 11 years relatives of people who disappeared in the ...
@reuters.com

10:46 PM - Jul 19, 2020 - Twitter for Android

Figure 3.20 BSNs Trends

#JusticeforBramsh – PROMINENT TWEETS



Figure 3.21 justice for Bramsh tweets

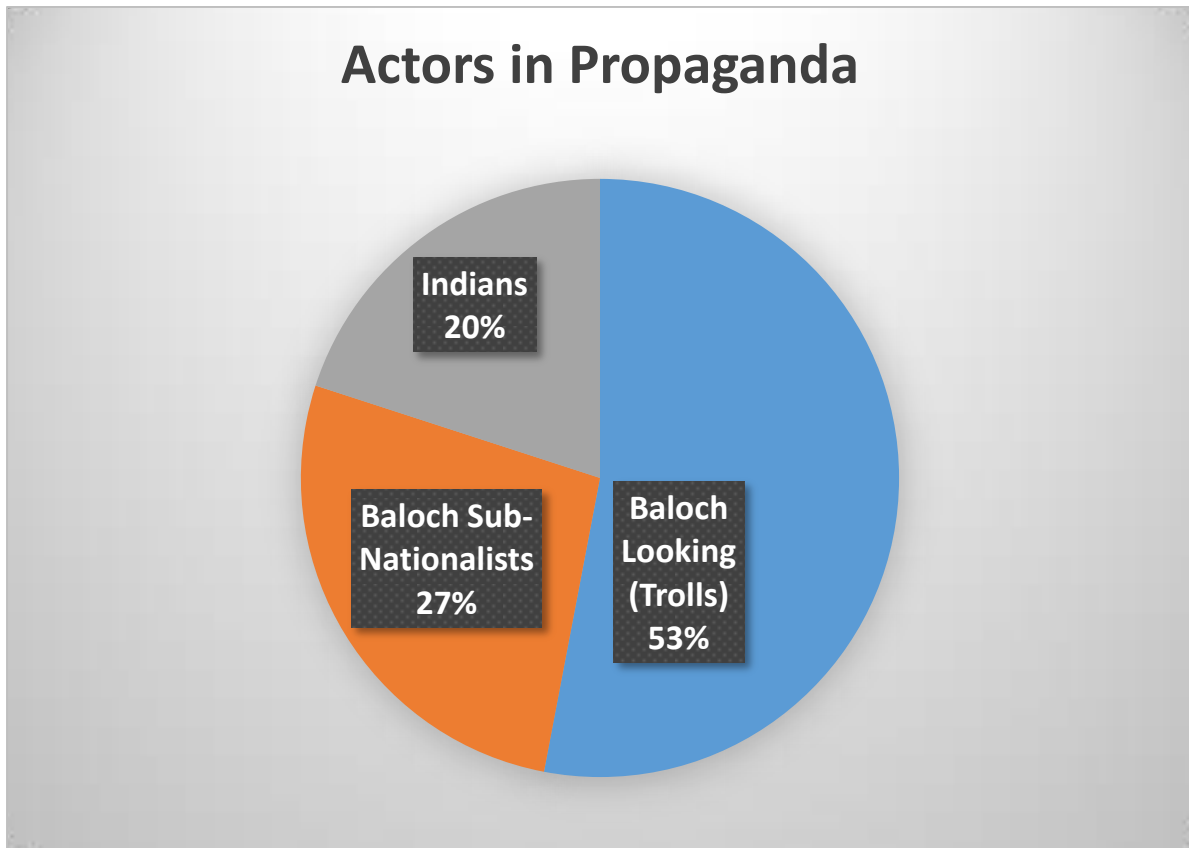


Figure 3.22 Actors in propaganda

Figure 3.22 shows that in the Bramsh propaganda, 53% of tweets generated on Twitter came from fake ids or troll accounts which were imitated as Baloch, 27% from Baloch sub-nationalists, and 20% from Indians and accounts operated from India.

Q-5 Do you know about hybrid warfare? How do you define hybrid warfare in the context of Balochistan?

Hybrid warfare includes the funding of separatist movements and insurgency in the adversary country to cause the country to weaken politically, religiously, and ethnically. Moreover, the proliferation of ammunition and armor to the separatist elements and funding them to ignite separatist elements in the country to weaken its social fabric (Bratko, Zaharchuk, & Zolka, 2021). The main goals of hybrid warfare are to elude head-on confrontation, weaken the adversary/ targeted country, and hamper its decision-making and policymaking. To carry out this, all tools are used to create instability and obscurity to avoid any sort of retribution and confrontation. These attempts are used in sync to either substitute a government or to control or to pressurize into a situation that is advantageous to the invader/aggressor.

Therefore, it is pertinent to know that what percent of the Baloch population are aware of the term hybrid warfare and its application in Balochistan. Figure 3.23 depicts the responses of the respondents regarding hybrid warfare in Balochistan.

