

Knowledge-Based Poppy Cultivation Control in Pakistan: Reflections of Local Policing Practice*

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Abstract:

Pakistan, after receiving a 'Poppy-free status' certificate from the USA in 2001, experienced a tremendously sharp rise in poppy-cultivation during 2003 and 2004 in all Tribal Agencies near Afghanistan and semi-tribal (de-facto) areas adjacent to settled districts. Pakistan faced serious concern by the international community. The Police Chief in District Charsadda, as the principal author of this study is an experienced police officer who based on his tacit knowledge of policing tribal communities engaged in a 'participant-observation' process that is consistent with a grounded theory approach to qualitative research. The application of Knowledge Management principles provided the theoretical lens through which an explanatory framework of a number of strategic patterns for operationalising a Community Policing approach is presented. The results of this study document the eradication of a significant area of poppy cultivation in the district of Charsadda which had never done in the past as well as wider community impacts. This study demonstrates how a cost-effective policing strategy can be implemented without extra special forces or funding to deal with adamant tribal growers of illicit poppy cultivation.

Keywords:

Knowledge Management, Community Policing, Tacit Knowledge, Poppy-Cultivation, Defacto-Tribal Area, Tribal Agency, Momand Resistance Movement, Voluntary-Destruction.

Introduction

This is a research study of a 'grounded theory' account of an operational policing experience in dealing with the problem of illicit poppy cultivation in the district of Charsadda in the North-West-Frontier-Province of Pakistan. Grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1992; Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1994, 1997, 1998) is a qualitative research methodology used to describe observations made about an event or phenomenon and then looking for patterns and explanations that emerge from such phenomenon.

*A version of this paper was presented at the International Police Executive Symposium at the 13th Annual Meeting of IPES: Local Linkages to Global Security and Crime: Thinking Locally and Acting Globally, May 26-30, 2006 (Ayvalik, Turkey)

Hence, the principal author of this study as an experienced police officer also engaged in a 'participant-observation' process that is consistent with a grounded theory approach. As such at points throughout this paper a narrative account of the 'lived experience' of the operational policing reality of dealing with this poppy cultivation problem in the North-West-Frontier is included.

Furthermore, the application of Knowledge Management principles, especially in relation to the importance of a police officer's tacit knowledge, provides the theoretical lens through which this account of operational policing practice can be usefully understood.

Finally, the results of this study document how a significant area of poppy cultivation was eradicated in the district of Charsadda which had never done in the past. Also, longer term initiatives resulting from this study are noted. Moreover, the complex nature of the constraints involved in eradicating poppy cultivation is also discussed.

Context of Study

Pakistan is a federation of four provinces and there are seven tribal agencies which are called FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas). The total population of Pakistan is about 151 millions (2.36% of world population) with an area of 796,095 sq. km (0.6% of the world). There are eighty settled districts in all the four provinces. (At the time of this publication, the population of Pakistan is estimated as 174 million).

Most of the seven tribal agencies, namely Bajaur, Momand, Kurram, Khyber, Orakzai, Malakand, North Waziristan and South Waziristan, are close to the boarder of Afghanistan. They are contiguous amongst themselves and separated at places from the settled districts by some small strips, called Frontier Regions (FR), which are also governed by the same laws as applied in the Tribal Agencies. The total area of FATA is 27220 sq. km (3.4% of the total area) and consists of about 3.42 million people (2.3% of the total population).

The context of this study is the district of Charsadda in the North-West-Frontier-Province of Pakistan. District Charsadda has an estimated population of about one million with a total area of 996 sq/km. There are some 75 tribal villages at its northwest and northeast boundaries, which are collectively known as 'the de facto-area', having an estimated population of 100,000.

The people of the de facto-area belong to the Momand tribe, which is also the major tribe of the adjacent Tribal Agency of Momand. The inhabitants of this area are generally unruly and reside in the rugged, hilly and extremely inaccessible villages. They have certain political demands. These tribal people have resisted the establishment of police stations in major portion of the area. Resultantly, the government has not fully established the Rule of Law in many of these remote tribal areas despite various offensive operations for the last fifteen years.

The principal author of this study (Fasihuddin) at the time of writing was the District Police Officer (DPO) in District Charsadda since November, 2005.

Extent and Significance of Problem

Ever since the Opium Wars between Great Britain and China in 1842 and 1860, the poppy remains an important item on the agenda of international community. In the context of Pakistan, poppy cultivation has been a serious issue for the law-enforcement agencies (LEAs) in some remote parts of Pakistan.

Pakistan produced 800 tons of the highest quality opium in 1980. The production declined to 6 tons in 2000 but despite earning the status of 'Poppy-Free Country' in 2001-2002, there appeared a sharp resumption of poppy cultivation in 2003-2004.

