

## **Understanding Pakhtun Hujra (A Socio-Cultural Institute) and its Relevance to Peacebuilding**

Nizar Ahmad<sup>1</sup> & Niaz Muhammad<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

The study aims at highlighting the relevance of Pakhtun Hujra (a socio-cultural institute) with peacebuilding in Pakhtun tribal society of Pakistan. A qualitative study was conducted in District Bajaur of Pakhtun tribal areas of Pakistan. Data were collected from 50 local inhabitants of the area through in-depth interviews using interview guide as a tool. Participants of the study were purposively selected based on their knowledge and experience with local peacebuilding mechanisms. It was noted that Pakhtun Hujra is one of local intuitions with peacebuilding functions. The local people call Hujra “*Da Aman Kor*” (The House of Peace) as it’s a sanctuary for people in trouble. Further, Hujra also functions as a court room and parliament for the local villagers. It is concluded that Pakhtun Hujra is a peace friendly space of Pakhtun villages and is of vital importance to peacebuilding organizations. It is suggested that Hujra can be used a resource center for peacebuilding related activities by government and non-governmental organizations.

**Keywords:** Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution, Pakhtun Society, Cultural Institutions

### **Introduction**

The devastating influence of colonization has badly disrupted the culture and structure of many traditional societies in the past (Yousaf and Poncian, 2008). These societies have suffered from the introduction of foreign processes and new ways of conducting judicial and other socio-political operations that invalidated their own indigenous mechanisms (Kyoony-Achan, 2013). In order to legitimize their interventions the colonial powers often labeled indigenous people as savage-like, backward and violent etc. (Yousaf, 2019). Such is the case of Pakhtun society, who has been portrayed as a savage, violent, warrior-like nation (e.g. Churchill, 1898; Enriquiz, 1921; Oliver, 1890). Grace Kyoony-Achan (2013) noted that in colonized societies such dubious invalidation supplanted an abundance of local knowledge and indigenous ways of healing, cultural teaching about resilience, life skills, reconciliation rituals and other informed socio-economic patterns. Many such post-colonial societies like Pakistan, India and Bangladesh

---

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Gender Studies and Education, Bacha Khan University, Charsadda, KP-Pakistan. [nizar@bkuc.edu.pk](mailto:nizar@bkuc.edu.pk)

<sup>2</sup>Professor/Chairman, Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar, Peshawar, KP-Pakistan. [niaz@uop.edu.pk](mailto:niaz@uop.edu.pk)

suffered from internal or external conflict. These societies are looking to external organizations, mostly west based, for support in building peace in their societies. The western approach towards peace in the world, which is adopted by UN and international organizations, is based on the liberal peace model.

The liberal peace project advocated by UN and other international organizations has often been criticized by critical peacebuilding scholars because of its universal stance that ignores the local level actors and specific context. A western based approach towards local societies of the south, not different from colonial mindset, may bring harm to existing level peacebuilding structures. In contrast, traditional societies are governed by their local cultural codes and values with low or no awareness of universal standards or laws. Considering this, a shift in the peacebuilding scholarship that recognized the local level institutions and efforts was advocated in early 1990s with the contributions of John Paul Lederach and has been invigorated in recent times by critical peacebuilding scholars (Paffenholz, 2015). Such scholars emphasize the local in peacebuilding as a measure to increase the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts and capacity building and ownership of the local people (Leonardsson & Rudd 2015). This local turn in peacebuilding emphasized the necessity of empowering local people as the primary authors instead of externally designed and driven peace interventions. The main assumption behind this shift was that ultimately only local actors from within the conflict context would be able to build sustainable peace in their own countries. (Paffenholz, 2015). With this a hybrid peace governance model (involving both global and local) was adopted by many International peacebuilding organizations. Local legitimacy, partnership and ownership of international peace interventions are seen as a fast track to success, sustainability and exit (Mac Ginty, 2015) but still their focus is on a technocratic approach, based on standardized principles mainly developed by professionals in the North. Although involving local people in their work, their emphasis has been mainly on the state building and good governance that leave the informal traditional infrastructure unacknowledged. Another important factor to note is the pressure of donors on these organizations who are anxious to maximize transparency to taxpayers and meet targets applying standardized procedures and formats--which are often not understandable by local people and result in passive participation of the locals (MacGinty, 2012). A further problem with the international organization is its project-based work orientation that is limited to the project life cycle, resulting in ad hoc based local committees that often remain inactive after the end of the project (Kawano-Chiu, 2011: 18). On the other hand traditional and tribal societies are governed by their own cultural codes which also provide means for peace and conflict resolution (Yousaf, 2009, Ahmad, 2014). Peace in such non-western, indigenous and rural societies are built on the knowledge of the local environment and the historical memory of times of crises and change. This knowledge is woven into religious beliefs, music, poetry, dance, ceremonies and celebration and decision-making assemblies and institutions (Boulding, 2000). In *Pakhtun* society, *Jirga* and *Hujra* are such institutions. *Jirga* has widely discussed

