

## Identifying causes of terrorism in Karachi, Pakistan

Mehwish Saleem<sup>\*</sup>, Aziz Ur Rahman<sup>\*\*</sup> and Shuja Ur Rehman<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

### Abstract

*Due to terrorism in the Karachi city, the academic literature and information media are full of the details of economic and social losses. This study aims to examine the causes of terrorism in Karachi city of Pakistan. A quantitative research design has been used to examine the causes of terrorism in Karachi city of Pakistan. In this regards, data was collected from citizens using five-point Likert scale questionnaire and measures. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics via SPSS. The results showed similar viewpoint of both male and female residents of Karachi towards causes of terrorism. Public expenditure helps to reduce terrorism in Karachi but ethnic fractionalization, domestic conflict, corruption, foreign involvement, poverty and unemployment contribute largely to increase terrorism incidences in Karachi, Pakistan. The results showed that all the four major ethnicities of Karachi including Sunni, Shia, Hindu and Christian were of the same opinion that public expenditure may reduce terrorism incidences. It has been concluded that government expenditure on various socio-economic activities may decrease the impact of terrorism incidences but those factors cannot able to reduce the possibilities of terrorism activities in Karachi, Pakistan.*

**Keywords:** Terrorism, Causes, Ethnicity, Corruption, Karachi.

### Introduction

Due to current operation by law enforcement, the general law and order situation in Karachi has enhanced significantly. In 2013, the operation begin to counter peaking target killing, immense loss of national economy and image, sectarian violence and lawlessness. The issue regarding the situation surpass beyond the international borders.<sup>1</sup>

In certain, Karachi has a cosmopolitan nature to its character. Additionally, it is the mere operational port city of Pakistan, which is regarded as the most important pillar of economy at the moment. The situation in Karachi is of great concern due to the presence of their own

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<sup>\*</sup> Mehwish Saleem, PhD Student, Department of Social Work, University of Karachi, Email: [mehwish\\_saleem19@yahoo.com](mailto:mehwish_saleem19@yahoo.com)

<sup>\*\*</sup> Dr. Aziz Ur Rahman, Assistant Professor, Department of IR & Political Science, Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology Peshawar.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Dr. Shuja ur Rehman, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Karakorum International University Diamir Campus, Chilas.

residents, living in Karachi for business purpose for international community. The issue is regarding the presence of the country for Pakistanis due to the unusual nature of Karachi.<sup>2</sup> From all over the country, people residing in Karachi and earns their livelihood from the city. It is renowned as mini-Pakistan and disturbances are regarded not localized but of national significance in this city. In certain, the later attribute of this concern has made it significant to examine and investigate the situation in Karachi city and recommend remedial measures for maintained stability.<sup>3</sup>

Disruptions in financial market and transport system have been adhered owing to swiftly spreading terrorist attacks in the country. The central government had to allocate immense shares to the military, which makes it complex to maintain social and economic expenditure as the need for security escalated. Terrorism is a major menace to economy and business environment of Pakistan in recent economic conditions.<sup>4</sup> Due to terrorism in the Karachi city, the academic literature and information media are full of the details of economic and social losses.<sup>5</sup> There might be assorted reasons of terrorism in the city and each cause has its own justification, which is based on the timeframe and situation and; therefore, some causes are imperative as compared to others.<sup>6</sup> Perceptions on critical success factors (CSFs) recommended that identifying relative significance of causing attributes is significant, so that few of them are identified.<sup>7</sup> Exploring the causes of terrorism and identifying their comparative significance is important applying that sense to this study.<sup>8</sup> Since policy makers prerequisite to consider some important causes as the resources to manage the complex phenomenon of terrorism may be restricted but parallel working on major reasons can ultimately provide beneficial findings for policy makers.