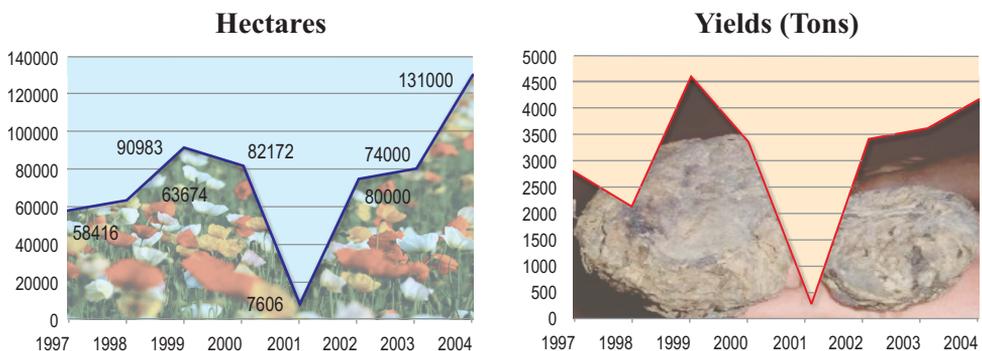
Table 1 shows the reported cultivation in hectares and the actual production after some efforts of destruction during 2003 and 2004.

Table I: Pakistan's Total Poppy-Cultivation and Production

Year	2003	2004
Hectares	6703.00	6694.00
Yield (Tons)	68.02	40.35

Source: Anti Narcotics Force (ANF). The estimated yield per hectare is 27 kilograms

However, the most important matter is the production of poppy in Afghanistan. Nearly all the tribal areas of Pakistan are adjacent to Afghanistan, so therefore, Pakistan is one of the major transit routes of Afghan's poppy. The total Afghan's poppy production is shown in the Figure 1.



Source: Yearly Digest, 2004-05 Published By Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Government of Pakistan

It shows that the production in Afghanistan went up to 131,000 hectares in 2004 from 7606 hectares in 2001, and the total yield was marked as 4200 tons in 2004 from an astonishing low level of 185 tons in 2001. It is worth mentioning that the opium economy in Afghanistan was valued at US\$ 2.8 billion, equivalent to about 60 percent of Afghan's GDP in 2003. The opium economy involves 2.3 million people, meaning one in every 10 of the Afghan population is involved in narco-business. A recent IMF report has described Afghanistan as on the verge of becoming a 'narcotics state'. About 90 percent of world's demand of poppy is met from Afghanistan. In all these areas an average price of one kilogram of opium is about 35,000 Rupees, equivalent to US\$ 585. However, this irregular pattern of drugs production, seizure and consumption as it is not a new phenomenon as it occurs in many other countries and at different stages of history.

In regard to the context of this study in the North-West-Frontier-Province (NWFP) several communications from the Federal and Provincial Governments to take effective action against the potential or actual growers of poppy in the de facto-tribal area were received for Districts Charsadda and Peshawar. The following passage from a letter by USA Ambassador at the time in November 2005 to the Governor of the North-West-Frontier-Province (NWFP) is representative of the extent and significance of the problem:

We remain concerned about the de facto Peshawar/Charsadda district, which as you know are easily accessible areas that have seen poppy cultivation double steadily over each of the past two years. The local police have noted in poppy enforcement meetings that they do not have sufficient forces to handle this problem in what is considered to be a “no go” area. It is critical that the Pakistani government designate responsibility for this area, clearly defining roles among agencies and establishing mechanisms for poppy destruction (i.e.; pre-requisitioning forces from other agencies, such as the Frontier Corps, to support the police if necessary). In that way, eradication can take place immediately upon identification of poppy cultivation.

In addition to this letter from the Ambassador of the USA quoted above, the officials of the Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) of the US-Embassy continued to put significant pressure on government agencies for early and tangible actions against illicit crops. They continued to send letters and findings of the NAS-Monitoring Teams. Some findings, no doubt were a little exaggerated and speculative in nature as no one could easily enter into and carry out proper measurements of these hilly

* See 'Drug Trafficking as Transnational Crime' by Sandeep Chawla in the *Handbook of Transnational Crime and Justice*, (2005) by Sage Publications, UK

areas. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed between the NAS and Government of Pakistan in Nov. 1989, was sent to Police District Offices for implementation and guidance in order to deal with the poppy cultivation problem in remote tribal areas of Pakistan.

Managing Police Knowledge

The knowledge base of operational policing is multi-dimensional in nature in that an individual police officer's tacit knowledge has cognitive, technical, and social dimensions which come into play when an officer seeks to apply their experience to a solving a problem (Dean & Gottschalk, 2007).

Given the seriousness of the problem both for the national government and international community, the principal author as an experienced police officer utilized all three dimensions of his tacit knowledge (cognitive, technical, and social) to develop a potential solution to this poppy cultivation problem in the North-West-Frontier-District of Charsadda.