in peace literature on *Pakhtun* society while the *Hujra* being the subject matter of this paper is described in the following section.

### **The Pakhtun Hujra (Pakhtun socio-cultural hub)**

*Hujra* in *Pakhtun* Society is a place of gathering and a center of *Pakhtun* male performance in the village (Ahmad, 2004). *Hujra* is a communal village guest house (a guest in the *hujra* is the guest of the whole community) and gatherings there may be casual routine such as evening or night gathering or on the event of special occasions such as celebration of cultural or religious festivals: weddings or Eid. People also gather for condolence of a demise at *Hujra*. It has an essential place in the daily lives of *Pakhtun* ethnic group and serves purpose of a community centers for men (Vandal, Khan and Hassan, 2003). Rashid (2006) terms *Hujra* the center of *Pakhtun* values and secular political power where people bring their issues and disputes to elders for resolution. Similarly, Barth (1959) argues that *Pakhtun* derive authority and exert influence by providing hospitality and receiving guests in *Hujra*. This may be true in non-tribal *Pakhtun* societies where the *Khan*<sup>3</sup> or *Malik*<sup>4</sup> use *Hujra* for maintaining their influence but is a contrast to the essence of hospitality in *Pakhtunwali* in the tribal area even the most poor are offering hospitality with an obvious sense of sincerity in his own *Hujra* or communal/ *Kheil* (sub-tribe or clan) *Hujra* (Dawar, 2017).

Another similar concept to *Hujra* is present in Bajour district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which is called *Dabba* (دبّا) in local language (an open ground with stones as seats for sitting under the shades of trees). *Dabba* also provides a similar platform like *Hujra* but the difference is that *Dabba* is an open space having no physical building like *Hujra*, and *Dabba* is functional only during daytime while *Hujra* is functional 24/7. *Dabba* is an open communal ground mostly near the *Jumat* (mosque) where people gather daily and like *Hujra* at a certain time of the day. There are stone seats for people to sit in a regular or irregular shape where elders sit, placing their *Chadar* (Men's Shawl) on these stones and sitting on them. Sometimes, during *Gham Khadi* (wakes or weddings) *Katuna* (local traditional beds also used for sitting) are brought from houses of the villages for seating.

### **Rationale of the Study**

*Pakhtun* tribal society of Pakistan is a traditional society which is governed by an unwritten code called *Pakhtunwali* (Khattak, 2003: Ahmad, 2013: Barfield, 2003). In history, *Pakhtun* nation/group is represented as "violent, warriors and savage" like people by colonial writers (Yousaf, 2009). Currently, US media's interest in the Taliban has led to an associated interest in *Pakhtun* culture (Khattak et al. 2009). Some writers have tried to link *Pakhtunwali* as a contributing factor towards Talibanization in tribal areas (Badshah et al., 2012:

---

<sup>3</sup> Tribal Chief or elder

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

Latif and Mussarat 2012) resulted once again in portrayal of a violent image of *Pakhtun* ethnic group. However, *Pakhtun* culture contains peaceful values and traditional institution that need to be discussed for an alternative image. The most predominant peacebuilding institution of *Pakhtun* society is *Jirga* which is largely discussed by many scholars such as Gohar and Yousafzai (2009), Yousaf and Poncian (2018) and Ahmad (2013). In addition to *Jirga*, *Hujra* (حجره) (*Pakhtun*<sup>5</sup> socio-cultural hub) is the second prominent institutions with a peacebuilding functions. The peacebuilding dimensions of *Pakhtun* *hujra* is rarely depicted in scholarly work. The importance of *Hujra* in peacebuilding came to the surface in the media as a result of deliberation of all parties in the 2006 *Aman Jirga* (*Peace Jirga*) in which the participants stressed on the nexus of *Hurja* and *Jumat* (mosque) for building peace in *Pakhtun* society (Rashid, 2006: The News, 2006). That further intensified the need of an in-depth understanding of the relationship of *Hujra* and peace in *Pakhtun* society.

### Objectives of the study

- To introduce *Pakhtun Hujra* as a local socio-cultural organization with peacebuilding relevance
- To explore different dimensions of *Pakhtun Hujra* that can be used for peacebuilding in *Pakhtun* society.
- To contextualize the use of *Pakhtun Hujra* as a peacebuilding organization in prevailing peace literature

### Methodology

This paper is extracted from the author's PhD Sociology field work data on the *Pakhtun* culture and peacebuilding. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 50 local inhabitants of the area using interview guide as a tool. The idea of saturation point of Mason (2010) was followed in deciding on the sample number of respondents. While Dworkin (2012) suggest a minimum of 25 to 30 participants to be included in a qualitative study based on in-depth interviews as the purpose of such studies is to generate an in-depth understanding rather than generalizability of the data. Participant for the study were purposively selected keeping in mind their knowledge and experience with the local cultural mechanisms for peacebuilding. Interviews were held in local language which was then translated into English during transcription. After transcription the data was analyzed using thematic analysis via qualitative data analysis software Nvivo version 12. For thematic analysis the procedure described by Maguire and Delahunt (2017) was followed which is in six steps, 1) becoming familiar with the data, 2) generation of initial codes, 3) Searching for themes, 4) Reviewing themes, 5) Defining and finalizing the themes and finally 6) the write up. In the study, *Hujra* along with *Jirga* and *Lashkar* merged as a sub theme under the major theme

---

<sup>5</sup> *Pakhtun* or *Pashtun* is an ethnic group living in Pakistan and Afghanistan on both side of the Durand Line (Pak-Afghan border)

“*Pakhtun* Social Cultural Intuitions” related to peacebuilding in *Pakhtun* society. This paper discusses the sub theme *Hujra* and its different codes emerged in the data in the next section.

### Results and Discussion

The following section presents nine different codes emerged from data grouped under the sub theme *Hujra*. These codes reveal the important role of *Hujra* as it functions as (1) a house of peace, (2) a village judicial complex, (3) as a village parliament, (4) as a mean for transmission of peacebuilding knowledge, (5) as a place for catharsis and counseling, (6) as a center of music, poetry and story telling, (7) as a space for hospitality and communal relationships, (8) as an agency for communal harmony and (9) as a communication hub. The discussion also incorporates the views of tribal members as well as views of other scholars and writers about the role of *Pakhtun Hujra* in context of peace and security.

#### *Hujra* as “*Da Aman Kur*” (The House of Peace)

It was noted from the participants point of views that *Hujra* in the tribal area is called “*Da Aman Kor*” (house of peace) where the safety and protection of anyone is guaranteed. In *Hujra* or *Dabba* everyone is safe, especially when disputes between two rivals are brought to *Jirga*; it is the normative code of *Pakhtunwali*<sup>6</sup> that no one can attack his enemy in *Hujra* or *Dabba* and this safety is guaranteed by the custodians of *Dabba* or *Hujra* (the local elders). The violators of such norms are held responsible for their actions by the *jirga* elders.