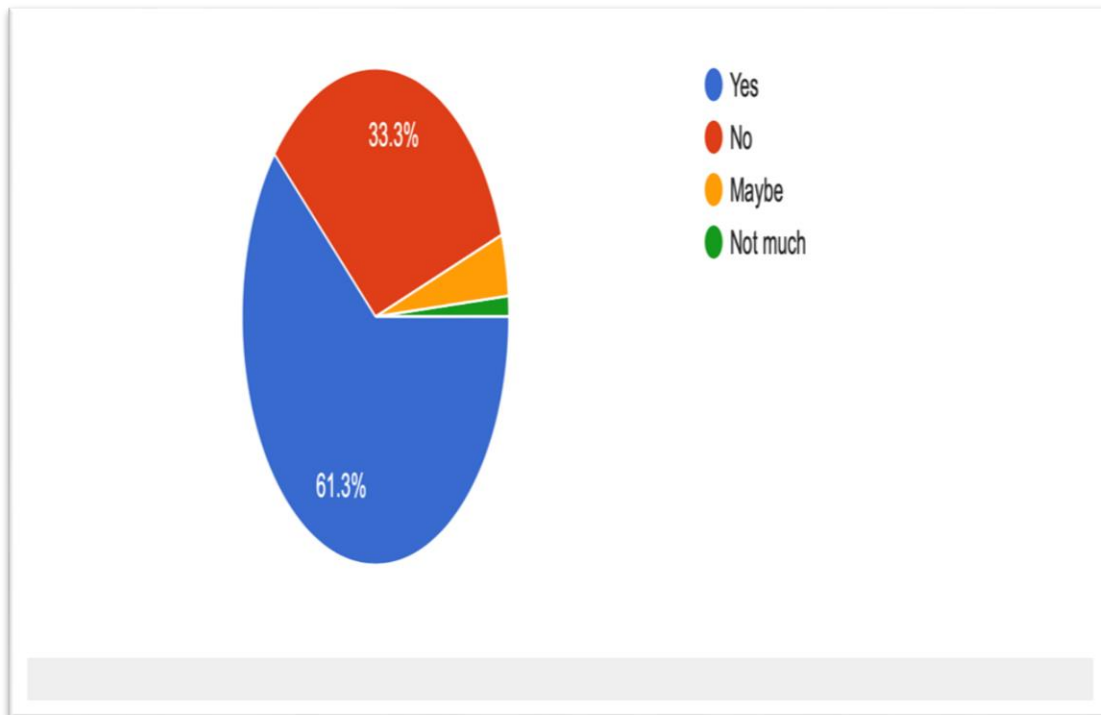


Figure 3.23 Hybrid warfare context in Balochistan

As per the available data, 61.3% of the individuals were familiar of the term hybrid warfare whereas 33.3% of individuals were not familiar with the term hybrid warfare.

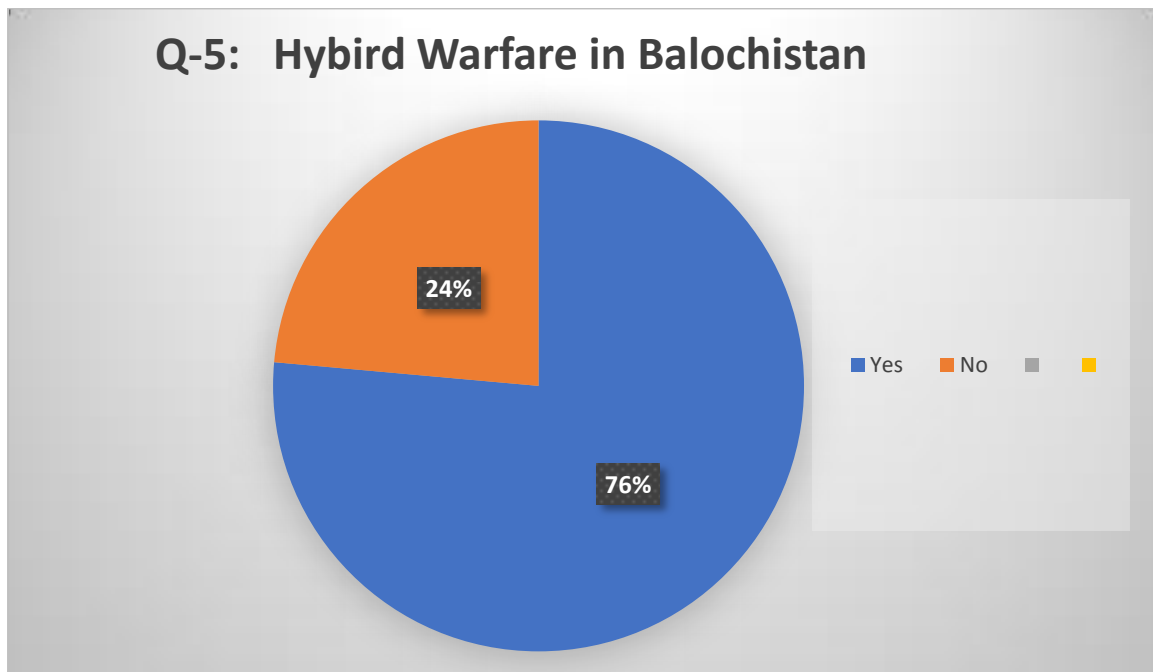


Figure 3.24 Hybrid warfare in balochistan percentage

As per the available data, 94 individuals believe that there is a strong heat of hybrid warfare in the province of Balochistan. They have explained that foreign players are using Balochistan as a battlefield of hybrid warfare. They are continuing exploitation of the weak indicators and pursuing propaganda against the state machinery which has been creating a gap between the local people and the central government. 57 people are of the point of view that there are no signs of hybrid warfare in the province instead it is states weakness due to which the instability in the province is constant.

