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Hybrid Warfare on Pakistan: Examining the Determinants and Impact

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ABSTRACT

Hybrid warfare, an ambiguous term in academia, has recently gained traction in scholarly work. However, its manifestation appears too vague in terms of observable phenomena. In the case of Pakistan, hybrid warfare has become more of a cliché or jargon. The nation contends with hybrid warfare on all fronts. Due to political instability and fragile governance, it has become an easy target for adversaries to employ hybrid warfare against, especially since its nuclearization. While this constant use of hybrid warfare may have made Pakistan resilient on the military front, it has had a far-reaching impact on Pakistani society. From the human development index to economic development, Pakistan has undergone a

phase marked by a significant loss of peace and harmony. The research paper explores these implications in detail to foster an understanding of its impacts on Pakistan.

Keywords: Hybrid warfare, non-traditional threats, non-linear warfare, political instability, Pakistan.

Introduction

Due to the events of the Cold War, the nature of battles and threats has been radically transformed.¹ Globalization has simultaneously altered the dynamics, rendering traditional instruments of foreign policy and military inadequate in ensuring the security of the state.² Furthermore, in the ever-changing environment of international politics, linking the social, economic, and environmental domains is necessary for the survival of the state. Thus, national security in the contemporary world has evolved to incorporate both traditional concerns and various non-traditional threats. Understanding the constantly changing nature of security requirements is an absolute necessity. Therefore, new concepts of security, threats, and challenges must be clearly defined.

Frank Hoffman argued that the hybrid warfare “blend the lethality of state conflict with the fanatical and protracted fervor of irregular warfare.”³ The emergence of a hybrid warfare model that merges the lethality of state-level conflicts with the extended and flexible nature of irregular warfare raises concerns about future security threats. This model provides diverse options for state and non-state actors, including state-sponsored groups or self-funded individuals, to exploit advanced military capabilities in unanticipated ways. It can be observed in the use of encrypted command systems, man-portable surface-to-air missiles, and other modern lethal systems, as well as in the support of long-lasting insurgencies that use ambushes, homemade bombs, and other methods. The United States (U.S.) Army defined

¹ It was noted that During the Cold War, the nature of threats was limited to conventional armed forces; however, after that, new threats emerged which required new ways and means to counter them. Please see: Lee Edwards and Elizabeth Edwards Spalding, *A Brief History of the Cold War* (Washington DC, USA: Regnery History, 2016), 99–191.

² Jonathan Kirshner, *Globalization and National Security*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2006), 1–33.

³ Frank G. Hoffman, “Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars” (Arlington, Virginia: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, December 2007), https://www.potomac institute.org/images/stories/publications/potomac_hybridwar_0108.pdf.

hybrid threats as “The diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, terrorist forces, or criminal elements unified to achieve mutually benefitting threat effects.”⁴

It is a relatively recent term, which lacks an acknowledged meaning globally.⁵ Meanwhile, different nations define it differently from their own perspectives. Since its first introduction by William J. Nemeth in 2002, the definition and application of the phrase “hybrid warfare” have shifted dramatically. The term hybrid warfare can be defined as the synchronized application of a variety of military as well as civil-oriented strategies and tactics. Hybrid warfare also refers to any non-military clandestine subversive attempt. It could be manifested as economic subversion or the spread of propaganda.⁶ These strategies have existed for centuries, and the only thing that sets them apart now is how they've been incorporated into today's technologies. The term fits because hybrid warfare is a mixture of different types of warfare from the past, but it is used in new and interesting ways because of the latest technology and hyper-globalization in the field of communications.

The changes in the character and political dynamics of global and regional wars pose a significant threat to a state's military and institutional strategies. Since the end of the cold war, the number of confrontations between traditional and conventional armies has decreased, while unconventional forms of warfare are on the rise.⁷ Due to the altering nature of wars and their accompanying goals, the paradigms of victory and defeat are transforming. Despite ambiguity around the definition of the concept, it appears that hybrid warfare is a harsh reality and has been deployed around the globe. Examples of hybrid warfare could be found in the Russian intervention in Ukraine. The concept of hybrid warfare, even before the term was introduced in 2002, was used by the South Asian states since the fall of Dhaka. In

⁴ Army Doctrine Publication, “ADP 1-02 Terms and Military Symbols,” armypubs.army.mil (Department of the Army, United States, August 2018), https://armypubs.army.mil/ProductMaps/PubForm/Details.aspx?PUB_ID=1005278.