A local elder reported that

*“No one can attack his opponent/enemy in someone else’s hujra or he has to bear the enmity of the hujra owners. Anyone in trouble and in search of safety and protection can reach to any tribal hujra where he will be granted Panah (safety).”*

Similarly, the peacebuilding scholar Boulding (2000) has called such places “Zones of Peace” safe spaces for people to seek refuge in trouble. She further posits that in history societies have provided such spaces, designated as sanctuaries for any one under threat. These included but not limited to temple, corridors safe passages during the war, sometimes king’s palaces. *Pakhtun Hujra* is a akin sanctuary where protection is granted to anyone, even strangers/ traveler who enters to someone *Hujra*. Moreover, *Nanawati*<sup>7</sup> (the traditional ritual of forgiveness) is an essential component of the traditional peacebuilding in tribal *Pakhtun* society, which starts from and ends at *Hujra*.

---

<sup>6</sup> The Oral Code of Conduct that Govern *Pakhtun* Society

<sup>7</sup> A practice in which the wrong doers enters to the *Hujra*/ house of the victim for submission of his guilt and request for forgiveness.

Modern societies lack such peace friendly spaces which are important for people seeking refuge from violence and harm.

### ***Hujra As a Village Judicial Complex***

Most of the participants reported that their *Hujra* is like a judicial complex or a court room of the tribal justice system. People gather in the *Hujra* for resolution of issues through *Jirga*. A local elder who was also a political leader said that

*“Everyone in the community knows the time of elders’ presence in the Hujra. When they are in trouble or have a dispute they come to these elders in the Hujra in order to hear them announce the Haq (right and wrong) in the local Riway (customary practices) and guide them towards righteousness. Elders in the Hujra not only guide people but they also persuade them towards goodness.”*

This confirms the views of (Khan, Ghuman and Hashmi, 2008) who argued that *Hujra* provides a space where *Jirga* is held and cases are discussed, each party present its arguments through their nominated *Jirga* members and decision is taken in the best interest of parties as well as in communal harmony. Unlike modern court system tribal societies handle their issues on its customary laws for which the presence of *Hujra* as a court system is necessary.

### ***Hujra as a Village Parliament***

It was noted that *Hujra* is a place where discussion on communal issues. Most of the participants were of the view that local problems are brought to *Hujra* for discussion and solution. Issues related to roads, school, sanitation and irrigation etc. are discussed and decisions are taken for the welfare and development of village. New rules are also applied in case the elder see the old norms as outdated or inconsistent with changing world realities. Like in a parliament new rule of business for running the village affairs are established. Cases and issues which have no precedents or rules in *Pakhtunwali*, are also resolved through mutual consultation, keeping in mind the communal welfare of society. Such cases become precedents for future similar issues. As a local *Pakhtun* writer and poet said that

*“Hujra is our court room, parliament and the place of “Khe Bde” (good and bad times) where all types of consultation are taking place. Elders in the Hujra are judges for community. They also act like law makers, not only deciding matters on the basis of Riway but also use their wisdom and experience through which new mechanisms for solution of problems are coming to surface”.*

This is in consonance with the views of Zalmay (2016) who also viewed *Hujra* as a place for where discussion on issues and village affair is held by the village elders. Hence it could be said that *Hujra* can be of vital importance for organizations who advocate community based approach for peace and

development. They can find an in-belt structure in tribal society in shape of Hujra.

### ***Hujra as a Mean for Transmission of Peacebuilding Knowledge***

Majority of the participants reported that *Hujra* is also a place of socialization and transmission of *Pakhtunwali* to their children. Pakhtun youngsters do attend Hujra regularly. They come to hujra and listen to all discussion and stories, observe the proceedings of *Jirga* and participate in other socio-cultural practices, enabling them to learn the ways of their elders (*Pakhtunwali*). Some participants told that the attendance of the proceedings of *Jirga* are very important to learn the ways of conflict resolution. The observation of resolution of conflict and learning of skills in conflict resolution has positive impact on the peacefulness of a person. Some other respondents quoted that *Hujra* is a place of oral history where stories of the unwritten traditions are shared. Stories about conflict, their emergence, causes, and resolution strategies are told by elders as the successes of their work as peacebuilding agents in the area. This was elaborated by a young study participants in following words.