The data collected explained that foreign players are using Balochistan as a battlefield to wage hybrid warfare. They are continuing the exploitation of the weak indicators and pursuing propaganda against the state machinery and creating a wedge between the local people and the central government. 57 people are of the point of view that there are no signs of hybrid warfare in the province.

The questionnaire comprised both open and closed-ended items so for the open-ended items, thematic analysis is carried out. Open-ended discussions were related to the issues faced by the locals in Baluchistan and their respective solutions for the problems.

Sampling:

150 questionnaires were conducted from different age groups in Balochistan which include doctors, engineers, and students to get the known information from the people who understand the situation of their province. Respondents were selected with the help of convenient and purposive sampling methods

For the number of respondents, random Baloch students were selected from eight Balochistan universities and the Baloch Council of Quaid-e-Azam University and Islamic International University, Islamabad. The questionnaires were sent to the following universities of Balochistan: University of Balochistan, BUIITEMS, University of Loralai, University of Turbat, Sardar Bahadur Khan University, Lasbela University of Agriculture,

Water and Marine Sciences, and Balochistan University of Engineering and Technology Khuzdar Campus. The universities were contacted through their concerned departments for the filling of the questionnaires.

Moreover, the population of Balochistan who belonged to different professions were also given the questionnaire online. They were mainly based in Kech, Mastung, Quetta, and other districts of Balochistan. Various steps were ensured before starting field data collection. Questionnaires were taken from the local community because they are the most vulnerable part after the implementation of a pro-security policy of government and increase in insurgency and other destructive events. For the collection of data two methods were utilized. One was the online submission of the questionnaires with some directions to fill the form which was sent to the respondents through email/WhatsApp for filling. After getting the responses, an analysis was carried of the responses. The collected data was translated and re-translated into English and analyzed under themes or sub-themes for a better understanding of the structure and chronology of results. Moreover, primary data regarding attacks and the nature of attacks was acquired from Law enforcement agencies and counter-terrorism organizations like NACTA. Results were analyzed along with existing literature.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods are used in the research methodology, to address the research questions. For the relevance of this study, the data collection through questionnaires is important for the validity of the existing problems in Balochistan faced by the general public. Thus, few significant questions are conducted to extract the viewpoints of the local people of Balochistan.

CHAPTERNO. 4: ANALYSIS

The last chapter presents analysis of the research results for each question within the context of the theoretical framework and research literature. The conclusions are provided in reference to each research question. Limitations and suggestions are also provided for further research on this subject.

Research question no.1

What are the perceptions of the local Baloch and students regarding the issues in Balochistan and hybrid warfare?

This question aims to highlight the perceptions of Baloch students and other locals regarding the issues faced by Balochistan. This research has divided the perceptions into six major categories ranging from socio economic development to law-and-order situation in the province. These 9 major reasons for the issues in Balochistan are socio-economic development, sub nationalist threats, sardari system, terrorists and militants, lack of attention from the center, foreign hostile agencies, sectarianism, law and order and drug trafficking. Out of 150 participants, most of the participants have attributed the socio-economic development as a major issue in Balochistan, Pakistan's enemies also want to weaken the nation economically, which means putting it further in debt. Some of the regions that have been problematic for Pakistan include Afghanistan, Iran, and India. (Iqbal, 2018). The reason of the issues in Balochistan are because of lack of economic developments and mega projects and because of this, the resources within Balochistan are exploited. The research conducted has shown that about 60% of local Baloch have summed the reason of issues in Balochistan is the lack of socio-economic development and then the second most prevalent reason to the issue is militants and terrorists. The individuals from all age groups, profession and areas are of the point of view that main issue in Balochistan are socio-economic development, sub-nationalist threat and foreign interference and their support to hostile elements in the province. The next most common reason given by the participants is the militants and terrorists attack. Since the inception of CPEC, there has been an increase in terrorists' attacks in the southern areas of Balochistan. Out of 150 participants, only 1% considered drug

smuggling as the major problem in the province. Remaining 1% believed worsening law and order situation as the major cause. Furthermore, from the data collected sub-nationalist threat, lack of attention from the center, foreign hostile agencies influence contributes 12%, 14% and 10% respectively to the issue.

