Vol. 24(2), 2024, pp.367-387, ISSN: 2072-0394(Print), ISSN: 2663-8886(Online)

Patterns of Students' Radicalization in Public Sector Universities of Pakistan

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Abstract

This research article takes an in-depth look at the complex issue of student radicalization within public sector universities in Pakistan. By exploring how radicalization emerges and evolves among students, the study sheds light on the various factors that contribute to these troubling patterns, given that student radicalization is a growing global concern. The research employs a mixed-method approach by incorporating both quantitative and qualitative elements. The tables include quantitative data, such as percentages and counts derived from structured surveys that measure students' perceptions on issues such as financial support, political trust, and attitudes toward religious extremism. By combining numerical analysis with subjective interpretations, the study effectively integrates both methodologies, confirming its status as a mixed-method research design and in conclusion section it is discussed in detail. Pakistan's diverse socio-political landscape makes this issue particularly relevant. The article carefully examines the historical background, socio-economic influences, and educational environments that play a role in shaping student radicalization. The goal is to offer a detailed and insightful understanding of what drives and manifests this phenomenon among students in Pakistan.

Keywords: Radicalization, Religion, University Students, Islamic Sharia, Religious Extremism, Armed Jihad, Social Media

Introduction

Radicalization in Pakistan is a pressing issue with serious consequences for both regional and global security (Khan, 2021). It refers to the process where individuals, particularly the young and vulnerable, embrace extremist beliefs and participate in actions that defy societal norms, frequently leading to violence. Over time, radicalization has transformed and now represents a major threat to Pakistan's stability and broader international security (Khan, 2011). The factors fueling radicalization in Pakistan are varied and intricate. Economic inequalities, political instability, sectarian conflicts, and religious extremism all contribute to the issue in a country where tradition and modernity often intersect. Historical events, such as Pakistan's involvement in the Afghan Jihad of the 1980s and the War on Terror, have significantly shaped the radicalization landscape (Hussain, 2005).

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Extremist groups in Pakistan often manipulate religion, which many turn to for comfort, as a tool to recruit, indoctrinate, and mobilize followers. This influence has even penetrated the country's educational institutions, including universities, where some students and faculty members have been drawn into extremist networks. The rise of digital technologies and social media has further amplified the reach of extremist propaganda, making it more accessible, particularly to tech-savvy youth. In today's globally connected world, the spread of extremist ideologies has become more widespread and difficult to contain (Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2022).

The consequences of radicalization in Pakistan are profound, impacting domestic stability and fuelling regional tensions and terrorism (Javed, Elahi & Nawab, 2022). The rise of numerous extremist groups both within and beyond Pakistan's borders poses a significant security threat. Moreover, the effect on the country's youth—often considered a valuable asset—raises serious concerns for Pakistan's future (Noor, 2023). The increasing trend of student radicalization, especially in public sector universities, underscores the critical need to study this issue. The implications reach beyond Pakistan, influencing regional stability, global security, and the well-being of the younger generation.

Objectives of the Study

This section outlines the specific objectives of the research, including:

- To identify patterns of student radicalization in public sector universities.
- To analyze the socio-economic and political factors contributing to radicalization.
- To assess the impact of radicalization on academic environments.
- To propose effective strategies for preventing and countering student radicalization.

Review of the Literature

The roots of radicalization can be traced back to the late 18th century, particularly during the French Revolution (McBride, 1998). At that time, the term 'radical' was used to describe political groups pushing for sweeping, often revolutionary changes in society. These radicals aimed to overturn existing power structures and build a more egalitarian world. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, various ideological movements emerged, challenging the status quo (Smith, 1979). Political ideologies such as socialism, anarchism, and nationalism gained traction among those willing to use radical methods to pursue their goals (Smith, 2022). In the 20th century, the concept of radicalization garnered increased theoretical attention with the emergence of

political theories that delved into the radicalization process. Scholars such as Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi examined how colonialism and oppression (Bulhan, 2004). Influenced the psychology of radicalization. Social psychologists also began to study radicalization more closely, exploring how individuals become involved in extremist ideologies and groups. The contributions of psychologists like Leon Festinger and Stanley Milgram provided valuable insights into the psychological mechanisms behind radicalization (Ross, 2011).