*“In our Hujra, elders are telling traditional stories or the stories of their travel and experience which are full of lessons for the people in the hujra. These stories have moral and ethical lessons along with entertainment. Our elders share the stories of conflict and skirmishes in the community and how they resolved it.”*

Similarly Zalmay (2016) wrote that *Hujra* is a site of great learning of folk wisdom in shape of proverbs in *Pakhtun* society. In line with the tradition of story telling in Hujra Senehi (2002) elucidated that these peacebuilding stories have an impact on the future generation's peaceableness and knowledge about conflict resolution skills. She further wrote that such stories can also be important in sharing the unacknowledged trauma and thus help in healing. One such example, is reported by Anderson and Foley (1988) by noting that in a Tanzanian camp for Rwandan refugees, women survivors created a similar space, with the name “Story Tree” where they shared atrocities of conflict to help cure themselves psychologically. Similar views regarding the transformation of oral history by *Hujra* are reported by Vandal, Khan and Hassan (2003) in their manual for peace education titled “Social Practices promoting Peace and Social Cohesion through Heritage Education”. They are of the view that this way that traditional wisdom is transferred to next generation and even after the demise of the custodian of the *Hujra* his elder son is ready to assume the role of his father. This creates a chain of leadership for the family who knows the basic standards and normative practices and moral standards of *Pakhtunwali* which in the local language is called *Adab* (ethical standards of behavior), and this ethical standard of behavior for a proud *Pakhtun* is linked with *Hujra* and *Jumat* (mosque). These standards are very clear in *Hujra* where the elders observe the young behavior and do guide them when they sense there is a divergence. Youngsters also mimic behavior of elders in the *Jirga* session in their absence by assuming roles of the elders of the *Jirga*.

Buneri (2013) compared it with the modern day roleplay in school for learning purposes. In this way *Hujra* is an important center of learning *Pakhtunwali* for young people. There is a famous *Pakhtu* phrase used while enquiring about one's behavior and manners: it is asked "*Hujra Pass d Ka Na*" (he graduated from a *Hujra* or not). It means that graduation of *Hujra* in *Pakhtun* society is a kind of a degree of customary integrity approved by the council of *Pakhtunwali* called *Muqami Masharan* (local elders). A study participant who is a government school teacher said that

*"Adab pa Hujra ke Zda Kege (ethical standards are learnt in hujra) and those who have no experience of sitting in the hujra are not capable of facing challenges of the modern world. How to practice Pakhtunwali and how to live a life of an honorable pakhtun is learnt in Hujra. Those people who act against the ideal Pakhtun identity are mostly taunted "Cherta Hujra Jumat k Nast Ye" (have you ever attended hujra or mosque?)."*

### **Hujra as a Place for Catharsis and Counseling**

Some participants shared that they come to *Hujra* every evening for sharing their daily fatigue and to listen about other's exhaustions which make them feel relax. Some people bring their issues and matters to elders in the *hujra* who provide guidance and suggest solutions. These issues do not necessarily involve conflict. Sometimes there is just a need for someone wise to listen and provide guidance. For example, a person who is in grief may come and be provided support, consolation, and counseling by elders in the *Hujra*. Elders mostly do healing of individual by sharing their own experiences of hardship and challenges in order to motivate people to be ready for their own challenges. In the presence of village *Hujra* no one can feel isolation in society. A Professor of *Pakhtu* language explained this function as:

*"Our Hujra is a place of entertainment and relieving fatigue for all the day tired labourers who come at evening to share their stories and listen to others".*

It works as a psycho-social support center which Braithwaite and D'Costa (2018) and Buneri (2013) reported as a kind of the much-needed catharsis to *Pakhtun* tribesmen who come to the *Hujra* after a day long labouring in their fields and mountains. Such kind of emotional support is of vital importance in tribal society which lack basic facilities from government side.