Henceforth, this study aims to examine the causes of terrorism in Karachi city of Pakistan. The study particularly focused on certain causes that were supported and highlighted by the literature. These factors include income, expenditures on economic activities, health, welfare, development and public expenditure that can reduce terrorism incidences in Karachi, Pakistan. However, certain causes were also emphasized in the current study including inequality, ethnic fractionalization, domestic conflict, corruption, foreign involvement, illiteracy, legal uncertainties, poverty and unemployment.

Due to mere available port and biggest city of Pakistan, Karachi is the lifeline of the Pakistan belonging to every segment and every aspect of the country. It further endows employment of assorted dimensions to majority of its dwellings and contributes immensely to national exchequer. The security situation has considerably been on

reverse slide influencing its economy and considerable loss of lives and property since last one decade in certain. Karachi operation was launched to restore its lost prestige as most harmonious and colorful city. Thereby, this study will be of significant importance for policy makers who want to pursue the current security situation and genesis of concerns and offer suggestions for continuing stability.

### **Literature Review**

The situation of Karachi is very difficult and complicated to be addressed after three decades of violence. The conditions of Karachi have been improved effectively since the beginning of current operations. The city is now being running without any threat of boycotts and shutter down etc., which was a usual aspect in the previous years; although, there are still some incidents of target killings to some extent. The government with the support of law enforcing agencies has provided a firm commitment and resolution to carry on fight against terrorism and being risk and threat under control. It is now expected that the nation will bring huge stability and enduring success.<sup>9</sup>

A study conducted by Rehman et al.(2018) has assessed the influence if terrorist activities in Pakistan on the stock indices. It has been concluded that three dominant attacks out of eleven have negatively impacted the stock returns. This study has contributed to analyze the influence of terrorist activities on the financial market in the nation. It has been found informative because stock markets of any economy are sensitive to internal and external technologies.

A study conducted by Aslam & Kang (2015) argued that the terrorist's attacks influence the Pakistani stock market negatively. The influence of attacks relies on the types and location of attacks.<sup>10</sup> The negative influence on the stock market depends on the severity of attacks. In conclusion, the study has predicted that different strategies of terrorists have various influences on the financial markets which may also predict the future terrorist attacks. Terrorist attacks are important events to the financial markets. Present literature concludes that terrorism has a negative influence on the financial markets all around the globe.<sup>11</sup>

Another study conducted by Shahzad et al. (2016) has examined the casual association between terrorism, economic growth and foreign direct investment. This study has been found significant in terms of evaluating the impact of terrorism of the rate of decline in foreign direct investment. The outcomes of the study revealed that terrorism has a worsening influence on foreign direct investment. Terrorism has negative impact on foreign direct investment in post 9/11 era, which specifies that administration in Pakistan must take actions to manage and deal with

terrorism in the state. A big military operation has also been launched by government against terrorism in the nation, and more steps are required to be taken to avoid foreign insurgency.<sup>12</sup>

A study by Khalid(2017) has suggested that counter terrorism is an imperative national policy, which is being made in Pakistan. The study has specifically emphasized on the role of strategies about the issues prevailing in the country. It has been argued that police has also become a target of the extremist groups in the country because of the politicization. Some of the extremist organizations consider these issues against the religious laws and regulation; therefore the role of police has become imperative in the state affairs. The best and appropriate practices for fighting against radicalization should be promoted among the citizens as well as police. Responsible and effective part of police will assist the state and civilization to spread security from terrorism in Pakistan.<sup>13</sup>

### **Methodology**

In order to examine the impact of terrorism in Karachi on its economic losses, this study has used quantitative research design. The reason for using specific research design is to examine the impact of terrorism in Karachi numerically and prove its consequences justifiably. Furthermore, this study has adopted primary data collection to gather information regarding terrorism and its associated factors affecting economic and social patterns of the city. The study has collected 384 sample responses from different towns and localities of Karachi city based on non-probability convenience sampling technique.