The concept of radicalization gained significant prominence in the aftermath of 9/11, as global terrorism and extremism (Shahzad et al., 2020). Became major concerns. Governments and academic institutions intensified their efforts to understand the radicalization process, particularly about Jihadist extremism. Today, discussions about radicalization often focus on individual vulnerabilities to extremist narratives and the recruitment tactics used by extremist groups, especially online (Shafieioun & Haq, 2023). The concept has also been subject to debate and critique. Some argue that it can be too broad and stigmatizing, potentially leading to unfair profiling of individuals based on their beliefs or affiliations. Scholars and practitioners acknowledge that radicalization is a complex and context-dependent process. It is not a straightforward trajectory, and there is no single explanation for why individuals become radicalized (Weggemans & De Graaf, 2017).

The concept of radicalization has evolved significantly over time (Borum, 2011), influenced by various historical, intellectual, and political developments. The term gained widespread attention in official and academic circles following the 'homegrown' terrorism of the London attacks on July 7, 2005. In the UK, radicalization has often been equated with Jihadization (Mullins, 2007). These 'homegrown' jihadists are typically described as individuals who live locally and act either independently or in small groups with limited resources and often rudimentary skills, such as basic bomb-making. Emerging from a decentralized Al-Qaeda network, they maintain connections through networks that link these local cells. As Robert S. Mueller, former FBI Director, observed, "The information age means (people) don't need training camps to become a terrorist" (Kohlmann, 2008). Virtual communication allows these individuals to stay connected with broader extremist networks. This evolving phenomenon has led to the need for new terminology to accurately describe and address the changing landscape of radicalization.

The process of leading young individuals towards violence is now known as 'radicalization.' This term specifically pertains to the homegrown aspect of radicalization, where the transformation often happens within the individual's own country or even within their own home (Brooks, 2011). Experts frequently connect this process to political, social, and religious ideals and ambitions, which often involve the use of violence to attain these goals (Clutterbuck, 2010). Arun Kundnani, a British expert on terrorism, has highlighted that the concept of radicalization has

become a key focus in the later stages of the 'war on terror,' providing a new lens through which to examine Muslim minorities (Kundnani, 2012). Since the September 11 attacks, there have been numerous cases of homegrown terrorism in various countries, where individuals act within their nations using their nationality and citizenship. Although these individuals are sometimes labeled as 'lone wolves' due to their solitary actions, they are often connected to networks that facilitate their travel to regions linked with jihad and help them plan their activities within their own countries.

These individuals might start by working in groups, often referred to as 'cliques' in Marc Sageman's terms or they may form small bands within their neighborhoods, mosques, or community organizations where they regularly meet. They sometimes adopt the 'Al-Qaeda label' as a way to legitimize their local groups or organizations, a practice that has been common since the 2000s. This label can initially serve to unite them, and they might work together in these groups before carrying out their activities (Sageman, 2012). There is an urgent need to understand the factors that contribute to radicalization and the rise of violent extremism (Marlies Sas et al., 2020). This paper examines the radicalization phenomenon with a focus on elements that are particularly relevant within the higher education sector. Since no single risk factor can be pinpointed as the primary cause of radicalization, identifying what drives individuals to commit violent acts in pursuit of religious, political, or ideological goals is complex and lacks straightforward answers (Echele, 2023).

The reasons why some individuals turn to radicalization and violent extremism involve a variety of psycho-sociological factors (European Commission, 2019). A common pattern observed among radicalized individuals in Pakistan—and globally—is that many have had difficult childhoods, often marked by the absence of a parent, and have a history of criminal activities during their teenage years or early adulthood. A key factor frequently highlighted by experts and in the research, literature is the concept of social exclusion, which plays a significant role in this context (Pfundmair et al., 2022).

Radicalization in Pakistan

A historical overview of radicalization in Pakistan reveals a complex journey shaped by a mix of geopolitical factors, social dynamics, religious ideologies, and regional conflicts.

History of Radicalization in Pakistan

The roots of radicalization in Pakistan extend back to the period before its independence in 1947 when it was part of British India. Movements like the Khilafat Movement and the All-India Muslim League played pivotal roles in advocating for a separate homeland for Muslims. After gaining independence, Pakistan initially

experienced a moderate political and social climate. However, the early years were marked by tensions between religious and secular forces, especially regarding the role of Islam in governance (Pervez, 2020). The 1960s and 1970s saw the rise of Islamist political parties such as Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), which sought to introduce Islamic principles into Pakistani society and were active in student activism on university campuses. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 significantly influenced the region, with support from the U.S., Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan going to the Afghan mujahedeen fighters. This intervention led to an influx of foreign fighters and arms, setting the stage for the rise of radicalization and extremist groups.