The study also explored how the vulnerabilities and fault-lines existing in Balochistan can be exploited by a Hybrid warfare actor (foreign hostile powers in the case of Balochistan) to achieve their strategic goals. For that purpose, questionnaires were conducted from local Baloch from different spheres and Baloch students from eight universities. Most of the participants were aware of the term hybrid warfare and were also aware of how foreign agencies were exploiting the vulnerabilities and problems of Balochistan by either funding the separatists or creating unrest. The questionnaire has yielded many different definitions of hybrid warfare according to the locals and students of Balochistan. The results extracted after using SPSS indicate that more than sixty percent of the participants knew about the intensity of hybrid warfare. Out of the 60%, 20% participants came up with different definitions of hybrid warfare. According to some it is the combination of traditional and non-traditional techniques of war. Balochistan is considered to be the sensitive part of Pakistan. It has been found susceptible to the threats and propaganda posed by foreign actors. The vulnerabilities of Balochistan have been exploited by foreign powers (Iqbal, 1992). The results of the study showed that there are many underlying causes that lead to exploitation and are the causes of the unrest in Balochistan. Some of the reasons that haven't been found are influence of foreign powers, media as a source of spreading propaganda and inception of CPEC. It is concluded that India's illicit activities in Balochistan are meant to sabotage CPEC (Khetran, 2017). One of the reasons that foreign powers are funding the insurgents and exploiting the unrest is to sabotage the CPEC. Therefore, they have enhanced their covert operations to sabotage the economic uplift of Balochistan by sabotaging CPEC and Gwadar. Hostile agencies opposed to the CPEC projects have enhanced clandestine/covert operations to sabotage it to harm the prospects of Pakistan making a much-needed economic recovery (Zaman, 2017). As from the literature and the data collected and analyzed, it has been corroborated that the foreign powers have created unrest to sabotage mega projects for their own benefit. The literature has also reviewed how India, US, South Korea, Russia, Iran, Afghanistan, China, UAE, and European countries have interests in Balochistan. The literature focused on how human rights' violations are being given wide coverage for their vested interests. The descriptive

analysis has shown that more than 100 participants agreed that the violent and some non-violent organisations are being funded by foreign agencies in Balochistan. Moreover, they also said that these foreign agencies are funding the leaders of the insurgencies for their benefits. This heavy influence of foreign powers is instigating hybrid war in Balochistan. Moreover, the picture of law enforcement agencies that media is portraying plays a key role in manipulating the perceptions of Baloch locals.

Psychological warfare and cyber warfare particularly social media play a key role in waging hybrid warfare in the target country by manipulating the minds of the targeted population. In the same manner, social media has been used to propagate negative sentiments against the FC personnel and law enforcement agencies working in Balochistan. This is being done to create a wedge between the people and the law enforcement agencies. Furthermore, the research has also revealed how since the initiation of the CPEC project, Balochistan has drawn the attention of foreign powers towards itself and that has led to the increase in attacks and threats towards the southern areas of Balochistan. The areas of Balochistan which are under most threat and attacks are Turbat, Awaran, Mastang, Kharan, Chaman and Kech. The opening of Gwadar, the strategic deep-water harbor, as the port of entry for the CPEC increased the significance of Balochistan (Zaman, 2017).

This research has also unveiled the reason why are these areas prone to unrest. The reasons are terrorists' attack, foreign interest, and the inauguration of CPEC.

Research question no. 2

What tactics/ nature of incidents are prevalent in different districts of Balochistan?

To evaluate the number of attacks, nature of attacks, and type and number of casualties which occurred district wise in Balochistan and propaganda on social media, the data is taken from newspapers, field sources, law enforcement agencies, military's media wing. For this, I employed – prime variables with their corresponding variables for the perusal of the internal security situation of Balochistan and application of hybrid warfare in it.

Total Terrorist Incidents: The total terrorist incidents that have occurred in Balochistan district wise.

Attack Tactics: This prime variable has a sub-set of five sub-variables. The attacks executed by the terrorists through the following ways: use of grenade, IEDs, Abduction, Physical, and ambush. Since each district of Balochistan is facing different threats therefore it was important to segregate all the attack tactics and nature of the attacks separately to cautiously analyse and monitor the security situation district wise.

This variable includes district wise data on the various tactics used by the terrorists and insurgents which includes grenade attacks, improvised explosive device blasts (IEDs), Abduction, ambush, and physical attacks like beheadings, firing, target killings, etc.

Casualties and Injuries: This variable consists of the casualties and injuries that occurred district wise in Balochistan of the civilians, and security forces including the FC, Army, and the police. This is considered as an important indicator to evaluate the level and the trends of security in Balochistan.

This data will help in answering the following things: the troubled districts of Balochistan, the type of attacks employed by terrorists to disrupt peace, the number of casualties district wise, comparison between last year and this year's attacks and to corroborate if the attacks have increased in Southern side (CPEC) or not.