The study has used five-point Likert scale questionnaire and measures were adopted from various literatures to identify major causes of terrorism in Karachi from the perspective of its citizens. In this regards, the study has purposefully used descriptive statistics to understand the demographic differences of opinion about various causes of terrorism in Karachi, Pakistan. Henceforth, the study has used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) as data analysis software to obtain considerable results.

### **Results and Findings**

The results and findings of the study contribute largely to understand the causes of terrorism in the Karachi city of Pakistan from the perspective of residents of Karachi. In this regards, the study has used descriptive statistics for understanding the viewpoint of Karachi residents toward causes of terrorism. Following table 1 provides various causes of terrorism in Karachi from the perspective of natives, citizens and residents of Karachi city.

Table 1: Causes of Terrorism in Karachi

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Higher income decreases terrorism in Karachi	N	86	83	61	91	63
	%	22.4	21.6	15.9	23.7	16.4
Provincial inequality increases terrorism in Karachi	N	83	98	53	103	47
	%	21.6	25.5	13.8	26.8	12.2
Economic expenditure decreases terrorism in Karachi	N	73	88	71	103	49
	%	19.0	22.9	18.5	26.8	12.8
Expenditure on health decreases terrorism in Karachi	N	77	98	38	116	55
	%	20.1	25.5	9.9	30.2	14.3
Expenditure on welfare decreases terrorism in Karachi	N	62	87	83	94	58
	%	16.1	22.7	21.6	24.5	15.1
Economic development decreases terrorism in Karachi	N	27	94	115	124	24
	%	7.0	24.5	29.9	32.3	6.3
Public expenditure decreases terrorism in Karachi	N	0	28	38	250	68
	%	0.0	7.3	9.9	65.1	17.7
Ethnic fractionalization increases terrorism in Karachi	N	0	27	55	224	78
	%	0.0	7.0	14.3	58.3	20.3
Domestic conflict increases terrorism in Karachi	N	0	13	56	229	86
	%	0.0	3.4	14.6	59.6	22.4
Corruption increases terrorism in Karachi	N	0	15	59	258	52
	%	0.0	3.9	15.4	67.2	13.5
Foreign involvement increases terrorism in Karachi	N	0	21	85	230	48
	%	0.0	5.5	22.1	59.9	12.5
Illiteracy increases terrorism in Karachi	N	51	65	91	149	28
	%	13.3	16.9	23.7	38.8	7.3
Lack of law enforcement increases terrorism in Karachi	N	18	79	21	221	45
	%	4.7	20.6	5.5	57.6	11.7
Poverty increases terrorism in Karachi	N	22	63	36	203	60
	%	5.7	16.4	9.4	52.9	15.6
Unemployment increases terrorism in Karachi	N	21	67	24	209	63
	%	5.5	17.4	6.3	54.4	16.4

Regardless of any demographic characteristics of the respondents, the overall perspective towards causes of terrorism in Karachi can be comprehended based on above table 1. It has been clearly illustrated that 91 (23.7%) respondents agreed that increasing trend of income status and standard of living can help to reduce terrorism in Karachi. Similarly, 103 (26.8%) respondents agreed that increasing provisional inequality leads to higher tendency of terrorism incidents in Karachi while increase in economic expenditure (n = 103, 26.8%); expenditure on health (n = 116, 30.2%); expenditure on welfare (n = 94, 24.5%); economic development (n = 124, 32.3%) and public expenditure (n = 250, 65.1%) can help to reduce terrorism incidence in Karachi city of Pakistan. However, from the social perspective, increase in ethnic fractionalization (n = 224, 58.3%); domestic conflicts (n = 229, 59.6%); corruption (n = 258, 67.2%); foreign involvement (n = 230, 59.9%) and lack of law enforcement (n = 221, 57.6%) lead to higher possibilities of terrorism

incidences in Karachi due to lack of social support and weak social norms and value system. However, some economic factors also contribute to terrorism incidences if not taken into serious consideration. These economic factors include illiteracy (n = 149, 38.8%); poverty (n = 203, 52.9%) and unemployment (n = 209, 54.4) that have been identified and agreed by majority of the respondents. Their viewpoint proclaimed that these economic factors aid terrorism meaning that increasing trend of these factors ultimately affect terrorism possibilities in Karachi, Pakistan. Furthermore, following table 2 provides gender-wise perception towards the causes of terrorism in Karachi, Pakistan.

