

A Sociological Investigation Of Post-Merger Educational Reforms In Ex-Fata

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Abstract

The study “A Sociological Investigation of Post-Merger Educational Reforms in Ex-FATA” was carried out in six FRs of ex-FATA with objectives to ascertain about services regarding education and health and its association with merger of FATA. Data was collected from a sample size 384 respondents from a population of 7, 13241 through Uma Sekaran formula. Data were collected through a well-thought-out questionnaire was used for data collection. The collected data were entered to SPSS, and Uni-variate test was carried out for prevalence of the causes and chi-square was carried out for association between dependent and independent variables. At Uni-variate level majority of the respondent strongly agree that ex-FATA was lacking education facilities although reforms in education improved the lives of the local people. At bi-variate level all the variables’ statements were found significant (P=000) with dependent variable FATA merger. The study concluded that the ex-FATA people were not satisfied from the pace of reforms process in education system. However the conditions of educational institutions improved after the integration of FATA into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The local community recommended speedy implementation of merger plan to provide basic educational rights and opportunities to the people.

Key Words: FATA merger, education, Reforms

Introduction

The tribal area of Pakistan was previously governed by the draconian law FCR although with the passage of time the government of Pakistan takes multiple initiatives towards the political and administrative reforms in FATA. During the regime of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto the government of Pakistan during that time established the right to vote in tribal areas, after that in the government of Pakistan PPP the president Asif Ali Zardari given the right to political participation in tribal areas. In last during the tenure of PMLN the prime minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif formed a committee which proposed the merger of tribal areas into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the consultation local people. The final report of reforms committee proposed the changes in structure of levies as according to the rest of other district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police. The committee also proposed judiciary system instead of local Jirga moreover the committee advice to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to take initiative to established industrial zones to uplift the economic condition of local people living in FATA. The committee directs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to extend control over the health and education system of ex-FATA through merger of ex fata health and education system with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa other settled regions.

The current research study is explored the post- merger development in education in tribal areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The education department was previously controlled by FATA Secretariat but has now been completely merged with the provincial departments bringing them under the control of relevant provincial ministries. The performance of education department was not up to the mark before the merger into KP but it is still lagging behind form the mainstream departments of the province as well as country.

FATA faced immense economic and humanitarian crisis after Soviet intervention, followed by Soviet disintegration and war on terror. The merger of FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is an important step by the Government of Pakistan to address the prevailing social issues and bring prosperity to the region. The merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was also considered as a salient feature of National Action Plan (NAP) to establish strategies for addressing the local conflicts in the county. The federal and provincial governments took the initiative to merge erstwhile FATA in to Kyber Pakhtunkhwa. Ostensibly, this merger is supposed to change the dynamics, rules, customs and traditions of the area. The education system in ex-FATA was badly affected due to terrorism and negligence of government however after the merger multiple initiatives are taken in the field of education in the newly merged districts.

Literature review

Initiatives of FATA reforms

Many attempts have been made to reform the FATA administration and the laws governing the region. In a 1954 ruling, Supreme Court Chief Justice Alvin Robert Cornelius described the FCR as “obnoxious to all recognized modern principles governing the dispensation of justice.”³⁹ Many committees were established in the past that came up with good recommendations. The process

got delayed because of the elections, and it could not be resumed since the Bhutto government was ousted by the military coup in July 1977 (Kakakhel, 2010). Another attempt was made in 1996 by introducing adult franchise in FATA, for direct election of representatives to the National Assembly. Previously, only Maliks were entitled to cast their votes for parliamentary members. In 2005, an attempt was made to introduce legal reforms in FATA. A committee was constituted to propose changes in FCR law after consulting the people of FATA. Many of the changes were acknowledged and incorporated in 2011 (Dawn, 2011). This attempt removed some flaws of FCR but major changes were required to improve their judicial system and grant equal citizenship to the people of FATA. With the extension of Political Parties Order 2002 to FATA on August 12, 2011, political parties were permitted to campaign freely in the region. This led to the demands for fundamental reforms. The process of merger of Federally Administrated Tribal Area (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) started in November 2015, with the establishment of a cabinet-level Committee on FATA reforms. The Committee organized several meetings with various stakeholders in all seven agencies of the FATA, including Maliks and Masharaan (tribal elders), political activists, local businessmen, media personnel, civil society organizations and youngsters (Sulaiman, 2018). The purpose of these meetings was to explore the needs, expectations and workable options. The Committee on FATA reforms headed by Sartaj Aziz in 2015 also took into account the popular views of FATA residents about the reforms by holding jirgas in all the 7 Agencies and consulted about 3000 tribal Maliks and elders. In addition, the Committee received over 29,000 comments on Ministry of SAFRON hotline and majority supported the merger of FATA with KPK and the abolition of Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) (Aziz, 2017).