As many as 194 terrorist attacks took place in Balochistan in the first six months of 2021 which is a decline of about percent from the year 2020. As can be seen from the graphs, 359 terrorist attacks took place in the second half of 2020. These attacks were launched by various terrorists, Baloch sub-nationalist organisations, and violent sectarian groups. These terrorist attacks claimed in all 104 lives which consisted of 41 martyred from the civilians, 8 from the FC, 48 from the police, and 7 from the army. However, there was a decline from those killed in such attacks in second half of 2020 – which claimed 143 lives comprising of 77 civilians, 6 police officers, 46 FC personnel, and 14 army officers

The data collected from 25 districts of Balochistan regarding terrorist attacks in first six months of 2021 show that Turbat (40), Quetta (25), Awaran (24), Sibi (15), Panjgur (10), Harnai (10), Kharan (9), Zhob (8), and Gwadar (5) are the most affected in terms of terrorist

attacks. Moreover, the tactics used by the terrorists and militants during 2021 in the districts of Balochistan have been grenade, Implosive explosive devices (IEDs), Anti-personal mines (APM), abductions, ambush, Physical which includes firing, suicide bombing, and target killing. A total of 129 incidents have been conducted by the use of grenades or small arms, 61 by the use of IEDs or Anti-Personal Mines (APM), 61 are conducted by using IEDs or Anti-Personal mines (2 from abduction, 2 from physical, and one from ambush).

In Turbat, the most common tactic used by the militants to disrupt peace and instability has been the use of grenades (38) and IEDs (1). In Quetta, the most common tactic used by the militants to attack in Quetta has been IEDs (18), grenade (5), and abduction (1) of the civilians. In Awaran, the most common tactic used by the militants to attack in Quetta has been grenade (17), IEDs (6), and ambush (1).

In Sibi, the most common tactic used by the militants to disrupt peace and instability has been the use of IEDs (10) and grenades (5).

In Harnai, the most common tactic used by the militants has been grenade attacks (6) use of IEDs (3) and abduction (1) of the civilians.

In Kharan, the most common tactic used by the terrorists has been the usage of grenades (9).

Research question no.3

Which militant groups are active in Balochistan and what are their areas of influence?

BLA was ideologically headed by late Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, whereas it is operationally managed/controlled by Hyrbyar Marri. Hyrbyar now lives in London and passes instructions to BLA militant commanders for sabotage activities including IED attacks, mine laying, target killing, abduction for ransom, extortion and intimidations to civilians and government officials. Its area of influence includes Kohlu, Loralai, Sibi, Harnai, Mastung, Quetta, Nushki, Kalat, Panjgur & Khuzdar.

Baloch Republican Army (BRA): BRA was established in 2006 and is headed by Brahmdagh Bugti, who shifted from Afghanistan to Switzerland during 2011. Its operational commanders are in Afghanistan, close to Pakistan-Afghan border in Spin Boldak area. They

mostly target gas installations and electric transmission lines in Sui / Dera Bugti with intermittent attacks on Frontier Corps (FC) posts / troops. They are also active in sabotaging Railway lines on Sindh - Balochistan border. They have been placing mines on tracks mostly in Sui, Dera Bugti, Pir Koh, Baiker and Pelawagh areas, killing hundreds of innocent men, women, and children. Balochistan Republican Party (BRP) is the un-registered political wing of this militant organization.

Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF) was founded by Jumma Khan Marri in 1964. Dr Allah Nazar Baloch now heads this organization. BLF is mainly active in Mekran, Mashkay, Awaran and Khuzdar. BLF operates in semi urban areas and has some affiliates in and around Quetta. It is involved in target killing, mine laying, kidnapping for ransom, IEDs' blast and rocket firing. Balochistan National Front (BNF) is the political mouthpiece of BLF. BLF undertakes anti-state activities exclusively in Mekran Division. Presently, BLF is having a foothold in Pasni, Jiwani, Turbat, Mand, Mushkay, Awaran, Panjgur & Gwadar where it undertakes target killing of settlers, LEA's personnel and conducts other terrorist activities.

Lashkar-e-Balochistan (LeB) is headed by Javed Mengal who the son of Atta Ullah Mengal is and, son in law of Khair Bux Marri. Noor Din Mengal s/o Javed Mengal is its operational commander. They move between UK and Dubai. The organization is present in Karachi, Hub, Khuzdar Kalat & Awaran. Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) politically supports it. LeB is involved in target killings, IED blasts, and abductions for ransom. BNP-M's political support provides space to their terror activities.

Untied Baloch Army (UBA) was formed by Zamran Marri alias Mehran s/o Khair Bakhsh Marri after developing differences with his elder brother Hyrbyar Marri, who heads BLA. UBA mainly operates in Quetta, Mastung, Kohlu & Barkhan areas (Interview with Law Enforcement Agency officer who was posted in Quetta, July 2021).

Baloch Student Organization-Azad (BSO-A) was headed by Vice Chairperson late Karima Baloch . BSO (A) had become a recruitment platform for BLA and BLF. 90% of recruits who join militant organizations are affiliated with BSO-Azad. There is also a struggle between rival militant groups to attract the bulk of recruits provided by BSO-Azad. Its areas of influence are educational institutions and urban areas of Balochistan (Law Enforcement Agency officer posted in South Balochistan, July 2021).