The cognitive dimension of the principal author's tacit knowledge in this context was utilized through a systematic acquisition of 'local' knowledge about the problem. Such sources included:

1. Minutes and proceedings of the meetings held regularly at the Home and Tribal Affairs Department, Government of NWFP (Pakistan).
2. Record of the District Revenue Officer (DRO) of Charsadda District and sub-offices at sub-divisional (Tehsil) level.
3. Intelligence Reports of the Sub-offices of Intelligence Bureau (IB), Special Branch (SB), District Security Branch (DSB) and other national intelligence agencies.
4. Meetings with officials of the Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) of the US-Embassy, who kept a vigilant eye on all the processes of policing efforts through their Monitoring Teams. They carried out many ground and aerial surveys of the area before and after germination of poppy.
5. The Yearly-Digest, 2004-05, published by the federal agency of Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) (www.anf.gov.pk). The ANF is a special force, working under the Federal Government and constituted by an Act of Parliament, the Anti-Narcotics Force Act, 1997. The ANF currently comprises of 1400 personnel whereas the Anti Narcotic Force of Iran consists of 34000 personnel.
6. Press coverage of all reports, statements and essays on the subject-matter which provided important understandings about the pervasiveness of the issue

*Principal author participated in some of these meetings.

in other parts of the country as well as in the neighboring country of Afghanistan;

7. Police files of investigation of the cases registered in the previous growing seasons of 2003-05 against illicit poppy-growers;
8. Last but not the least, feedback from the general public and local tribal leaders.

This knowledge acquisition process is very much akin to an intelligence gathering cycle that a crime analyst would conduct. However, whereas a crime analyst generally restricts research to a combination of open & closed sources in a very specific range more was involved in this case. There was a direct 'participant-observer' role by the principal author with the general public and local tribal leaders about the problem. Such a role is consistent with a grounded theory research methodology.

The technical dimension of the principal author's tacit knowledge can into play with the planning of the two operational offensives against rebel tribal leaders. The technical aspects of these operational encounters are discussed in detail later in this paper.

The social dimension of the principal author's tacit knowledge comprised a number of elements.

The principal author studied the overall situation, life-style, culture, history and demands of the 'Momand' tribal community that were the main tribal group who participated in illicit poppy-cultivation. A book on the 'Momand Tribe' written and published in the national language (Urdu) by a local journalist Shams Momand was an invaluable source of knowledge. Though the book is like a one-sided story and pleads the case of the tribal community against the efforts of the previous governments, it strategically provided significant insights into the genesis of the problem. Furthermore, it provided first-hand knowledge of the exact and pointed demands of those tribesmen who reside, theoretically, in the settled district but in reality are severely against the jurisdiction of the district police. The de-facto-area was incorporated officially into the settled districts of Charsadda and Peshawar (the provincial headquarter of the North-West-Frontier-Province) in 1999 but the local tribesmen refused the arrangement on certain points. They even launched an armed Resistance Movement of Momand for realization of their demands, in which a dozen of civilian and police officials lost their lives or received serious injuries since 1999.

Hence, poppy-cultivation is one of their major 'black-mailing' or 'bargaining' techniques. Their other demands are also interwoven and interrelated with poppy cultivation and they are quite clever at muddling the issue with non-issues for their ulterior motives.

For example, they argue that they are very poor people, and since they have no other cash crops are 'compelled' to grow poppy. Moreover miscreant growers exploit the anti-USA feelings of the unaware tribal people. They misinterpret the situation and propagate amongst the farmers that the USA is against Islam and interferes in our national and tribal affairs, so we should grow more poppy as a protest and retaliation against the American hegemony.

They also want free-electric supply and insist on the non-payment of the arrears outstanding against them for decades. The most serious issue is the dispute of the ownership of their lands. The land they occupy at the moment doesn't belong to them as per revenue record. They hold that it was originally their land but the British Government, before the partition of India in 1947, transferred this land to the big landlords of the settled districts in order to create bad blood in the tribal community and other landlords, which was a strategy of 'divide and rule'. They now want re-incorporation of the area into the adjacent tribal Momand Agency. This is a debatable issue and a matter of life and death for both the parties.



Grand Tribal Jirga (consultative meeting) in Yakka Ghund, Mohmand Agency, to discuss anti-poppy of Charsaddah police

Lastly, they demand the unconditional withdrawal of the criminal cases already registered against them with the local police since the operation clean-up, launched against them in the early 90s. They want the settlement of their disputes through 'Jirga', which is a traditional consultative body of local notables/elders.

Interestingly, most of them don't demand much for development works, health facilities, construction of roads, provision of communications or educational institutions. Their society, like all other tribal societies is primitive in outlook of life and closed to many modern interventions and cultural diffusion.