In response to this extraordinary action by the FATA MPs, then prime minister Nawaz Sharif formed a special six-member FATA Reforms Committee. Headed by Sartaj Aziz, adviser to the prime minister on foreign affairs, the committee was tasked with proposing necessary reforms, identifying viable options for the future of the FATA region, and coming up with substantive recommendations and a roadmap for implementing changes in the tribal region (UNDP, 2017). The committee took eight months to visit tribal agencies, meet with tribal elders and other relevant people, and prepare recommendations and a roadmap for determining the future of FATA. Four major options identified by the committee were thoroughly explored in its report: (1) FATA should be merged with the adjacent KP province, (2) FATA should become a full-fledged separate province in its own right, (3) FATA should get a new autonomy arrangement with an elected council modeled on the Gilgit Baltistan Council (the quasi-autonomy proposition), and (4) FATA should remain as it was for the time being, with minor reforms to the FCR laws (Reforms committee report, 2016). Sweeping changes would be mandated under some of these proposals. A separate provincial status for FATA would entail a separate provincial administrative setup, including installation of the region's own governor, chief minister, legislative body, cabinet, and a fully independent and authorized secretariat to focus on tribal affairs and the new province's own taxation system. Under the quasi-autonomy proposal, the FATA political administration would work under the autonomous council while making independent decisions in various sectors, such as health, education, industry, and job creation (Ahmed, 2018). A December 2016 survey by an

Islamabad-based independent research center showed that 74 percent of tribesmen broadly support FATA's merger with KP, while a clear majority of 54 percent support that objective unequivocally (Niaz, 2017). Support for a merger with KP received the backing of many major mainstream and regional political parties, including the Pashtun nationalist Awami National Party, the Pakistan People's Party, and the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz). In December 2016 the KP Provincial Assembly, where the Pakistan Tehrik-e Insaaf party rules in a coalition with the Islamist party Jammāt-e-Islami, passed a unanimous resolution favoring the FATA merger. Some of these parties have a presence in FATA and hope that if it is merged with KP, they will be able to strengthen their vote share in the KP assembly and form a government in KP (Ali, 2018). However, at least two parties have opposed the merger: the religious party JUI-F and the Pashtun nationalist party, the Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP), whose share of the electorate is mostly based in Pashtun populated areas of Baluchistan province.

After months of deliberation, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government made a landmark political decision in early March 2017, approving a series of reforms that are to culminate in the merger of FATA with the neighboring KP province. The official reforms committee ruled out the possibility of a FATA province on the grounds of questionable feasibility, lack of revenue, and poor sustainability (ICG, 2018). The committee said in its report that the advantages of integrating FATA with KP are far greater than the disadvantages. The proposed reforms package brings the tribal areas into parity with other parts of the country through parallel and concurrent political, judicial, administrative, security, and economic reforms. The reforms aim to provide constitutional protection to the FATA people by extending the formal justice system, introducing modern policing, establishing local government, and starting a full range of activities for economic and social development (NCHR, 2019).

Post-Merger Impact on Education

Unfortunately, the standard of education in FATA is dismal and below par. It is reported that as many as 600 educational institutes are non-functional mainly owing to security concerns or displacement of locals to other parts of Pakistan. Likewise, the data gathered for educational institutes for girls is equally pathetic and shows that out of total 1927 schools for girls; around 537 are non-operating making 28% of non-working institutions for girls. Of all the districts of FATA, Khyber tribal district has the highest ratio of non-functional educational institutes, like 44.5% are non-functional schools there (P & DKP, 2019). According to the FATA development household survey (2013-14), the literacy rate in tribal district is 33% which is too less as compare to average literacy rate (58%) of the country. The adult literacy rate too is abysmally low at 28.4% in merged areas against 57% adult literacy rate in Pakistan (Bureau of statistics, 2013). In general, there are only 4506 out of 6050, or 74%, institutions providing primary education. With the parameter of 40 students and above making an overcrowded institute, only 41% of schools are rightly overcrowded; too low a percentage if compared with the other parts of Pakistan. Moreover, it is discovered that there are only 35 colleges, 23 and 12 for boys and girls respectively, with only 3% of students successfully completing their higher education (FATA Development Indicator

Household Survey, 2013-14). It gives credence to the fact that education sector in FATA is dismal and needs a timely remedy. It also was discovered that girls, who are less likely to attend both formal and informal education because of prevalent societal norms and taboos, lacked way too behind if compared with their male counterparts. The boys who could read a single sentence in either Urdu or Pashto made 42% compared to only 17% of girls who could do same (Zia, 2017).