Table 2: Gender-Wise Perception towards Causes of Terrorism in Karachi

	Male	Female
Higher income decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral
Provincial inequality increases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral
Economic expenditure decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral
Expenditure on health decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral
Expenditure on welfare decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral
Economic development decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral
Public expenditure decreases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree
Ethnic fractionalization increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree
Domestic conflict increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree
Corruption increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree
Foreign involvement increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree
Illiteracy increases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral
Lack of law enforcement increases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Agree
Poverty increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree
Unemployment increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree

The above table showed gender-wise categorization of various causes of terrorism in Karachi, Pakistan. However, the results showed similar viewpoint of both male and female residents of Karachi towards causes of terrorism. In this regards, the results showed that ethnic fractionalization, domestic conflict, corruption, foreign involvement, poverty and unemployment were few important causes of terrorism in Karachi. However, public expenditure helps to decrease terrorism in Karachi. Moreover, female population was of the opinion that lack of law enforcement in Karachi also increases terrorism but male population did not support this argument.

Table 3: Age-Wise Perception towards Causes of Terrorism in Karachi

Causes of Terrorism	18 to	23 to	28 to	33 to
	22	27	32	37
	years	years	years	years
Higher income decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Provincial inequality increases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Economic expenditure decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Expenditure on health decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Expenditure on welfare decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Economic development decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Public expenditure decreases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Ethnic fractionalization increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Domestic conflict increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Corruption increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Foreign involvement increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Illiteracy increases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Lack of law enforcement increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Neutral	Neutral	Agree
Poverty increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Unemployment increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree

Similarly, above table 3 provided that public expenditure helps to reduce terrorism in Karachi but ethnic fractionalization, domestic conflict, corruption, foreign involvement, poverty and unemployment contribute largely to increase terrorism incidences in Karachi, Pakistan. These perceptions were unanimous amongst all the age groups. However, the results also manifested that population aged between 18 years to 22 years and 33 years to 37 years were of the opinion that lack of law enforcement was another cause of terrorism in Karachi, Pakistan.

Table 4: Ethnicity-Wise Perception towards Causes of Terrorism in Karachi

Causes of Terrorism	Sunni	Shia	Hindu	Christian
Higher income decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Provincial inequality increases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Economic expenditure decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Expenditure on health decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Expenditure on welfare decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Economic development decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Public expenditure decreases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Ethnic fractionalization increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Domestic conflict increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Corruption increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Foreign involvement increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree

Karachi				
Illiteracy increases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Lack of law enforcement increases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Neutral
Poverty increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Unemployment increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Neutral

In addition, above table 4 showed perception of population towards causes of terrorism based on ethnicity differences also undertaken by the study. In this context, the results showed that all the four major ethnicities of Karachi including Sunni, Shia, Hindu and Christian were of the same opinion that public expenditure may reduce terrorism incidences while ethnic fractionalization, domestic conflict, corruption, foreign involvement, and poverty causes increase in the incidents of terrorism in Karachi, Pakistan. However, Sunni and Shia population agreed with the increasing trend of unemployment as aiding factor to terrorism incidence in Karachi but Hindu and Christian community have neutral viewpoint in this regards.