Taken together these points form what in Knowledge Management terms is referred to a developing a 'Context and Culture' approach to a problem situation (Dean and Gottschalk, 2007). A 'Context & Culture' emphasizes the cultural dimension of knowledge construction and knowledge transfer (Glisby and Holden, 2003; Wensley, 2001; Al-Rasheed, 1994) and has its roots in complexity theory (Dreyfus, 2002; Tsoukas and Hatch, 2001).

From an operational policing perspective adopting a 'context and culture' approach to understanding a problematic situation puts a police officer in a stronger

'psychological' position and hence a better strategic position to manage the context and the people in it. How such psychological dynamics operate will be discussed further in subsequent sections. With this solid knowledge base in place, the next stage was the implementation of a planned 'community policing' strategy in a number of proactive operational phases. With this solid knowledge base in place, the next stage was the implementation of a planned 'community policing' strategy in a number of proactive operational phases.

Operational 'Community Policing' Strategy

Community policing is a crime fighting strategy that stresses partnership and problem solving (Tilley, 2003). In the United States it has been widely practiced for about a decade. In the context of this study in the North-West-Frontier-Province of Pakistan such a 'community policing' approach involved a number of planned phases of an indigenously devised strategy as follows:

Phase i: Advance Notices

As a precautionary measure legal notices were served on the potential/suspected growers who were identified on the basis of unanimous intelligence reports. These growers were warned of the legal repercussions of growing poppy. Because of the inaccessibility of the area and lack of fully functional administrative set-up, there were many fault-lines in the true implementation of these notices; however, it conveyed the concern of the local police, which normally these tribesmen don't take seriously.

Phase ii: Seed Seizure

In a move to minimize the cultivation spot checks/inspections were initiated of all loaded vehicles running between tribal areas and settled districts for seizure of poppy-seed. The police have effective control on some entry-exist points around the de-facto area being targeted. About 2190 kg of poppy seed was seized. Such a huge quantity had never been seized before in this area hence the psychological impact of this 'search and seizure' phase was very substantial.

Phase iii: Awareness Raising in Tribal Community

The principal author had a significant strategic advantage in this particular context since he had a semi-tribal background himself. His years of policing service near tribal areas and as a commanding officer of the Frontier Constabulary, which was a force established on the basis of tribal affinities and segmentation by the British Rule back in 1913, he had gathered a 'storehouse' of information on local relevant issues and acquired many negotiating skills in dealing with the people of tribal agencies.

Hence, to be 'tribal' does not necessarily mean to be a resident of a tribal area but it is a kind of 'mentality' - a sort of 'psyche' and 'idiosyncrasy' - which is ingrained in the inherent nature of tribalism. Consequently 'tribals' are very conscious of their separate social and tribal identity. Their social and political cohesiveness is based upon the cementing bonds of blood, common ancestors, common origin, common cultural ties, common land and of course, common enemy.

Moreover, the tribal mentality or mindset is extremely entrenched in superiority-complexes, chauvinism and ego-problems. They seek prestige and pleasure in dominating others and in showing strong opposition to foreign invasion, suppression or any forcible law-enforcement.

The dominating and leading position amongst a tribe is that of the tribal chief, called 'Malik' in local language. The tribal community, divided in clans, sections and sub-sections, decides their important issues in a local consultative body, called 'Jirga' in Pushto language, which comprises of the wise notables and elderly experienced members of the tribes. The 'Jirga' is held under certain well-established conventional and non-conventional rules, which are derived from the customs and traditions of the tribes.

With such an understanding of the psychology of a tribal mindset the principal author was in a strong position to engage in a series of public speeches and strategic dialogue with tribal growers. He cultivated friendship and familiarity with some influential elders of the area and started public gathering in order to create awareness in these tribesmen that poppy-cultivation was not the 'right tool' to use for pressing their long awaited demands. Furthermore, some law-abiding tribesmen who have their business or economic interests in this settled district provided support in helping to organize such community awareness meetings.

The principal author devised his 'dialogues' for these community meetings around what in therapeutic terms is referred as a 'utilization' principle. That is, in therapy with a resistant client a wise therapist will 'accept what the person offers and seek to utilize it' rather than oppose such resistance (Lankton and Lankton, 1983:10). Such a principle of utilization works by taking *what is and adding to it* thereby *creating something different* for the client - perhaps a new interpretation, a new twist, or new insight or understanding in such a way that the client begins to 'perceive' things differently by 'bypassing' their resistance.

The following points made by the principal author in his 'dialogues' are structurally similar in their intent as to what a therapist would use with a difficult client. Both the therapist and in this case the police officer are working on the same transformation principle although in very different contexts.

- Praising the virtues of honour, prestige, hospitality and bravery of tribal people as part of their long and rich history.