In the 1980s, General Zia-ul-Haq's military regime implemented policies aimed at Islamizing the country (Laghari et al., 2021), including the introduction of Sharia law and a push for religious education. These policies contributed to the spread of conservative and extremist ideologies. The 1990s saw an increase in sectarian violence, with extremist groups targeting religious minorities and engaging in terrorism. During this time, militant organizations like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) emerged. Following the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan became a key player in the U.S.-led War on Terror. While cooperating with the international community, some extremist groups intensified their activities, particularly in the tribal areas along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Between 2007 and 2009, the Pakistani military conducted major operations in Swat Valley and Malakand to combat the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other militant groups, marking a significant shift in counter-extremism efforts.

In the 2010s, Pakistan introduced the National Action Plan (NAP), a comprehensive strategy for counter-terrorism, and carried out military operations against extremist strongholds. The country also took steps to address radicalization and curb hate speech. Despite these efforts, Pakistan continues to face challenges from domestic extremist groups and international terrorist organizations. Pakistan's strategic location, particularly its proximity to Afghanistan, has made it a crucial player in regional and global security. The conflict in Afghanistan has had spill over effects on Pakistan (Kaura, 2022), contributing to radicalization and the presence of militant sanctuaries in border regions. Sectarian violence, especially between Sunni and Shia Muslims, exacerbated by extremist groups, remains a significant issue. Additionally, Pakistan's network of religious seminaries (madrasas) has a complex role in spreading extremist ideologies. While many madrasas offer education and religious training, some have been criticized for promoting radicalism, prompting ongoing government efforts to reform and regulate the madrasa system.

The Significance of Studying Radicalization Among Pakistani University Students

For nearly a millennium, universities have played a crucial role in society, starting with the earliest institutions like Bologna, Paris (later known as Sorbonne), and

Oxford. Castells (2001) Outlines four fundamental functions that universities have historically served: shaping and spreading ideology, identifying and nurturing influential elites, generating and applying knowledge, and training a skilled workforce. These roles highlight the extensive influence universities have on various societal aspects. This article aims to explore the mindset and factors that drive highly educated youth towards radicalization and involvement in terrorist activities. Understanding radicalization among Pakistani university students is critical due to its significant impact on multiple fronts: Pakistan's internal stability, regional security, global safety, and the overall well-being of young individuals.

Research Methodology

The research takes a mixed-method approach, starting with a quantitative phase aimed at identifying the factors that drive radicalization among educated youth. To gather data on the extent of radicalization and its contributing factors, structured surveys were distributed to university students across Pakistan. A stratified random sampling method was used to ensure a representative and diverse sample. After this, a qualitative phase was carried out to explore the students' perspectives more deeply and understand their mindsets. Qualitative methods were used to understand the issue of student radicalization in public universities in Pakistan. Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with university professors and experts to gather detailed insights into why students may be drawn to radical ideas. These interviews helped explore their views and experiences on the topic. Additionally, the researchers used thematic analysis to review the interview data, identifying common themes and patterns in students' attitudes and beliefs. This approach allowed for a clearer understanding of the factors influencing radicalization among university students. The data primarily through tables, the research employs a mixed-method approach by incorporating both quantitative and qualitative elements. The tables include quantitative data, such as percentages and counts derived from structured surveys that measure students' perceptions on issues such as financial support, political trust, and attitudes toward religious extremism. This quantitative aspect provides a broad statistical overview of trends within the student population. Simultaneously, certain aspects of the data reflect qualitative insights. For instance, questions that seek to understand students' opinions on the role of religious organizations or their trust in the political system capture subjective views and beliefs, which are qualitative in nature. These responses, though categorized and presented numerically, are rooted in qualitative perspectives. By combining numerical analysis with subjective interpretations, the study effectively integrates both methodologies, confirming its status as a mixed-method research design.