Research Design

The people of ex-FATA, six former frontier regions (FRs) were selected as universe for this study. Those six ex-FRs include FR Kohat, FR Peshawar, FR Bannu, FR Lucky, FR Tank and FR DI Khan. According to census 2017 the accumulative population of those six FRs was 7,13241. Considering the nature and objectives of this study, quantitative research approach was utilized in order to understand and explain educational reforms after ex FATA's merger into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The data was collected from the respondents through questionnaire. The total number of 384 respondents were sampled from total population of 7,13241 through Uma Sekaran, 2006 table formula for sample size selection. According to the given formula the total sample size was 384 out of the total 713241 members of the selected six ex FRs. Questionnaire was utilized as a tool of primary data collection. The collected data was arranged in ordinal sequence which was then analyzed using uni-variate simple frequency and percentage for prevalence while chi-square statistical test was carried out for measuring the association at 0.05% confidence level. The dependent variable was indexed and cross tabulated with independent variables for desired results.

Results and Discussion

Basic information

Basic questions were asked from respondents regarding gender, age, marital status, occupation, and educational qualification.

Respondent's profile

The following table shows demographic information of the respondents. 78 percent of the respondents were male and 22 percent were female. 9 percent of the respondent's age was 18-23, 50 percent age was 24-29, and 27 percent respondent's age was 30-34 and 15 percent respondent's age above 34 years. Then the question was asked about marital status of the respondents, 28 percent respondents were found single, 71 percent were married while 1 percent were founded widowed. The next question was about the education of the respondents, 20 percent respondents were illiterate, 17 percent got primary education, 29 percent respondents having secondary school certificate, 22 percent were graduates and 11 percent of the respondents were higher education. The question was asked about the occupation of the respondents, 26 percent were found Business man, 17 percent were Government employee, and 54 percent were labor, while 14 percent were related to other occupations or they don't have any occupation.

Respondent's profile

Gender	Male	Female	Others		
	299 (78%)	85(22%)	0		
Age	18-23	24-29	30-34	Any other	
	35(9%)	192(50%)	104(27%)	53(14%)	
Marital status	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced	
	107(28%)	273(71%)	04(1%)	0	
Educational qualification	Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	Graduation	Higher
	78(20%)	67(17%)	111(29%)	87(22%)	41(11%)
Occupation	Business	Employee	Labor	Any other	
	99(26%)	66(17%)	205(54%)	14(3%)	

Values in cell show frequency while values in parenthesis show percentages.

Uni variate Analysis of Post-merger education system in ex-FATA

The above table shows data regarding post-merger education system in ex FATA. In this regard, most of the respondents i.e., 52.3 percent respondents disagreed with the statement that education system is improved with merger, 20.15 percent were strongly disagreed, 16.7 percent shared their view in favor of neutral, 7 percent of the respondents were agreed and the remaining 3.6 percent were consider strongly agreed and opined that education system is improved. Majority of the respondents i.e., 56.4 percent agreed that physical infrastructure of the building was bad and not according to market demands before merger, 14.35 percent consider strongly agreed, 10.9 percent were found neutral, 13 percent were consider disagreed and the remaining 5.2 percent were strongly disagreed. Majority of the respondent's 52.95 percent agreed with the statement that there is no concept and mechanism of education monitoring in Ex FATA before merger, 24.25 percent were consider strongly disagreed, 15.15 percent were found neutral, 5.55 percent were disagreed and the remaining 2.3 percent were consider strongly disagreed. Then the question was asked that whether the economic condition of the schools and colleges were improved after merger, 60.2 percent respondents found neutral, 14.6 percent were consider disagreed, 6.5 percent were found strongly disagreed, 10.2 percent of the respondents agreed and the remaining 8.65 percent were strongly agreed with such kind of economic improvement. Similarly, the question was asked that whether people of the locality were satisfied from educational institution before FATA merger,