### **Hujra as a Center of Music, Poetry and Story telling**

The role of music, poetry and stories in peacebuilding cannot be denied, especially in a society like *Pakhtun* where people are affected by war and terrorism. Most of the key informant were of the view that their *Hujra* provides a platform for entertainment and leisure hours. It was noted that in the study area many *Hujra* were having musical instruments such as Sitar or Rabab



and Mangai (local musical instruments) for “*Tang Takor*” (*Pakhtu* term for Music) where people, mostly young ones, come at certain times to play these instrument and sing songs. As noted by Kahar (2014) that there is a musician in every Pakhtun and the reason is the availability of musical instruments like Rabab, Sitar and Mangi in the village *Hujra*. Similarly, Zalmay (2016) viewed *Hujra* as the site of great learning, for the promotion of art, poetry, music and culture in the Pashtun society. Further, Braithwaite and D’Costa (2018) noted that Pakhtun romanticism is expressed in *Pakhtu*<sup>8</sup> folk stories and songs and strength and pride of *Pakhtun* youth is demonstrated in traditional dance like *Attan*<sup>9</sup>

Although, as noted above Pakhtun *Hujra* provide a platform for music, dance and poetry but about half of the study participants were of the view that the narrative of Afghan Jihad and recent wave of Talibanization in the area has badly damaged the tradition of music and dance. With Afghan Jihad narrative people became more inclined toward religion, leaving such musical traditions when the Taliban leaders announced a ban on such activities in the local area. Taliban had a very hard stance against such activities; they blasted the local music center and threatened local people to stay away from business of such instrument or CDs. They also threatened local musicians and poets to refrain from these traditional activities. During Taliban time people could not play music even in their marriage ceremonies. Those who tried were called to their Center, warned and fined for doing so. Similarly, Buner (2013) is of the view that militancy in *Pakhtu* society has negatively affected the pluralistic traditions of *hujra* and need efforts for its revival.

### ***Hujra* as A Space for Hospitality and Communal Relationships**

It was noted that *Hujra* works as a community reception of guests and travelers. Anyone who comes to the community is welcomed in the *hujra*, as *Pakhtun* don’t take guests to their homes. It’s a place that represents one of the most prominent values of *Pakhtun*: *Milmastia* (hospitality). Without *Milmastia* *Pakhtun* is incomplete even they practice it in foreign countries. Some participants shared that an outsider cannot roam freely in the village otherwise he will be questioned by locals. But he must come to the *Hujra* and sit with the elders. If he wants to meet anyone in the village, the elders will call the person to the *Hujra* for him. The elders of the *hujra* provide any kind of support to the guests and strangers; they guide them and provide information. The local practice dictates that strangers are also not supposed to roam in the village without a reason or purpose, if some one wants to go around he will be accompanied by elders or he will be provided with a young guide like a modern day tourist guide. This guide provides the history and stories of the village to the visitors. *Hujra* is open for every one irrespective of race, class and caste, even to non-Muslims. One of the respondents who was a social worker said that:

---

<sup>8</sup> Name of the Language of the *Pakhtun* ethnic group.

<sup>9</sup> One of the types of *Pakhtun*’s traditional dance famous in Waziristan area.

*“I was working in Swat with an international NGO and there were foreign workers with us. During our visits to the local communities people were warmly welcoming them in their Hujra. They offered hospitality more than the one offered to the local guests, they presented local gifts to the foreigners in Hujra.*

### **Hujra as an Agency of Communal Harmony**

Hujra was found the central force behind communal harmony and tribal unity. It's a place for practicing of local traditions necessary for communal harmony such as *Milmastia* and *Gham Khadi* (ceremonial activities of Sorrows and Joys). Hujra is a male space for ceremonial activities for consolation and for happy occasions of marriage, engagement, birth celebration and Eid etc. Such type of activities are of vital importance in creating and strengthening solidarity among villagers. A local scholar teachers articulated this as

*“Hujra contribute to Rurwali (brotherhood among fellow villagers), harmony, collective gathering, positive relationship building, entertainment and constructive engagement of people in the village by bringing them all at one point daily or on special occasions. This is all due to the existence of hujra in our society.”*

The above findings are in line with the argument of Ahmed, 2004 and Vandal, Khan and Hassan (2003) who noted the role of *Hujra* and *Gham Khadi* in strengthening the bond of social relation in *Pakhtun* villages.