Research Design

The research employed a descriptive survey design to examine a particular population, integrating both quantitative data from surveys and qualitative insights

from interviews with university students. By combining these methods, as suggested by Kombo and Tromp (2010); Cresswell (2010), the study aimed to provide a deeper understanding of the research objectives.

Data Collection Methods and Tools

The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. According to Bryman (2015, p.36), quantitative research adopts a deductive approach, treating social reality as something objective. For this study, data was gathered through questionnaires distributed to 100 students at public universities across Pakistan, yielding uniform and quantifiable data (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). On the other hand, qualitative research takes an inductive approach, focusing on individuals' interpretations of their social world and moving away from purely scientific models (Bryman, 2015, p.36). This aspect of the study involved in-depth interviews with university professors and experts on radicalization, providing richer insights into the complexities of youth involvement in extremist activities and the subjective analysis is provided in the conclusion.

Data Analysis

The study involved detailed data collection and analysis from 808 out of 1000 questionnaires distributed to students across public sector universities in Pakistan. Data editing, summarization, and classification were performed using SPSS, applying both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Qualitative data was analyzed to identify recurring themes. Researchers visited universities personally to gather accurate, firsthand insights into student attitudes toward radicalization. Of the respondents, 426 (52.7%) were male and 382 (47.3%) were female.

Descriptive Statistics

Total Participants:	808
Male:	426 (52.7%)
Female:	382 (47.3%)

Institute Wise and Gender Distribution

All the collected data was gathered and separated gender-wise to see the active participation of both the gender following table indicated all the sample universities.

Table: Institute Wise and Gender Distribution

Institutes	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Bahaudin Zakria University Multan	39	12	51
Karakoram International University Gilgit-Baltistan	17	52	69
LUMHS Jamshoro	46	29	75
Mehran University	9	14	23
Punjab University	34	38	72
Quaid-e-Azam University	31	48	79
Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University	60	28	88
Sindh university Jamshoro	39	37	76
University of Baluchistan	21	84	105
University of Karachi	40	27	67
University of Peshawar	46	57	103
Total	**382**	**426**	**808**

The table shows the gender distribution of 808 students across various Pakistani institutes. Overall, there were more male respondents (426) than female (382). However, gender distribution varied by institution. At Bahaudin Zakria University Multan, females were more represented, with 39 female students compared to 12 males. In contrast, the University of Baluchistan had 84 male students and only 21 females, while at Karakoram International University Gilgit-Baltistan, there were 52 male students and 17 females. These figures highlight the differing gender compositions across institutions, reflecting broader trends in higher education enrolment in Pakistan.

Q.1 Your Satisfaction with the financial\Psychological help you get from your family

Count		Your Satisfaction with the financial help you get from your family					Total
		V. poor	Poor	Fair	Good	V. Good	
Institute	Bahaudin Zakria University Multan	3	2	10	13	23	51
	Karakoram International University Gilgit-Baltistan	5	3	22	27	12	69
	LUMHS Jamshoro	1	2	13	19	40	75
	Mehran University	0	1	3	10	9	23
	Punjab University	2	4	13	27	26	72
	Quaid e Azam University	6	2	12	30	29	79
	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University	4	8	12	28	36	88
	Sindh university Jamshoro	3	2	20	18	33	76
	University of Baluchistan	5	8	18	39	35	105
	University of Karachi	5	7	4	21	30	67
	University of Peshawar	4	1	16	45	37	103
Total		**38**	**40**	**143**	**277**	**308**	**808**

The table above illustrates students' satisfaction with the financial and psychological support from their families across various educational institutions in Pakistan. Among the 808 students surveyed, 308 rated the support as "Very Good" and 277 as "Good." Conversely, 38 students felt dissatisfied, with 40 rating the support as "Poor" and 143 as "Fair." Satisfaction levels varied, with the University of Baluchistan showing higher satisfaction, while Mehran University had more students expressing dissatisfaction. These findings emphasize the critical role of familial support in students' well-being and academic success across Pakistani institutions.

Table I: Satisfaction with the financial or psychological help to get from family

Categorical Responses	n	%
Very Good	308	38.1188%
Good	277	34.2822%
Fair	143	17.69801%
Poor	42	5.19801%
Very Poor	38	9.90099%
Total	**808**	**100.00**

Table I categorically says that n = 585 (72.401%) responses are more than good and very good level of financial or psychological help to get from family, n = 143 (17.69801%) are little bit get help from family with the financial or psychological satisfaction, and n = 80 (9.90099%) to be got help from family. This statistical outcome does not provide significant elements for radicalization.