most of the respondents' 51.9 percent were agreed, 22.7 percent were consider strongly agreed, 10.7 percent were neutral, 9.1 percent were in favor of disagree and 5.75 percent respondents were consider strongly disagreed. A high number of the respondents i.e., 62.2 percent consider neutral with the statement that they are satisfied with post-merger educational reforms, 20.3 percent were agreed, 9.3 percent were in favor of strongly agreed, 6.5 percent were disagreed and a smaller number of respondents i.e., 1 percent were consider strongly disagreed. 52.95 percent of the respondents were consider disagreed with statement that female education is improved after merger, 20.5 percent were strongly disagreed, 12.55 percent were considered neutral, 8.6 percent were agreed and 5.55 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed. Then the question was asked that whether meritocracy is ensured after merger with KPK, 57 percent of the respondents consider neutral, 10.7 percent were disagreed with statement, 4.9 percent strongly disagreed, 16.4 percent were in favor of agreed and remaining 10.9 percent were strongly agreed. 51.6 percent respondents were agreed that number of qualified teachers were increased after merger, 28.65 percent were strongly agreed, 7.6 percent were considered neutral, 9.4 percent were found agreed with statement and 4,7 percent were consider strongly agreed.

Uni variate Analysis of Post-merger education system in ex-FATA

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
Do you see that education system will improve after merger	77(20.1)	201(52.3)	65(16.9)	27(7)	14(3.6)
Before FATA merger with KPK educational infrastructure/buildings were in bad condition	20(5.2)	50(13)	42(10.9)	217(56.5)	55(14.3)
Before FATA merger with KPK there was no concept of monitoring in education system	9(2.3)	21(5.5)	58(15.1)	203(52.9)	93(24.2)
The economic condition of schools and colleges improved after merger	25(6.5)	56(14.6)	231(60.2)	39(10.2)	33(8.6)
People were not satisfied from the performance of educational institutions before FATA merger with KPK	22(5.7)	35(9.1)	41(10.7)	199(51.8)	87(22.7)
I am satisfied from the post-merger reforms in education system.	4(1)	26(6.8)	239(62.2)	78(20.3)	37(9.6)
There is overall improvement in female education	79(20.6)	203(52.9)	48(12.5)	33(8.6)	21(5.5)

after the merger.					
Post-merger reforms in educational system will ensure meritocracy in teacher's recruitment process.	19(4.9)	41(10.7)	219(57)	63(16.4)	42(10.9)
The numbers/strength of qualified teachers	103(26.8)	198(51.6)	29(7.6)	36(9.4)	18(4.7)
Improved after merger.					
Post-merger reforms addressed the administrative failure in educational system of Ex-Fata.	27(7)	72(18.8)	243(63.3)	27(7)	15(3.9)

Values in cell show frequency while values in parenthesis show percentages.

Association of education system in ex-FATA with Merger

The above table shows association of post-merger education system of Ex FATA and perception about merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In this regard, a high significance association ($P = 0.000$) was found between education system improvement in tribal districts and merger perception with KPK. A high significance association ($P = 0.000$) was found between bad infrastructure of educational institution before merger with perception about merger with KPK. Similarly, the concept of monitoring in education system was not found before merger in the targeted area and found a high significance association of ($P = 0.000$), as the institutions of the area was not developed and not according to national standard and market. A high significance association ($P = 0.000$) was found between the economic condition of the colleagues and educational institution was developed after merger with KPK and people perception regarding merger with KPK, as after merger proper budget was allocated for new tribal. Similarly, the people of the locality were not satisfied from the education of the area, as education was not according to national standard having no mechanism for monitoring before the merger, which was found a high significance association with the perception about merger with KPK. A significance association ($P = 0.000$) was found between satisfaction from FATA reforms after merger with perception of merger with KPK, as the people opined that now the system is changing and people inclination is towards education while the government are also playing their role positively in merger for the educational and economic development of the locality. Similarly, a high significance association ($P = 0.000$) was found between female education improvement after merger and perception of merger with KPK, as the female education is an indicator of development and prosperity of the nation. Post-merger reforms in FATA ensured meritocracy and proper selection the teachers which shows a high significance association ($P = 0.000$). a high significance association ($P = 0.000$) was found between the number/strength of the qualified teachers increased with perception of merger, as qualified teachers are ensured due to monitoring and proper educational system of the tribal district. A high significance association ($P = 0.000$) was found between perception of FATA merger between post-merger reforms address the administrative failure in educational setting at Ex FATA. It is concluded that before merger the education system was weak and not fulfilling the local demands

as well as not fulfilling national standards. Rather the education is improved positively due to merger with KPK.