Baloch Republican Guards (BRG) is headed by Mir Bakhtiar Khan Domki, the organization claimed to be an ally of BRA and assert to work hand in hand alongside BLA saramchars for the freedom of Balochistan. Their manifesto revolves around the restoration of Greater Balochistan from alleged occupied forces (i.e Pakistan and Iran). The organization is active in places dominated by Domki tribe, which include areas from Bakhtiarabad to Sibi, especially in Tehsil Lehri (Law Enforcement Agency Personnel, July 2021).

Lashkar e Jhangvi (LeJ) mainly operates in Quetta, Pishin, Mastung and Bolan. It concentrated in Balochistan after its camps were cleared by the US forces in Kabul and Kandahar after their invasion in Afghanistan in 2001. The Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan – the architect of LeJ is its silent backer (Majeed, 2021).

Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has footprints in Zhob, Gawal, Quetta & Loralai, while Jundullah operates along Pak-Iran border, Mashkhel, Turbat, Taftan, Dalbadin and Noshki etc.

The targets hit by the militants are military personnel, posts of the law enforcement agencies, and convoys. These tactics have claimed as shown in figure 1.6 in all 104 lives which consisted of 41 martyred from the civilians, 8 from the FC, 48 from the police, and 7 from the army in first of 2021. However, in such attacks in second half of 2020 claimed 143 lives comprising of 77 civilians, 6 police officers, 46 FC personnel, and 14 army officers.

Research question no. 4

Have the attacks shifted to the Southern side of Balochistan closer to CPEC?

This research aimed at finding the ratio of attacks on Balochistan before the inauguration of CPEC and after it. Although Balochistan was forever under threat of terrorists and militants, but it has been seen that CPEC has increased the number of attacks in Balochistan. So, the research aims at finding the view of the Baloch people regarding it. Moreover, research cross examines that with the factual data collected from law enforcement agencies regarding the attacks.

Descriptive analysis of the item has shown that more than 80% of the Baloch students and locals have responded that after since the initiation of CPEC, there has been a drastic increase in the number of attacks in Balochistan. Moreover, from the thematic analysis of the

open-ended question, it is clear that due to the projects like CPEC, the southern areas of Balochistan are continuously under threat and attacks from militants and insurgents. One of the items in the questionnaire asked the participants to highlight the areas which were prone to unrest and what were the potential reasons for the unrest. The respondents highlighted areas like Kech, Mastang, Awaran, Turbat, Chaman, Kharan as the most prone to unrest due to the terrorists or insurgents. Most of the areas are closer to Gwadar and CPEC are under the red flag.

In the 2nd half of 2020 about 359 terrorist attacks took place and in the first half of the year 2021 this figure has been declined to 194 that is more than half. A decline of about 54% terrorist attack has been seen in different areas of Balochistan.

Research question no. 5

Is social media being used as a tool of hybrid warfare?

Psychological operations are an important part of hybrid warfare waged by hybrid warfare actor against an adversary state. It is carried out using media specifically social media to change the cognitions of the people. To assess this, an incident which took place in Kech Balochistan on May 26th, 2020, popularly known as Bramsh incident is taken as a case under observation. A mother – Malak Naaz – was killed while resisting the robbery attempt. Her daughter Bramsh was injured in the incident (News Intervention, 2020). The incident was made viral on the social media to falsely blame the army of the death of Bramsh's mother. It was propagated as a direct attack on Baloch honour.

Baloch sub-nationalists like Sher Muhammad Bugti and Lateef Johar Baloch tweeted about it and the protests took place in Toronto and Germany against the Pakistan's intelligence agencies for the alleged killing of Bramsh's mother. Moreover, Pashtun2Tahafuz Movement (PTM) activists also actively participated in propagating the same narrative against the state institutions. Many Indian newspapers and Indian spokespersons participated in the same narrative which was that the killing of the Bramsh's mother was executed by Pakistan's army.

This is an example of how social media was used as a weapon to tweak the reality and to deceive the population against the state.

Conclusion:

The research explored the perceptions of the people of Balochistan against the problems occurring in their districts of Balochistan. Moreover, the research dwelled on their understanding of the term hybrid warfare. The research also found the interests of the foreign powers in Balochistan specifically with respect to the initiation of CPEC.

The research highlighted the connection between the current insurgency and the susceptibility to wage hybrid warfare in Balochistan and the militant groups' areas of influence. The research also explored that the attacks have shifted to the southern side and closer to CPEC. Furthermore, the research also shows that social media propaganda is being used as an active tool of hybrid warfare against the law enforcement agencies.

The sample taken for the research included Baloch from different professions and Baloch students scattered in various universities of Balochistan and Islamabad. The research has attempted to find out the common and educated Baloch's point of view regarding different factors that contribute to the issues of Balochistan and the possible solutions to it. The current unrest in Balochistan is due to several factors. As the respondents highlighted in the research, the causes of unrest are lack of development, sub-nationalist threat, internal feud between the tribes, militants and terrorists, and lack of attention from the center. The Sense of Alienation prevails in Baloch as the Baloch feel they have no participation in national and provincial decision making, especially with regards to execution of mega projects. Moreover, they have also shown concerns over the Sardari system. Over the period of history, governments have felt compelled to appease Sardars and their reach to the masses remains limited. Most of the respondents shared their concerns regarding the biggest issue in Balochistan as the socio-economic deprivation. According to them, Unemployment is another major factor for the subversion in the population. Poor Communication Infrastructure curtails the exploration of untapped mineral resources, agriculture, fishing industry, and tourism. CPEC and other road development work can enhance the capacity of these industries. Frequent tribal violence has destroyed peace and hampered development and investment.