Q.2 Your concept about the role of religious organization at your institute

Count		Your concept about the role of religious organization at your institute					Total
		V. poor	Poor	Fair	Good	V. Good	
Institute	Bahaudin Zakria University Multan	5	4	20	15	7	51
	Karakoram International University Gilgit-Baltistan	4	13	22	20	10	69
	LUMHS Jamshoro	13	13	19	18	12	75
	Mehran University	2	2	9	5	5	23
	Punjab University	8	14	20	20	10	72
	Quaid e Azam University	15	14	19	22	9	79
	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University	9	9	20	30	20	88
	Sindh university Jamshoro	6	20	29	15	6	76
	University of Baluchistan	20	16	30	26	12	104
	University of Karachi	6	10	27	13	11	67
	University of Peshawar	13	13	43	26	8	103
Total		**101**	**128**	**258**	**210**	**110**	**807**

The table above presents students' perceptions of religious organizations' roles at educational institutions in Pakistan. Among 807 students surveyed, 258 rated the role as "Fair," 210 as "Good," and 110 as "Very Good." Meanwhile, 101 students held negative views, and 128 rated it as "Poor." Perceptions varied by institution, with Mehran University having more positive views and the University of Baluchistan having more negative ones. These findings highlight the diverse opinions on religious organizations' influence, emphasizing the need for institutions to align religious activities with the diverse beliefs of their student body, promoting inclusivity and respect.

Table II: Your concept about the role of religious organization at your institute

Categorical Responses	n	%
Very Good	110	13.61386%
Good	210	25.99009%
Fair	258	31.93069%
Poor	128	12.62376%
Very Poor	102	12.62376%
Total	**808**	**100.00**

Table II indicates that n=320(39.60396%) have shown their satisfaction with religious organizations n=258(31.93069%) indicated that they have influence n=230(28.46534%) indicated that they affect their academics so 488(60.39603%) have shown dissatisfaction and it may cause a radicalization if not handled properly.

Q.3 Your trust in the present political setup

Count		your trust in the present political setup					Total
		V. poor	Poor	Fair	Good	V. Good	
Institute	Bahaudin Zakria University Multan	3	7	21	14	6	51
	Karakoram International University Gilgit-Baltistan	12	19	18	13	7	69
	LUMHS Jamshoro	14	14	28	13	6	75
	Mehran University	1	7	7	5	3	23
	Punjab University	6	17	17	18	14	72
	Quaid e Azam University	15	20	27	13	4	79
	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University	23	14	22	18	11	88
	Sindh university Jamshoro	34	14	17	10	1	76
	University of Baluchistan	33	24	16	17	15	105
	University of Karachi	8	13	18	18	10	67
	University of Peshawar	10	26	34	19	14	103
Total		**159**	**175**	**225**	**158**	**91**	**808**

The table above shows students' trust levels in Pakistan's current political setup across various educational institutions. Among 808 students surveyed, 225 rated their trust as "Fair," 158 as "Good," and 91 as "Very Good." On the other hand, 159 students expressed low trust, with 175 rating it as "Poor." Trust levels varied by institution, with Mehran University showing higher trust and Sindh University Jamshoro more skepticism. These findings highlight the varied student perspectives on the political system's effectiveness, underscoring the need for transparency and accountability in governance to build trust among students.

Table III: your trust in the present political setup

Categorical Responses	n	%
Very Good	91	11.26237%
Good	158	19.55445%
Fair	225	27.84653%
Poor	175	21.65841%
Very Poor	159	19.67821%
Total	**808**	**100.00**

Table III indicates that n=249(30.81683%) supported the current political setup n=225 (27.84653%) showed a neutral approach n=334(41.33663%) completely

showed dissatisfaction with the present political setup of Pakistan. This data suggests that public trust or lack thereof in a political setup is one of many factors that can contribute to radicalization in certain contexts. However, it's important to emphasize that trust or distrust in a political system can cause radicalization and can be a more complex puzzle.