- Appreciating the role, sacrifice and loyalty of tribal people to the nation and state since national independence in 1947.
- Emphasizing the importance of cultural values, societal norms and tribal traditions in the surrounding communities.
- Giving high priority to the commitment of the tribal people towards the Religion of Islam. Their sacrifices in the independence war during colonial era were given high recognition.
- Admitting the genuine demands of the tribal people vis-à-vis developmental works and social uplift, and making a gentleman promise for their settlement and solution.
- Being an officer of their community the tribal people are morally bound to understand my official limitations and responsibilities and the constraints in discharge of my professional duties. This was done on the basis of 'we feeling' and 'sense of belonging'.
- Extending honest offer for helping and promoting our 'tribal brotherhood' provided they help me in eradication of a menace which is anti-social, anti-state, anti-humanity and anti-religion.
- Listening with patience to the queries, objections and sometimes provocative criticism from some unbending growers openly in the public gathering. This helped in their catharsis and ventilation of some of their suppressed grievances against the previous harsh treatment of local police.

Although tribal people are very difficult to be understood fully and their attitude and tone are extremely political, diplomatic and equally convincing with 'twisted messages of obedience and defiance' as the case may be, fortunately the 'confidence-building measures' contained in the dialogue points above as well as mutual respect and understanding worked well.

Furthermore, common language and shared cultural and tribal values created a conducive context for meaningful and positive dialogue that allowed the principal author to influence the 'perceptions' of the tribal growers more towards the points made below:

- Islam forbids all intoxication (Quotations from The Holy Book)
- State, Religion and Society don't recognize this right
- Enough business avenues & substitute crops are there
- America/West are very far away. It harms only our people
- Legal and Financial Matters should be taken to proper forum
- Tribal self-esteem and ego can not tolerate charity
- I am here not to repeat such unhappy incidents

Moreover, it was explained in these public meetings that neither the US is against Islam, nor poppy cultivation is allowed in Islam, nor it is a reasonable way to articulate their demands. It was openly discussed with them that some of their demands are highly unconvincing and irrational, and were not in consonance with our own cultural norms and values.

Interestingly, the impact of this mass awareness campaign was such that many of the growers openly denounced the cultivation of poppy and honestly promised not to cultivate this 'bad thing' in future. Of course, such 'promises' hardly constitute evidence but nonetheless for some growers to state such a position publicly is not an insignificant outcome.

Phase iv: Voluntarily Destruction

After these meetings, the local elders persuaded the unyielding growers to cooperate with the local police in the larger interest of the nation and country. A major portion of the germinated or slightly identified poppy at the start of the season was destroyed/eradicated throughout the area, including the remotest villages, which are not even clearly demarcated at the boarder of tribal areas and settled districts. The voluntarily eradication was started in January 2006 and went on until mid-March 2006.

Local police took the representatives of the local government and media to these fields and also had productive discussions with the growers, who might have missed our general meetings at various villages. Eradication through these efforts was given due coverage in the print media which publicized the case of the local police.

As expected a counter reaction by some of the unrelenting growers, possibly at the instigation of other drug-barons, occurred at times with them issuing statements against the 'anti-poppy drive'. However, for the first time the local police had made inroads into the operations of illicit poppy cultivation growers.

During this process, a number of vehicles and close relatives of the growers were detained. For example, if the local police came across such persons in the targeted area when they come down for their daily necessities or business they were detained. This is normally not accepted as a right legal action on part of the police in the urban areas. However, it is a very common practice of imposing 'collective and territorial responsibility' under the FATA Crime Regulation (FCR), which is the major law in all the tribal agencies/tribal areas of Pakistan.

To exert more and more pressure on illicit poppy growers, the local police wrote to the Home Department to issue non-bailable warrants of such suspected growers under the law for Maintenance of Public Order (MPO). This pressurizing technique also worked well and our trusted notables became the surety of release for the detained people and their vehicles. The local police set them free after they provided us with the verifiable assurances of voluntarily destruction of their standing crop.

Phase v: Active Operation

From a practical and offensive policing point of view, the principal author decided that a series of further active operations was required to reinforce the message that the local police were steadfastly determined to eradicate poppy cultivation from the district of Charsadda. A narrative account by the principal author of two such operations is presented below:

‘Tangi Circle’ Operation

One half of the de facto-area, which comes under one of the subdivisions of District Charsadda is an area called Tangi Circle.

As the time for voluntarily destruction was running out the shrewd tribal growers were trying to gain time for lancing period. One night (March 25th, 2006) I decided to attack a highly adamant grower. It was the first time that the local police, along with heavy weapons destroyed a rich field of poppy at midnight. As we were busy in destroying the field, the grower and his close relatives woke up and started heavy firing and shelling on our raiding party. It was a serious encounter in an inaccessible and unfrequented area where the firing continued for one and an half hours. I myself crawled out from the field under heavy gunshot fire. Some policemen received minor injuries while jumping from the top but no serious police casualties took place. A case was registered against the alleged firers and growers, under the Control of Narcotic Substances Act, 1997 and other relevant laws.