Exacerbated with slow pace of development, illiteracy, and abject poverty, people are mostly critical of government and fall easy prey to nationalist forces' propaganda.

According to the research the main reason for the unrest and instability in Balochistan is due to the influence of foreign powers and foreign funding. Social media, militants, sub nationalist threat, lack of attention from the center all contribute to the hybrid warfare in Balochistan and the districts that are targeted mostly by the hybrid warfare actor are Turbat, Quetta, Kech, Mastung, Awaran, Sibi, and Kharan. The areas which are closer to Gwadar and CPEC have been under massive terrorist attacks in recent years. Social media has been used as a tool for turmoil to incite the locals against the law enforcement agencies. Moreover, social media had been used to influence the minds of people by negatively portraying the work of the law enforcement agencies. The research concludes that there are many fault-lines existing in Balochistan and there is instability in Balochistan which makes it an ideal place to wage hybrid warfare. Moreover, the hybrid warfare actor is using both kinetic and non-kinetic means to disrupt the peace and stability in Balochistan and eventually CPEC.

The research also sheds light on the fact that not all Baloch are separatists but majority of them demand greater autonomy and access to resources. Moreover, the present insurgency (2004 onwards) is the protracted one since it has the educated middle-class part of it as well. Moreover, the insurgency has shifted from the north-east to the south-west – closer to CPEC which again corroborates the interests the foreign powers to wage hybrid warfare. The research has also found a strong correlation between the vulnerabilities of Balochistan and the susceptibility to become a target of hybrid warfare of the enemy state.

No insurgency can sustain without external support and this research proves that there is strong evidence of external support and funding to the militant organizations of Balochistan.

Involvement of foreign powers has complicated the security situation in Balochistan. While it is paramount to address socio-economic inadequacies for wellbeing of the people of Balochistan, sustainable peace is unlikely until proxies of foreign powers are quashed through cogent application of smart power. Furthermore, the situation warrants proactive exterior maneuvers to check/ expose foreign interference in Pakistan at appropriate international forums.

Recommendations:

Hybrid warfare in Balochistan needs to be countered through a well-thought-out strategy. External sponsors and their domestic partners need to deal without being encumbered by political expediencies. It does not entail military measures only but calls for a combination of military, political and social actions, involving all elements of national power (EoNP). On the military front, there needs to be zero tolerance to those involved in acts of sabotage and target killings, squeeze the space within which they operate and strengthen the intelligence networks. On the political side, all the Baloch nationalist forces and those who have taken recourse to belligerency must be encouraged to join the political mainstream and made part of the political power sharing arrangement. While on diplomatic front, the propaganda of India and other foreign powers in creating unrest in Balochistan while covertly supporting sub-nationalists' elements all over the world should be vehemently exposed. Some specific recommendations are proffered in succeeding paragraphs.

Foreign Involvement in Balochistan: The case for declaring all militant Baloch groups as 'terrorist organization' should be taken up at all international forums especially the UN; besides, countries like US, EU, Canada and other friendly countries shall be pursued to restrict activities of Baloch Sub-nationalists in respective countries. There is an urgency to raise the issue of Indian involvement in Balochistan; proof (especially about Kulbhusan Jhadav) may be included as one of the important agenda points in 'Comprehensive Dialogue' process. Iran and Afghanistan governments to be engaged to deny use of their soil by Baloch Sub-nationalists and TTP against Pakistan. Misperception / long held fear of Baloch people that their resources will be taken away by foreigners / investors / other provinces needs to be addressed. The Participation / job opportunities for local population in mega projects like Gwadar deep seaport to accrue maximum benefit.

Redirected National Focus towards Balochistan: Implementation on 'Pur Aman Balochistan' project in letter and spirit is essential to remedy Balochistan unrest. Some suggestions are:

Lead Role by Federal Government: Federal government should proactively play the lead role and address issues at priority.

Political Engagement: Provide space to those willing to talk and come back in the mainstream.

Aggressive Exterior Manoeuvre: Effective exterior manoeuvre through friendly countries for exposing the foreign involvement. Priority of this manoeuvre may focus on engaging US, and Islamic countries.

Selective Operations: Targeted operation against militants at an appropriate time.

Addressing the Youth Problems

The youth should be provided with education and equal opportunities. There should be an increase in special quota in leading institutions of the country. Provinces to be asked to extend maximum cooperation.

Incentives for Masses: There should be job opportunities for the local Baloch and free distribution of agricultural implements specially tractors etc. under federal oversight and soft loans for livestock.