Q.4 Idea of armed jihad is valid to implement Islamic sharia in Pakistan

Count		The idea of armed jihad is valid to implement Islamic Sharia in Pakistan					Total
		V. poor	Poor	Fair	Good	V. Good	
Institute	Bahaudin Zakria University Multan	11	6	24	10	0	51
	Karakoram International University Gilgit-Baltistan	14	13	22	16	4	69
	LUMHS Jamshoro	17	18	17	16	7	75
	Mehran University	7	7	6	2	1	23
	Punjab University	9	18	19	17	9	72
	Quaid e Azam University	25	24	15	9	6	79
	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University	8	16	30	19	15	88
	Sindh university Jamshoro	24	10	26	13	3	76
	University of Baluchistan	41	26	21	11	6	105
	University of Karachi	14	11	22	13	7	67
	University of Peshawar	24	34	29	14	2	103
Total		**194**	**183**	**231**	**140**	**60**	**808**

The table above presents students' views on the validity of armed jihad to implement Islamic Sharia in Pakistan, based on a survey of 808 students from various educational institutions. Opinions were mixed: 231 students found the idea "Fair," 140 considered it "Good," and 60 deemed it "Very Good." On the other hand, 194 students had reservations, with 183 rating it as "Poor." Support varied by institution, with more backing at the University of Baluchistan and more opposition at Mehran University. These results highlight the complexity of such discussions and emphasize the need for peaceful, inclusive approaches to societal challenges while upholding democratic values and human rights.

Table IV: The Idea of armed Jihad is valid for implementing Islamic Sharia in Pakistan

Categorical Responses	n	%
Very Good	60	7.42574%
Good	140	17.32673%
Fair	231	28.58910%
Poor	183	22.64851%
Very Poor	194	24.00990%
Total	**808**	**100.00**

Table IV indicates that n=200 (24.75247%) strongly supported the idea n=231 (28.58910%) showed a neutral approach n=377 (46.65841%) indicated complete dissatisfaction. The data suggests that a portion of respondents believe that armed jihad is a valid means to implement Islamic sharia in Pakistan. While holding this belief does not automatically cause radicalization, it does reflect an alignment with a particular interpretation of Islam that may promote the use of violence to achieve religious or ideological goals.

Q.5 Religious extremism is the main driving force towards radicalization

Count		Religious extremism is the main driving force towards radicalization					Total
		V. poor	Poor	Fair	Good	V. Good	
Institute	Bahaudin Zakria University Multan	3	6	28	9	5	51
	Karakoram International University Gilgit-Baltistan	7	11	22	18	11	69
	LUMHS Jamshoro	10	22	19	19	5	75
	Mehran University	3	2	5	7	6	23
	Punjab University	7	17	21	21	6	72
	Quaid e Azam University	7	15	18	14	25	79
	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University	19	23	21	18	7	88
	Sindh university Jamshoro	3	14	20	23	16	76
	University of Baluchistan	24	15	23	23	20	105
	University of Karachi	6	12	21	17	11	67
	University of Peshawar	9	17	24	32	21	103
Total		**98**	**154**	**222**	**201**	**133**	**808**

The table above shows that among 808 surveyed students in Pakistan, 222 rated religious extremism as a "Fair" driver of radicalization, 201 rated it "Good," and 133 rated it "Very Good." Conversely, 98 disagreed, with 154 rating their disagreement as "Poor." Support was stronger at the University of Baluchistan, while dissent was higher at Mehran University. These findings highlight the need for nuanced strategies to address extremism and promote tolerance in educational institutions.

Table V: Religious extremism is the main driving force toward radicalization

Categorical Responses	n	%
Very Good	133	16.46039%
Good	201	24.87623%
Fair	222	27.47524%
Poor	154	19.05940%
Very Poor	98	12.12871%
Total	**808**	**100.00**

Table-V indicates that n= 334(41.33663%) largest group supported this idea n= 222(27.47524%) have indicated neutral approach n=252 (31.18811%) have shown complete dissatisfaction. This reflects the complexity of the factors that contribute to radicalization, with some individuals emphasizing religious extremism as a primary driver, while others may consider a broader range of influence. Religious extremism can indeed be a significant factor contributing to radicalization, especially in cases where individuals adopt extremist interpretations of their religion and become motivated to engage in violent or radical actions.