In the morning many delegations visited me in my office and asked for a halt to any other operation or undesirable bloodshed in case of serious encounters. The police were determined to launch an operation clean up but the local elders mediated between the remaining growers and the police. So before any other incident, the tribal volunteers destroyed the standing crop with their own hand and under the supervision of the local community.

This one forceful destruction had a fruitful outcome. No other growers took the risk of being involved in such a heavy encounter as well as face the registration of serious cases against them in the police-stations of settled area. Moreover, some small-scale offensive operations were also carried out by other police officers in daytime, which confirmed the commitment of the local police.

The complete destruction in Tangi Circle was inspected and verified by the Monitoring Team, comprising members from Home Department and the Narcotics Affairs Section of the US-embassy.

‘Shabqadar Circle’ Operation

In the other half of District Charsadda is an area known as Shabqadar Circle. This area is somewhat bigger and occupied by relatively violent leaders of the Momand Resistance Movement. The principal author narrates the following:

We decided to go for a similar operation. Unfortunately, we carried out little voluntarily destruction in that circle due to human and physical resource constraints. At places some armed tribesmen in this subdivision resisted the local police. We gathered our force at the outskirts of Shabqadar Circle, which was a good show of force at night.

The deterring effect of this well-organized deployment of our forces of regular and reserve officers in Shabqadar Circle compelled the most adamant local leaders to come down to table talks and negotiations, though not with the local police.

The most unyielding leaders, especially Prof. Ayaz, the ring leader of Momand Resistance Movement resided in this area, and the greater cultivation was done in the vicinity of Ayaz Korona (The village of Ayaz). We, therefore encircled this area from four different approaches, the most important was the eastern corner where the enemies of Prof. Ayaz live, the Rasam Khan Korona (The village of Rasam Khan).

It is a political and tactical strategy of immense importance in dealing with the tribals to fully capitalize on their internal differences and family feuds. 'The enemy of my enemy is a friend of mine' is the common saying in tribal societies.

Our forces were also deployed on all other unfrequented routes from where a support was likely to reach to the formidable tribals in case of any encounter with the law-enforcement agencies. The allied tribals rally around a single command in case of a common enemy. The local police was supported by forces from Central Police Office (CPO) which included 8-platoons of Frontier Constabulary (FC), a striking force, (one platoon consists of 42 cops), 15-platoons of Frontier Reserve Police (FRP) and a team of Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) with four APC (Armoured Personnel Carrier) and some other heavy weaponry. All these arrangements were still very meager vis-à-vis the opposing tribal community and their sophisticated weapons.

However, the tribal elders requested the Political Agent of Momand Agency that “they are ready to destroy the same crop under the supervision and command of Political Administration but not on the command of the local police, provided the deployed police force is withdrawn and their detained relatives are released”.

Though it was somewhat against the earlier decisions of the government, yet in order to avoid unnecessary casualties and as a practice of 'tactical retreat', I was ordered to thin out my force and withdraw from the boarder line back to barracks.

On next day, after due deliberation and consultation with the administration of the Momand Agency, the growers started

destruction of poppy crops, which was monitored by the members of the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) and Narcotics

Affair Section (NAS) of the US-embassy. Though the

jurisdiction of local police of two settled districts is supposed to be exercised in these areas, the writ of the government is yet to be fully established in this area and hence the exact figure for destroyed poppy-fields was not known to us in Shabqadar circle.



Growers from local tribal community with the police (not in uniform) destroying the poppy fields.

Results of Study

There are several outcomes that emerge from this study - some more tangible than others. For example, as a result of the proactive policing operations at Tangi and Shabqadar circles a significant area was cleaned from illicit poppy cultivation which had never done in the past.

The total estimated cultivation area varies depending on what source is used. For example according to the Monitoring Team of NAS it is approximately 260 acres, while the Revenue Record estimates are around 71 acres, and the Local Police Intelligence (LPI), known as District Security Branch (DSB) put the figure at around 81 acres. Hence, it should be noted that such 'estimates' are exactly that, as precise and accurate figures are difficult to get for several reasons which are discussed in more detail in the section dealing with constraints. Table 2 on next page provides estimates of the actions taken in clearing these poppy cultivation areas.