Improving Internal Security Situation in Balochistan

The 21st Constitutional Amendment should be dealt across the board including the Baloch Sub-nationalists inciting the insurgency. There needs to be a fair and timely execution of Surrender Policy by Balochistan Government to accrue positive dividend. The program *Pur Aman Balochistan* was started in 2015 and it basically laid down the supplying of funds by the federal and provincial governments on proportionate basis to stiffen the resolve of the militants (Ferraris) to terminate insurgency and contribute as a citizen (Kundi, 2019). This program should be implemented in letter and spirit as it will be able to curb militancy and misguided youth.

There should be a proactive application of The Protection of Pakistan Act (POPA) & the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) by booking Baloch Sub-nationalist in absentia to curtail freedom of movement / fund transfer of properties both inland and international. The FC and civil government to effectively control the move / illegal settlement of Afghan Refugees (ARs) and issuance of CNIC to check fast changing demography. There should be a restoration of Trust deficit attitude in Pashtun belt and priority construction of CPEC via

Zhob. There is a need to neutralize Baloch Sub-nationalist / terrorist training camps inside Afghanistan by exerting diplomatic pressure on Afghanistan and taking up the issue internationally. There needs to be an expedited legal prong at each rung by all concerned quarters (Head Money, 4th Schedule and Fair Trial Act 2013). There should be a speedy execution of “Quetta Safe City Project” being centre of gravity of Balochistan. There should be a further improved Border Management including speedy establishment of “Chaman Transit Trade Facility” with biometric system to check illegal entry of Afghan individuals / weapon/ammunition/explosive. There should be “Proactive Media Management “to highlight the true situation and expose the true face of anti-state elements to negate the misperceptions in masses. Besides, there should be Political stability / reconciliation with sense of ownership by all stakeholders. There should be speedy initiation of mega projects like Ricko Diq through transparent international tendering for massive economic activity.

Limitations:

This research was constrained because of several reasons. First and foremost was the sensitivity of the topic. Moreover, the research was limited to the educated section of the Baloch population. There were security reasons as well as the Covid-19 pandemic for not conducting field research and to have direct interaction with the locals – even though interviews were not the methodology employed in this research. However, the true picture could have been better portrayed if the researcher had access directly to the locals. Moreover, the willing respondents were few, so it was difficult to build an accurate picture of the situation in Balochistan. This research could be more in-depth and extensive if barriers of resources were removed. This research could have been done on a large scale to ensure generalizability. Moreover, the research also did not include all the factors involved in waging hybrid warfare due to the limited time frame. Further research on hybrid warfare should address all the aspects of hybrid warfare to fully present the true picture of hybrid warfare in the context of Balochistan.

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APPENDICES

9/22/21, 1:45 PM

Problems in Balochistan

Problems in Balochistan

This research survey is conducted from 150 Baloch and Pushtun students and locals of Balochistan to get a true picture of Balochistan's problems. This is anonymous so answer it properly but do mention your region and gender. Thank you very much for taking out time.

*Required

1. Which area of Balochistan you belong from? Please mention it (For example Kech, Turbat, etc) *

2. What is your age, gender, and profession? *

3. What is the main issue of Balochistan according to you? *

Mark only one oval.

- Socio-Economic Factors
- Sub-nationalist Threat
- Internal Feud between the tribes/ Sardari System
- Militants and Terrorists
- Lack of attention from Center
- Foreign Hostile Agencies' Interference
- Sectarianism
- Law and Order
- Other: _____

9/22/21, 1:45 PM

Problems in Balochistan

4. What is affecting your area in terms of instability? *

Mark only one oval.

- Sectarian Violence
- Subnationalist Threat
- Terrorists/Militant Organisations
- Feudal Tribal Construct
- Economic Factors/ Development

5. Do you think foreign powers like India etc have interests in Balochistan and are exploiting the unrest? If yes, then how are they executing it? *

6. Do you think social media is being used to spread propaganda against the Law enforcement agencies (Police, FC, security personnel) working in Balochistan? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

9/22/21, 1:45 PM

Problems in Balochistan

7. Do you know about hybrid warfare? How do you define hybrid warfare in the context of Balochistan? *

8. Have you heard about the term hybrid warfare?/ Do you know about this term? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Other: _____

9. What is the role of Law Enforcement Agencies in creating peace in Balochistan? *

10. Do you think the leaders of Baloch insurgency are being funded by the foreign powers for their interest? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Other: _____

9/22/21, 1:45 PM

Problems in Balochistan

11. Is the border fencing having any positive effect? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

12. What are the troubled districts of Balochistan and why are they more prone to unrest? *

13. Are there sectarian, ethnic and economic divisions/problems in your area? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

14. Have the attacks in Balochistan increased after the announcement of CPEC? *

Mark only one oval.

- YES
 NO

9/22/21, 1:45 PM

Problems in Balochistan

15. Do you think foreign powers are trying to disrupt the CPEC projects? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

16. Do you have any grievances related to your province? *

17. Do you think there is a solution to the Balochistan issue? please share your concluding remarks. *

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