Q.6 Mental\psychological\social disorder leads to radicalization

Count		mental\psychological\social disorder leads to radicalization					Total
		V. poor	Poor	Fair	Good	V. Good	
Institute	Bahaudin Zakria University Multan	6	6	14	19	6	51
	Karakoram International University Gilgit-Baltistan	3	6	33	21	6	69
	LUMHS Jamshoro	10	5	23	21	16	75
	Mehran University	1	2	5	4	11	23
	Punjab University	6	12	28	12	14	72
	Quaid e Azam University	6	8	34	17	14	79
	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University	11	26	19	17	15	88
	Sindh university Jamshoro	4	9	28	18	17	76
	University of Baluchistan	15	15	24	25	26	105
	University of Karachi	12	9	14	20	12	67
	University of Peshawar	10	16	21	35	21	103
Total		**84**	**114**	**243**	**209**	**158**	**808**

The table above shows that out of 808 students surveyed on the role of mental, psychological, and social disorders in contributing to radicalization within Pakistani educational institutions, 243 agreed at a "Fair" level, 209 rated it "Good," and 158 "Very Good." However, 84 students disagreed, with 114 rating their disagreement as "Poor." Support for the idea was

strongest at LUMHS Jamshoro and the University of Baluchistan, while dissent was higher at Mehran University and the University of Karachi. These results underscore the importance of addressing mental health to reduce extremism in educational settings.

Table VI: Mental/psychological/social disorder leads to radicalization

Categorical Responses	n	%
Very Good	158	19.55445%
Good	209	25.86633%
Fair	243	30.07425%
Poor	114	14.10891%
Very Poor	84	10.39603%
Total	**808**	**100.00**

Table VI indicates that n=367 (45.420792%) large number of groups have supported this idea n=243 (30.07425%) have a neutral approach that this can be a cause n=198(24.50495%) indicated dissatisfaction on this belief but the interpretation of this data underscores the recognition that mental and psychological factors can play a role in the radicalization process. They can be a great source to increase vulnerability to extremist influences.

Q.7-Armed jihad is the duty of every Muslim

Count		armed jihad is the duty of every Muslim					Total
		V. poor	Poor	Fair	Good	V. Good	
Institute	Bahaudin Zakria University Multan	9	6	14	18	4	51
	Karakoram International University Gilgit-Baltistan	11	5	22	23	8	69
	LUMHS Jamshoro	18	7	16	11	23	75
	Mehran University	5	5	7	3	3	23
	Punjab University	11	9	19	18	15	72
	Quaid e Azam University	24	22	16	8	9	79
	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University	12	7	23	22	24	88
	Sindh university Jamshoro	17	11	23	13	12	76
	University of Baluchistan	28	19	16	21	21	105
	University of Karachi	15	8	11	17	16	67
	University of Peshawar	24	25	28	14	12	103
Total		**174**	**124**	**195**	**168**	**147**	**808**

The table above shows students' views on whether armed jihad is considered a duty for every Muslim in their educational institutions in Pakistan, based on a survey of 808 students. Opinions varied: 195 students had a "Fair" level of agreement, 168 rated it "Good," and 147 rated it "Very Good." Conversely, 174 students disagreed, with 124 rating their disagreement as "Poor." Support was higher at institutions like the University of Baluchistan and LUMHS Jamshoro, while dissent was more common at Mehran University and Punjab University. These findings reveal diverse interpretations of religious concepts and emphasize the need for critical thinking and nuanced discussions on sensitive topics like armed jihad to encourage tolerance and pluralism.

Table VII: Armed jihad is the duty of every Muslim

Categorical Responses	n	%
Very Good	147	18.193069%
Good	168	20.79207%
Fair	195	24.13366%
Poor	124	15.34653%
Very Poor	174	21.53465%
Total	**808**	**100.00**

Table VII indicates that n=315 (38.99%) large number of groups supported armed jihad n=195 (24.13366%) indicated that it can be a duty of Muslims but do not support n=298 (36.88118%) this indicated complete dissatisfaction with the idea of respecting individual freedom and human rights and through tolerance it can settle down various issues.