Table II: Operational Police Actions in Tangi Circle and Shabqadar Circle Encounters

No.	Actions	Sowing Season 2004 - 05	Sowing Season 2005 - 06
1	Seizure of Poppy-Seed	1560 kg	2190 kg
2	Detention of Vehicles of Suspected Growers	05	11
3	Detention of Suspected Growers	07	24
4	Public Meeting by District Police Chief	03	12
5	Public Meeting by Other Police Officials	10	39
6	Press / News items in Local / National Dailies	20	136
7	Cases Registered Against Growers	46	11
8	No of Growers Charged in Cases	86	37
9	No of Growers Arrested in Registered Cases	36	10 (27% Arrest)
10	Voluntary Poppy-Destruction	34 Acres	114 Acres
11	Destruction by Force / Operation	00	02 Acres
12	Voluntary Destruction by Tribal Administration in Area of Police Jurisdiction	00	35 Acres

A further positive yet unanticipated outcome was that local growers realized the after-effects of growing poppy and therefore some tribesmen decided to impose a collective fine on anyone who grows poppy in the next sowing season. Furthermore, the general public throughout the district appreciated the strategy of the local police of District Charsadda who worked tirelessly with all available options for eradication of poppy cultivation at that time.

Moreover, the local police adopted a strategy of community involvement and except on the two occasions, as discussed under phase V of the active operations in Tangi and Shabqadar circles, the local police went for a peaceful dialogue with the growers or their supporters.

Litigation and arrests, except in cases of preventive detention or threats of dire consequences, were generally not proceeded with until the completion of investigation or conclusion of trial. The police even extended legal help to those growers of the past season who have now abstained from growing poppy anymore.

The total estimation of crops was not a consensus issue amongst the various reporting agencies. However, the local police carried out visits to the interior of the areas, as long as it was humanly possible, to ascertain actual facts. This ensured continuing publicity in the local and national media and helped garnish more moral and public support of local policing efforts in the fight against illicit poppy cultivation. The midnight operations in Tangi and Shabqadar circles caused only a destruction of some two acres but the message was more powerful and effective to the illicit growers.

Discussion

The value of the narrative provided by the principal author of this paper of the events as they took place in the operational offensives of Tangi and Shabqadar circles provides an authenticity to the accounts that is rare to capture in scholarly works. Furthermore, the narrative accounts provide a rich tapestry of tacit knowledge in policing.

Moreover, the role of the principal author as a 'participant-observer' of this study provides access to direct observations and insights that otherwise would be lost through secondhand accounts.

Hence, this section of the paper provides a type of 'one-step removed' analysis of the patterns and explanations that emerge through an examination of these narrative and participative roles. This way of analysing the study's data involves what is known in a grounded theory (GT) approach as a process of 'constant comparison' (Holloway and Wheeler, 2002).

Six strategic patterns were identified by the authors through this reflective process of comparative analysis. These patterns when considered together provide an explanatory framework about the nature and purpose of the strategic police interventions taken in this study. The following figure highlights each strategy and illustrates their sequential use by the principal author.

Figure 2:
Explanatory Framework about Strategic Patterns of Police Intervention

**Patterns of Strategic Police Intervention in Dealing
 with Poppy Cultivation in NWFP of Pakistan**



The six strategic patterns in Figure 2 are relatively self-explanatory. As can be seen there are two 'arcs', as it were, that flow out of the first pattern of developing a well grounded 'police knowledge management' strategy (pattern 1) for intervention.

One arc builds on devising a clearly thought out 'community policing' strategy (pattern 2) which in turn links to eliciting 'community cooperation' (pattern 4) as evidenced through the voluntary destruction of crops by some tribal growers. This voluntary assistance was in turn harnessed further by the local police by providing other resources to cooperative growers in order to develop a sustainable long term engagement partnership against poppy cultivation with the larger tribal community (pattern 6).

The other arc involved a more 'psychologically-oriented' strategy of utilizing the resistant mindset (pattern 3) of the tribal community to convince them that poppy cultivation was not the right solution to their grievances but would in fact bring them more harm than good in the longer term. This psychological strategy of talking about how the police were determined to eradicate poppy cultivation also needed to be backed up with offensive actions (pattern 5) to reinforce the message that the police were serious this time about ridding the community of illicit poppy cultivation that was been promoted by drug barons. Again, as can be seen on Figure 2 such offensive actions escalated tensions to the point where recalcitrant tribal growers then wanted to negotiate a peaceful deal which in turn reinforced community participation and partnership (pattern 6).

The zigzagging broken dotted lines that connect various patterns through the middle of Figure 2 indicates not only the sequential order of these patterns but also implies how these two outer arcs work in tandem to reinforce each other. For example, the voluntary destruction of crops (pattern 4) by some tribal growers was as a result of the influence of (pattern 3) which was operationalised in phase 3 through awareness raising meetings in various places within the tribal community of District Charsadda.

Finally, with regard to the first 'Knowledge Management' strategic pattern it is clear that without a deep, rich and comprehensive understanding of the tribal community's 'culture & context' in which illicit poppy cultivation is embedded in the NWFP of Pakistan any subsequent police strategy is highly likely to be doomed. Indeed, it can be cogently argued that this must be the first principle of any police intervention if one is to avoid the folly of other previous attempts to deal with similar policing problems.