⁵ It was argued that after the Russian annexation of Crimea in March 2014, the term ‘Hybrid Warfare’ gained momentum globally; however, its use remained focused on Russia only. James K. Wither, “Making Sense of Hybrid Warfare,” *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 15, no. 2 (2016): 73–87, <https://doi.org/10.11610/connections.15.2.06>.

⁶ William J Nemeth, *Future War and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid Warfare* (Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School, 2002), 58–74, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/36699567.pdf>.

⁷ Due to the changing character of war and warfare, the nature of conflict also changed and conventional armies had had to face new threats after the Second World War. Such conflicts emerged exponentially after the end of the Cold War. David Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War : Churchill, Roosevelt, and the International History of the 1940s*, 1st ed. (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 291–351.

1971, the Indian armed forces used psychological, political, subversive, and violent methods to force the people of East Pakistan to separate from the West.⁸ Civilian and military leaders in Pakistan should grasp the nature and mechanisms of hybrid warfare to avoid becoming targets of such tactics in the future.

The constant struggle of India against Pakistan is altering, likely to “blur the distinction between war and peace.” Announcement of wars is not done and is followed by haphazard patterns. With every passing day, India’s use of hybrid tactics against Pakistan is increasing. After the South Asian nuclearization and the minimization of marginal utility for war between the nuclear adversaries, the enhancement of hybrid activities is a crucial component of India’s overall increase in military capabilities and hostile stance toward Pakistan. To safeguard its national interests, Pakistan must understand the imminent threat and develop effective countermeasures against India's hybrid warfare techniques.

Hybrid Warfare: Threats to Pakistan and Its History

According to its academic definition, the practical usage of hybrid warfare against Pakistan dates to 1971. The academic terminology of hybrid warfare did not exist at the time, but its embodiment existed. The fall of Dhaka, which happened in 1971, is a successful example of how neighboring India, deployed hybrid warfare against Pakistan.⁹ New Delhi successfully executed its plan to fight a war unconventionally by placing Islamabad in an undermining position. Multiple actors fostered a situation in which the Bengalis took up weapons against Pakistan in response to India's questionable objectives. Since its creation, Pakistan has struggled with domestic security concerns as a result of the improper sub continental divide, which has been exploited by hostile governments. To maintain Pakistan’s survival in a hostile environment, security from both foreign and internal threats remains the country’s top priority. Most of Pakistan’s security and non-traditional challenges have an international component. Currently, Pakistan faces several hybrid challenges, which continue to destabilize the state largely.

⁸ Anne Noronha Dos Santos, *Military Intervention and Secession in South Asia : The Cases of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, and Punjab* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security International, 2007), 23–40.

⁹ Amir Zia, “Hybrid Warfare Manifested!,” www.hilal.gov.pk (Hilal Publications - ISPR, February 1, 2018), <https://www.hilal.gov.pk/eng-article/detail/MjY1.html>.

Moreover, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, and the subsequent US-led invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001 drastically affected Pakistan's peace and the ensuing conflict concerns reinvigorated violence.¹⁰ Pakistan was confronted with grave domestic concerns such as rampant and active terrorist outfits; sectarian and ethnic violence; governance and development were in shambles; and Pakistan was dealing with foreign-funded separatist movements. In this scenario, terrorism was about sending a message of political nature in a non-traditional manner against a state or group of individuals, which could be in the form of violence, which happened in the case of Pakistan after it became a non-NATO ally and front-line state in the war on terrorism, since Al-Qaeda declared war against Pakistan.¹¹

Indicators as Enablers

Hybrid warfare is all about the visuals, where the states tend to fall into their trap. The national indicators are lacking, or it could be construed that in states which are developing and whose prosperity levels are not up to the mark with the standards of the contemporary globalized world, then the population of that state as well as the government machinery are likely to be the victims of hybrid warfare. Each of the indicators works in different ways and could have different manifestations to enable the phenomenon of hybrid warfare. As far as the state of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is concerned, the indicators are not in Pakistan's favor. Whereas Islamabad's problems with a stable government and a functioning system of governance have been problematic. This led Pakistan to the not-so-optimal level of indicators that could be witnessed primarily in food insecurity. Moreover, 43 percent of the population is suffering from food insecurity, which means this 43 percent could be psychologically subverted to play a determining role in the hybrid warfare against Pakistan.¹² It is obvious that whenever there is food insecurity, which means the economic position of the state is quite vulnerable and the population lacks the opportunity to meet basic needs, there is no concept of upward mobility in society, and hybrid warfare brings such opportunities that

¹⁰ Charles Phillips and Alan Axelrod, *Encyclopedia of Wars* (New York: Facts on File, Cop, 2005), 1231.