Association of education system in ex-FATA with Merger

Statements	Independent	Dependent		Total	Statistics
	<u>Education</u>	<u>FATA merger</u>			
	<u>system</u>	Yes	No		
	Responses				
Do you see that education system will improve after merger	SD	77 (20.1)	0(0)	77(20.1)	P= 0.000
	DA	201 (52.3)	0(0)	201(52.3)	
	N	9 (2.3)	56(14.6)	65(16.9)	
	A	0 (0)	27 (7)	27 (7)	
	SA	0 (0)	14 (3.6)	14(3.6)	
Before Fata merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa there was no concept of monitoring in education system	SD	9 (2.3)	0(0)	9(2.3)	P= 0.000
	DA	21 (5.5)	0(0)	21 (5.5)	
	N	58 (15.1)	0(0)	58 (15.1)	
	A	199(51.8)	4(1)	203(51.9)	
	SA	0 (0)	93(24.2)	93 (24.2)	
Before Fata merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa there was no concept of monitoring in education system	SD	9 (2.3)	0(0)	9 (2.3)	P= 0.000
	DA	21 (5.5)	0(0)	21 (5.5)	
	N	58 (15.1)	0(0)	58 (15.1)	
	A	199(51.8)	4(1)	199(52.9)	
	SA	0 (0)	93(24.2)	93 (24.2)	
The economic condition of schools and colleges improved after merger	SD	25 (6.5)	0(0)	25(6.5)	P= 0.000
	DA	56 (14.6)	0(0)	56 (14.6)	
	N	206(53.6)	25 (6.5)	231(60.2)	
	A	0(0)	39(10.2)	39 (10.2)	
	SA	0(0)	33 (8.6)	33(8.6)	
People were not satisfied from the performance of educational institutions before Fata merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	SD	22 (5.7)	0(0)	22 (5.7)	P= 0.000
	DA	35 (9.1)	0(0)	35 (9.1)	
	N	41 (10.7)	0(0)	41 (10.7)	
	A	189(49.2)	10(2.6)	199(51.8)	
	SA	0 (0)	87(22.7)	87(22.7)	
I am satisfied from the post-merger reforms in education system	SD	4(1)	0(0)	4(0)	P= 0.000
	DA	26 (6.8)	0(0)	26 (6.8)	
	N	239(62.2)	0(0)	239(62.2)	
	A	18 (4.7)	60(15.6)	78(20.3)	
	SA	0(0)	37 (9.6)	37 (9.6)	

There is overall	SD	79 (20.6)	0(0)	79(20.6)	P= 0.000
improvement in female	DA	203(52.9)	0(0)	203(52.9)	
education after the merger	N	5 (1.3)	43(11.2)	48(12.5)	
	A	0(0)	33 (8.6)	33 (8.6)	
	SA	0 (0)	21 (5.5)	21 (5.5)	
Post-merger reforms in	SD	19 (4.9)	0(0)	19(4.9)	P= 0.000
educational system ensure	DA	41 (10.7)	0(0)	41 (10.7)	
meritocracy in teacher's	N	219 (57)	0(0)	219 (57)	
recruitment process	A	8 (2.1)	55(14.3)	63(16.4)	
	SA	0 (0)	42(10.9)	42 (10.9)	

Values in cell show frequency while values in parenthesis show percentages.

Conclusions

The current study focuses on the sociological analysis of educational reforms after FATA merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Further the study explores services related to education in new tribal districts. The study explores and compares the facilities provided to people in Pre and Post-merger with KPK. The educational system of the Ex FATA was not satisfactory before merger, which was developed and improved after merger. Monitoring system was implemented in FATA for the development and improvement of the education. The physical infrastructure of schools and number of teachers was increased in tribal districts

Recommendations

- For the development and prosperity of the new tribal district the local people will cooperate with the government and institution in implementation of law and order implementation.
- Provision of services and facilities is the responsibility of the government, so government can play their role positively in provision of facilities and services.

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