### **Hujra as a Communication Hub**

Finally, *Hujra* was also described by some study participants as a communication place where information is shared about the daily life, including issues and problems in the village. Some participants reported that in *Hujra*, people discuss their “*Kha ao Bad*” (virtues and troubles) which brings an awareness about each other's problems. Other shared that sometimes people come and share the information with elders in private chat. Sensitive matters of the village are also discussed here in isolated meetings. In short it works like a modern day intelligence office of the village for elders. These information are very important for *Jirga* members in their decisions regarding communal affairs and interpersonal conflict resolution in the community. A local elder said that:

*“Our Hujra or Dabba is a BBC studio and you can hear the news of internal and external happening, here people share information of their daily visits inside and outside of the area, some have stories from Timergara, some from Peshawar and even from Karachi and some may have studied newspapers so he could share the information of interest from there”.*

Although not directly related to peacebuilding but communication and information sharing are of vital importance for communal harmony and social support to each others. Such kind of information are not always shared with external organization and governmental actors who work for peacebuilding in the area.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The culture and structure of *Pakhtun* society, like other traditional societies of the word is badly disrupted by colonizers who represented *Pakhtun* as violent and savage like people for legitimization of their interventions. The current situation of Talibanization in *Pakhtun* society caught the attention of west for peacebuilding interventions. However, western approaches are based on universal values which may not always fit to the local context. While, *Pakhtun* have their own peacebuilding infrastructure that represent their inclination towards peace. These local structure is of vital importance to peacebuilding organization who are looking for a bottom up approach to peacebuilding. *Pakhtun Hujra* is one such institution with peacebuilding relevancy. Its role in provision of safety, resolution of disputes, capacity building of youth and strengthening communal relation is of vital importance. A peacebuilding approach solely based on western values may hamper the peacebuilding potential of such local structure. Hence peacebuilding organizations instead of imposing a western peacebuilding model need to utilize it as it offers a true bottom up approach towards peacebuilding. It can also resolve the issue of sustainability of donor funded projects as *Hujra* is a century old tradition functioning without any external aid. It is therefore suggested that the peacebuilding organization working in *Pakhtun* tribal areas to understand *Hujra* and its peacebuilding functions. They can use *Hujra* as a resource center for training, a source of local peacebuilding knowledge and a place for identification and resolution of local problems. The government and other developmental organization should utilize and promote the use of *Hujra* in their activities that could help in preservation of this traditional structure

### References

- Ahmed, A. (2013). *The thistle and the drone: how America's war on terror became a global war on tribal islam*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Ahmed, A. A. (2004). *The world is established through the work of existence: the performance of Gham-Khadi among Pukhtun Bibiane in Northern Pakistan* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge).
- Anderson, Herbert, and Edward Foley. 1998. *Mighty Stories, Dangerous Rituals: Weaving Together the Human and the Divine*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Oliver E. E. (1890). *Across the border of Pathan and Biloch*. London: Chapman & Hall.
- Badshah, I., Rehman, H., Khan, S., & Faiz, F. A. (2012). War on Terrorism and its Impacts on the Socio-Political Structure of Pakhtun Society of Pakistan. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 12(6), 826-832.