Limitations and Constraints of Study

Through this local community policing strategy in District Charsadda the administrations in the settled district of Peshawar and other tribal agencies also started similar campaigns. However, it should be borne in mind that there are no easy fixes with this type of community policing strategy.

Clearly an obvious limitation is acquiring senior commanding police officers with the kind of experienced 'tacit' knowledge and high level negotiating skill shown by the principal author in this study to conduct such a campaign. Also, there are several policy constraints and operational difficulties faced by the local police in District Charsadda which must be kept in mind.

Such constraints should be considered as part and parcel of any such policing initiative taken in other areas of Pakistan. Hence, they need to be planned for when

developing a holistic Knowledge Management framework for local policing. Some of the constraints faced included but are not restricted to the following:

- The local police was not provided with any verified and authentic data by the concerned Monitoring Teams of NAS and Home Department about the extent of cultivation; the identification of exact locations and villages; and the verified names of the growers (actual or potential). Lack of this prior information made the police practical work a little cumbersome and time-consuming. Sometimes the data provided was very old, outdated and based on mere speculation. Whenever the local police objected to the authenticity and validity of the given information, the Monitoring Teams and the Provincial Home Department attributed them to the contradiction amongst various local intelligence agencies. Physical verification and assessment in the de-facto area was beyond the reach and capability of many government agencies. Local police received the findings of the surveys of the Monitoring Teams on three different occasions, which were not without inconsistencies and certain omissions. Such inaccuracies are still on record with the District Police.
- The land dispute is a long standing problem between various communities. Therefore no one is in a position to fix responsibility on others for poppy-cultivation as most of the tribal people have occupied these lands forcibly and a proper revenue record is not available in any of the local revenue offices. During investigation and trial, the growers are granted relief on the pretext that the prosecution has failed to prove the ownership of the land as per revenue record. Legally they are right but in practice they grow poppy on the lands they have occupied by the sheer use of force.
- The poppy-issue was highly politicized by the fighters of the Momand Resistance Movement who have a lengthy agenda of their economic and political demands. Certain religio-political elements are reported to have contacts with this movement.
- Non-cooperation by WAPDA (Water and Power Development Authority) was another vexing issue as electricity breakdown often enraged the local population and it added to the local policing problem in getting a community support for the anti-poppy program. The growers tried to gain sympathies of the non-growers on this common issue of electric supply. It was basically a non-cooperation between the opposing governments at federal and provincial levels, and between the unfriendly governments at Provincial and District levels. The local police were sandwiched in all such

opposing masters. In a way, the local police are seen as responsible to all of them.

- Establishment of local police-stations and police-posts in the de-facto area are resisted and usually attacked with rockets and missiles during night by the local inhabitants. Dozens of criminal cases are registered with the local police against anonymous terrorists for this sabotage every other day but rarely someone is identified and arrested. The first police operation launched to establish the writ of government in these areas was started in 1992 but due to heavy losses on both sides, and due to political interference by certain religio-political elites and pressure groups, the operation was done half-hearted and left incomplete. This was not good for the efficiency and morale of the local police and that is a key reason why the local police now suffer from a limited authority in the area. The local police depend mostly on their actions against the tribal people in the settled areas whenever they come down to the nearby markets or on their way to mega cities.
- Inaccessibility of the area, lack of communication facilities, the unfrequented routes, and the structure of tribal houses with safe roof-top and guard rooms make the police actions more difficult than anything.
- The inherent police deficiencies of material, logistics and human resources are well-known to the people in the law enforcement community. Time and again demands were made for provisions of extra force. However, the local police had to do many more routine works than this specific assigned task. The extra force was provided only for the potential offensive operation in Shabqadar circle and not as a regular support which was demanded and requested.

Conclusion

Six strategic patterns of police intervention emerged out of this study of an experienced police officer's account of how he applied his tacit knowledge in such a manner as to effectively deal with poppy cultivation in the North-West-Frontier-District of Charsadda in Pakistan.

These patterns involved first and foremost a 'Knowledge Management' strategy based firmly on a deep and rich understanding of the culture and context of the Momand Tribal Community involved in poppy cultivation. This strategic knowledge base was then managed through a series of other patterns that come into play at various tactical points in the overall proactive 'community policing' strategy that was devised to deal with the poppy cultivation problem in this community. The community policing strategy utilized both psychological and operational elements in tandem to bring about initially some small-scale crop destruction. However, the larger and more significant impact of these combined policing patterns was the

development of a longer term community partnership in which the tribal community itself has taken over the role of monitoring and enforcing the eradication of poppy cultivation in its community.

These strategic patterns of a successful police intervention are woven together and grounded in an explanatory framework. This framework contains many lessons for managing police operations and has potential to be of value to other policing and law enforcement efforts to deal with similar problems. Finally, various limitations and constraints involved in this study are noted and discussed in the context of policing in Pakistan.

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