¹¹ Arshad Ali, "Economic Cost of Terrorism: A Case Study of Pakistan," Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad 30, no. 1/2 (2010): 70–157.

¹² Muhammad Abdul Kamal, "Food Insecurity in Pakistan," *Dawn*, November 29, 2021, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1660903>.

provide food on the table for such vulnerable populations.¹³ Thus, they become the enablers of hybrid warfare. Here are a few indicators which suggest that the hybrid warfare against Pakistan is working:¹⁴

- i. Pakistan is in 161st rank on the Human Development Index
- ii. The country's literacy rate is around 62.3 percent¹⁵
- iii. The corruption index exceeds the 140th rank¹⁶
- iv. Food insecurity engulfs more than 43 percent of the population of Pakistan

Hybrid Warfare and the Vulnerabilities in Pakistan

Pakistan has been a vulnerable state and hybrid warfare against Pakistan could be used against its vulnerabilities that could be understood from the following vulnerabilities, which are prominent in Pakistan:

- i. Lack of national integration and coherence.
- ii. Political instability.
- iii. A perpetually weakened economy has numerous far-reaching implications for its population.
- iv. Radicalism and extremist tendencies on surge in society
- v. Social discords are formed because of ethnic and religious differences.
- vi. Increased social injustice and lack of trust in the judicial system
- vii. Population explosion
- viii. Divergences between civil and military leadership
- ix. Lack of proper implementation of national security strategy

Hybrid Warfare: New and Prevailing Threats to Pakistan

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ United Nations Development Programme, "Specific Country Data - Human Development Index," [hdr.undp.org](https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/PAK), September 8, 2022, <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/PAK>.

¹⁵ Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training Government of Pakistan, "Adult Literacy," mofept.gov.pk, 2022, <https://mofept.gov.pk/ProjectDetail/NjQ4ZTg2NjltOWM2NC00Y2IxLTkzMDgtMjU2OTFhMjA4NzNh>.

¹⁶ Transparency International, "2021 Corruption Perceptions Index - Explore Pakistan's Results," [Transparency.org](https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2021/index/pak), 2021, <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2021/index/pak>.

Due to the availability of modern means of communication, Pakistan's hybrid warfare issues are highly unstructured and well-connected to both domestic and foreign elements. Hostile agencies' involvement has exposed Pakistan to numerous external threats. As mentioned earlier, the domestic sphere is highly unstable due to various factors. Islamabad's primary concern revolves around the interplay of internal and external elements employing hybrid warfare techniques for their interests. The applications of such hybrid warfare aim to achieve malicious objectives, whether exploiting ethno national sentiment, propagating against the Pakistan Army, or targeting the nuclear program to create a destabilized situation regarding denuclearization, political integrity, the prestige of Pakistan's army, and sensitive denuclearization issues. This ultimately leads to the phenomenon known as Balkanization by Pakistan's Eastern neighbor.

Involvement of Non-state Actors

As far as the involvement and the role of non-state actors are concerned, these entities have been merged as the most prominent ones as compared to fourth-generation warfare.¹⁷ Meanwhile, such non-state actors were used as proxies against rivals as was observed in the case of the Taliban when they were used as proxies against the Russian invasion of Afghanistan but in the contextual sense of hybrid warfare, things have moved in the favor of non-state actors. Since the evolution of warfare, non-state actors have been designated as primary players in the realm of hybrid warfare. According to the concept of hybrid warfare, these actors are recognized for participating in armed struggles against states, while also maintaining independent operations to pursue their personal or group interests. The subsequent lines outline the key non-state actors currently active in Pakistan.

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

TTP Pakistan began as a faction of Al-Qaeda following the US invasion of Afghanistan and Pakistan, which was founded on the primary concept of armed struggle/Jihad against the U.S. and its allies.¹⁸ They demand that Pakistan should have been

¹⁷ Antulio J. Echevarria , *Fourth-Generation War and Other Myths* (Carlisle, PA : Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2005), <https://permanent.fdlp.gov/websites/ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pdf/PUB632.pdf>.