- Barfield, T. (2003). Afghan customary law and its relationship to formal judicial institutions [Report]. Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace.
- Barth, F. (1959). *Political leadership among Swat Pathans*. London: The Anthlone Press.
- Boulding, E. (2000). *Cultures of peace: The hidden side of history*. Syracuse University Press.
- Braithwaite, J. & D’Costa, B. (2018). *Cascades of violence: War, crimes and peacebuilding across South Asia*. Acton, Australia: Australian National University Press.
- Buneri, S. (2013). Taliban militancy: Replacing a culture of peace. *Tigha, a Journal of Peace and Development*
- Churchill, W. (1898). *The story of the Malakand Field Force: an episode of frontier war*. Longmans, Green.
- Denzin and Lincoln (2011). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Sage Publications: USA.
- Dworkin, S. L. (2012). Sample size policy for qualitative studies using in-depth interviews. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, Volume 41, Issue 6, pp 1319–1320.
- Enriquez, C. M. (1921). The Pathan borderland: a consecutive account of the country and people on and beyond the Indian frontier from Chitral to Dera Ismail Khan (1921).
- Kawano-Chiu, M. (2011). Starting on the same page: A lessons report from the peacebuilding evaluation project. Washington: Alliance for Peacebuilding.
- Khan, M. B., Ghumman, A. R., & Hashmi, H. N. (2008). Social and environmental impact of Hujra. *Environmental Justice*, 1(4), 195-202.
- Khattak, R. W. Shah, Fida, Mohammad and Lee, Richard (2009), The Pashtun Code of Honour, Central Asia, Research Journal of Area Study Centre, 65(1), pp-1-17 Retrieved from [http://www.asc-centralasia.edu.pk/Issue\\_65/01\\_The%20Pashtun\\_Code\\_of\\_Honour.html](http://www.asc-centralasia.edu.pk/Issue_65/01_The%20Pashtun_Code_of_Honour.html) on 12.5.2017.
- Khattak, W. S. R. (2003) Changing Dynamics of Pashtun Culture Rajwali shah khattak, (2003), retrieved from [http://www.khyber.org/culture/a/Changing\\_Dynamics\\_of\\_Pashtun\\_C.shtml](http://www.khyber.org/culture/a/Changing_Dynamics_of_Pashtun_C.shtml) on 12/07/2018)
- Kyoon-Achan, Grace (2013), *Original Ways: An Exploration of Tiv and Inuit Indigenous Processes of Conflict Resolution and Peacemaking*, A PhD Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba, Canada.
- Latif, A., & Musarrat, R. (2012). Socio-political issues of Fata, a historical And contemporary perspective. *Journal of Public Administration & Governance*, 2(4).

- Leonardsson, H., & Rudd, G. (2015). The 'local turn' in peacebuilding: a literature review of effective and emancipatory local peacebuilding. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 825-839.
- Mac Ginty, R. (2012). Indicators +: A proposal for everyday peace indicators, *Evaluation and Program Planning* 36 (2013) 56–63
- Mac Ginty, R. (2015). Where is the local? Critical localism and peacebuilding. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 840-856.
- Maguire, M. and Delahunt, B. (2017). A Practical, Step by Step Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars, *All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, (AISHE-J), Vol. (3). P.3351-3362
- Mason, M. (2010). Sample Size and Saturation in PhD Studies using Qualitative Interviews. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 11(3) [Article No. 8]
- Paffenholz, T. (2015). Unpacking the local turn in peacebuilding: a critical assessment towards an agenda for future research. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 857-874.
- Rashid, A. (2006). Pashtuns want an image change, BBC, retrieved from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/6198382.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6198382.stm) on 02/05/2019.
- Sangasubana, N. (2011). How to Conduct Ethnographic Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 16(2), 567-573. Retrieved from <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol16/iss2/14>
- Senehi, J. (2002). Constructive storytelling: A peace process. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 9(2), 41-63.
- The News, (2006), Pashtun Peace Jirga vows to bring stability to Fata retrieved from <https://www.thenews.com.pk/archive/print/646760-pashtun-peace-jirga-vows-to-bring-stability-to-fata>
- Vandal, Sajida Haider. Khan, Tariq. Hassan, Fakhra, (2003), *Social Practices Promoting Peace and Social Cohesion through Heritage Education*, UNESCO, ISLAMABAD.
- Yousaf, F. (2019). Pakistan's "Tribal" Pashtuns, Their "Violent" Representation, and the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement. *SAGE Open*, 9(1), 2158244019829546.
- Yousaf, F., & Poncian, J. (2018). Detriments of colonialism on indigenous conflict resolution: an analysis of Pakistan and Tanzania. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 21(4), 455-473.
- Yousafzai, H. M., & Gohar, A. (2009). Towards Understanding Pukhtoon Jirga: An Indigenous Way of Peacebuilding and More.... *Pakistan: Just Peace International*. Retrieved from [http://peace.fresno.edu/docs/Pukhtoon\\_Jirga.pdf](http://peace.fresno.edu/docs/Pukhtoon_Jirga.pdf)
- Zalmay, A. Z. (2016),. Pashtun's Hujra, The Pashtun Times, retrieved from <http://thepashtuntimes.com/pashtuns-hujra/> on 03/04/2019