Table 5: Qualification-Wise Perception towards Causes of Terrorism in Karachi

Causes of Terrorism	Matric	Intermediate	Bachelors	Masters
Higher income decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Provincial inequality increases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Economic expenditure decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Expenditure on health decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Expenditure on welfare decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Economic development decreases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Public expenditure decreases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Ethnic fractionalization increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Domestic conflict increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Corruption increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Foreign involvement increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Illiteracy increases terrorism in Karachi	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Lack of law enforcement increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neutral
Poverty increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neutral
Unemployment increases terrorism in Karachi	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree

Similar viewpoint was obtained from the segmentation of population based on academic qualification as shown in table 5 above. It was

manifested by the results that regardless of academic qualification and education status, the respondents were of the opinion that public expenditure can help to reduce terrorism in Karachi. However, ethnic fractionalization, domestic conflict, corruption, foreign involvement and unemployment play supporting role to increasing trends of terrorism in Karachi. Furthermore, lack of law enforcement and poverty may cause increase of terrorism in Karachi as perceived by matriculation, intermediate and bachelor qualified population but does not supported by respondents with master degree.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study has shed light on one of the important but lack discovered topic of social sciences that is the causes of terrorism in Karachi, the most populace city of Pakistan. Despite the fact that undoubtedly there are number of causes of terrorism in Karachi, the study has categorically emphasized on social and economic factors that can reduce or increase terrorism incidences in Karachi, Pakistan. Based on literature survey, the study has identified few important causes of terrorism in context to developing Muslim countries. Henceforth, those factors were adopted and empirically examined for Karachi city on the basis of its citizens' perception and viewpoint. The study has therefore examined those factors on the basis of different demographic differences such as gender, age-group, ethnicity and qualification of the sample population.

Based on the results and findings of the study, it has been concluded that government expenditure on various socio-economic activities may decreases the impact of terrorism incidences but those factors cannot able to reduce the possibilities of terrorism activities in Karachi, Pakistan. Therefore, the study has concluded that government expenditure might not be contributing significantly in reducing distress and apprehension of Karachi population. However, lack of trust on governmental activities and efforts to reduce terrorism may also considerably important for population. Furthermore, negative aspects were importantly supported by the citizens of Karachi that ultimately have some religious and ethnic perspective as major cause of terrorism in Karachi. It can be understandable that domestic conflicts and ethnic fractionalization majorly play their negative role in inducing terrorism activities and incidences in Karachi city of Pakistan. While, other perceived causes may also increase possibilities of terrorism in Karachi.

Whatsoever the reason and cause of terrorism in Karachi, local, provincial and federal government and law enforcement agencies of Pakistan should pay adequate attention towards reducing the impact of these factors on terrorism incidences. Through effective allocation of the

law enforcement forces and regular security drills, government can able to reduce or even eliminate the chances of terrorism attacks in Karachi, Pakistan. Furthermore, domestic conflicts and ethnic fractionalization should also be taken into serious consideration. In this regards, it has been suggested to religious scholars and practitioners to propagate positive speeches and lectures to encourage brotherhood and peace in the region. Different awareness campaigns and programs should be encouraged by the government and non-government agencies that ultimately educate common population about the real-face of terrorism. In addition, government should strengthen law enforcement agencies to tackle situations and terrorism possibilities with enthusiasm and motivation. With proper allocation of power and authority to law enforcements, the possibilities and probability of terrorism incidences can be reduce significantly.

There are certainly some important and needful areas of research for future researchers in regards to terrorism and its associated perspectives. Most importantly, empirical and conceptually described framework is very needful to undertaken the larger perspective of terrorism. Theoretical framework to understand the leading and lagging factors of terrorism is another important area of research. Furthermore, using secondary data from various published sources and databases, future researches can enable the impact of terrorism on different economic activities of Pakistan as a whole. Irrespective of city-wise segmentation and use of primary sources of data, future studies may include the flavor of secondary quantitative information for improvising different outcomes of terrorism in Pakistan. Neighborhood involvement in Pakistan should also be taken into consideration through qualitative secondary and primary data can ultimately enhances the knowledge and understanding of the researchers, practitioners, policy-makers and academics.

## Notes & References

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