Q.8 Social media is supporting radicalization a lot

Count		Social media is supporting radicalization a lot					Total
		V. poor	Poor	Fair	Good	V. Good	
Institute	Bahaudin Zakria University Multan	4	5	22	12	8	51
	Karakoram International University Gilgit-Baltistan	5	6	26	19	13	69
	LUMHS Jamshoro	4	5	24	22	20	75
	Mehran University	3	2	4	8	6	23
	Punjab University	7	15	18	17	15	72
	Quaid e Azam University	9	12	27	17	14	79
	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University	6	11	23	21	27	88
	Sindh university Jamshoro	1	12	22	19	22	76
	University of Baluchistan	13	15	27	23	27	105
	University of Karachi	5	6	22	13	21	67
	University of Peshawar	14	16	37	18	18	103
Total		71	105	252	189	191	808

The table above shows students' views on the role of social media in supporting radicalization across educational institutions in Pakistan. Among 808 respondents, 252 students rated their agreement as "Fair," 189 as "Good," and 191 as "Very Good." Conversely, 71 disagreed, with 105 rating their disagreement as "Poor." Institutions like LUMHS Jamshoro and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University had more students acknowledging social media's role in radicalization, while Mehran University and Sindh University Jamshoro had more dissenters. These findings highlight the significant impact of social media on radicalization and the need for effective strategies to address this issue in educational settings.

Table VIII: Social media is supporting radicalization a lot

Categorical Responses	n	%
Very Good	191	23.63861%
Good	189	23.39108%
Fair	252	31.18811%
Poor	105	12.99504%
Very Poor	71	8.787128%
Total	**808**	**100.00**

Table VIII indicates that n=380 (47.02970%) indicated that media plays a crucial role in promoting n=252 (31.18811%) indicated the issue but may not see it as extremely concerning n=176 (21.78217%) this indicated complete dissatisfaction. So, n=428 (52.97028) showed complete dissatisfaction and they highlighted negativity on the various stuff that have been displayed.

Conclusion

Radicalization in Pakistan is a complex issue (Quaid-i-Azam University, 2024), lacking a universally accepted definition. While there's no definitive link between radicalization and violent actions, exposure to radical ideas through online sources or local influencers can shape individuals, especially in contexts of perceived inequality. Religious fundamentalism, growing globally as a reaction to modernization, presents an alternative to secularization, yet addressing its root causes remains challenging. The media's sensationalism often obscures the real process of radicalization and its impact, distorting public perception by generalizing entire populations based on the actions of a few radicals. Radicalization among youth, particularly in Muslim-majority countries like Pakistan, is gaining prominence. Unlike in Western countries where discrimination fuels radicalization, in Pakistan, even affluent students in public universities are being radicalized, challenging the view that only religious seminaries (Madrasas) contribute to this phenomenon. The involvement of university students in radicalization highlights the need for a more nuanced understanding that considers political, societal, and psychological factors.

Quantitative research indicates that political instability increases the likelihood of radicalization, while findings reveal that a culture of political violence promotes intolerance. This leads some youth to seek out radicalization, driven by political, religious, and ideological influences. The data also reveals that Pakistani youth, although largely enlightened, struggle with the psychological pressure from parents and society, which can contribute to radical thinking. The lack of mental health support exacerbates this issue. Religious groups within educational institutions pose significant challenges if not properly monitored. A majority of youth (73%) expressed concern over state politics in education and the need for oversight of religious

activities. These groups often use emotionally charged slogans to manipulate youth, with 60% of students acknowledging that mistreatment can contribute to radicalization.

The influence of clerics in mosques, continuously preaching that "Jihad is obligatory," has shaped public beliefs over decades. Around 39% of university students support the idea that "armed jihad is a duty," although 36% disagree, reflecting a divide in opinions. Politically, corruption and dissatisfaction with the current setup have also made students susceptible to radical elements offering alternative paths. Religious extremism, identified by 41% of students as a key driver of radicalization, is deeply intertwined with emotions. Psychological disorders can increase vulnerability to extremist influences, as evidenced by 45% of students linking mental health issues to radicalization.

The use of armed jihad or violence to achieve religious or political goals is controversial and widely condemned. While many Muslims advocate for Sharia law through peaceful means (Powell, 2015). Islamic law states and peaceful resolution of territorial disputes. *International Organization, 69*(4), 777-807.), the majority reject violence as a method to achieve such goals. Radicalization, driven by a mix of political, religious, and psychological factors, remains a critical challenge in Pakistan's socio-political landscape.

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