¹⁸ Paul Cruickshank and Mohannad Hage Ali, "Abu Musab al Suri: Architect of the New al Qaeda," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30, no. 1 (December 21, 2006): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10576100601049928>.

supporting the Afghan Taliban against the United States, not vice versa.¹⁹ The Taliban opposed the government, leading to havoc in Pakistan. The situation worsened after the tragedy at Lal Masjid, prompting the Pakistani army to launch an offensive against extremists in the nation's capital. The army conducted military operations in the country's northwestern region, which features the harshest terrain. Hybrid warfare against the state was initiated by the TTP²⁰ by employing non-conventional and ad hoc tactics to instil terror among the general populace.²¹

Due to bombs and attacks on Mosques, Imam Bargah, markets, homes, and schools, insecurity intensified.²² The 2014 attack on Army Public School (APS) was the bloodiest attack that resulted in the slaughter of innocent students.²³ The TTP dug its own grave through this operation, prompting the military to start extensive retaliations to eliminate radical members. The principal weapon of TTP was innovative and hybrid methods of assaulting individuals. The most notable advantage of hybrid warfare was the difficulty in identifying the terrorists, who had blended in with the civilian population. Again, the lines between war and peace were not drawn. There is evidence suggesting that the TTP may receive foreign funds for their activities. Some see this as a potential tactic in hybrid warfare to draw Pakistan into domestic concerns, according to certain perspectives.

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

The ISIS also known as Daesh was founded by Abu Musab Al Zarqawi in the name of *Jam'at al-tawhid wal jihad*, which was a Salafist ideology-oriented radical organization,

¹⁹ Hassan Abbas, "A Profile of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan," Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, January 15, 2008, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/a-profile-of-tehrik-i-taliban-pakistan/>.

²⁰ Amir Zia, "Hybrid Warfare Manifested!," www.hilal.gov.pk (Hilal Publications - ISPR, February 1, 2018), <https://www.hilal.gov.pk/eng-article/detail/MjY1.html>.

²¹ Abbas, 1–4.

²² Abdul Sayed, "The Evolution and Future of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 21, 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/12/21/evolution-and-future-of-tehrik-e-taliban-pakistan-pub-86051>.

²³ Gallup Pakistan, "One Year after Peshawar APS Attack, 47% Pakistanis Believe That the Taliban Were Most Responsible for the Terrorist Attack on Army Public School on 16th December 2014," Gallup Pakistan - Pakistan's Foremost Research Lab, February 8, 2016, <http://gallup.com.pk/one-year-after-peshawar-aps-attack-47-pakistanis-believe-that-the-taliban-were-most-responsible-for-the-terrorist-attack-on-army-public-school-on-16th-december-2014>.

operating in the region of Iraq and the Levant.²⁴ Their aim was the establishment of the global Islamic caliphate, while they demanded that all the Muslim states around the globe should consider the authority of their caliphate. Numerous scholars have denied the existence of Daesh in Pakistan, but many have claimed that their recruitment has been quite active in Pakistan. This is called conclusive because there is practical evidence of links between Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Many reports have indicated the ISIS factors and derogatory publications, as well as the observation of wall chalking in Pakistan in support of ISIS. It is estimated that Daesh from tribal areas and Baluchistan have recruited more than ten thousand people, according to a confidential dossier presented to the government of Baluchistan, and a big number of supporters are also present. Similarly, there were reports of some banned sectarian organizations such as Lashkar e Jhangvi (LeJ) and Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat members joining ISIS. The latter developed a Khorasan province (ISIS-Khorasan) including the regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.²⁵ In a statement claiming the responsibility issued by ISIS, for the 2015 bomb blast on a bus carrying members of the Ismaili minority community in Karachi. In comparison to Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Yemen, the Islamic State (IS) poses a minimal level of threat to Pakistan. IS faces a formidable enemy in the Pakistani state.

Sectarian Organization

In Pakistan, sectarian organizations have established a structure resembling the concept of the deep state. The sectarian conflict in the subcontinent existed before Pakistan's independence. The two major sects of Sunni and Shia had been pitted against each other to prove the veracity of their claims. However, the Afghan invasion has changed the sectarian dynamic of the subcontinent. As a result of the radical nature of certain sects, such as Deoband, there are now divisions even among Sunni sub-sects. A regrettable aspect of such conflict is that caused the loss of a great number of distinguished scientists, doctors, and ordinary citizens. The unconventional nature of entrained conflicts has arisen due to the involvement of states such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran. These states have

²⁴ Federico Lorenzo Ramaioli, *Islamic State as a Legal Order: To Have No Law but Islam, between Shari'a and Globalization*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2022), 12.

²⁵ Amira Jadoon, Nakissa Jahanbani, and Charmaine Willis, "Challenging the ISK Brand in Afghanistan-Pakistan: Rivalries and Divided Loyalties," *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, April 26, 2018, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/challenging-isk-brand-afghanistan-pakistan-rivalries-divided-loyalties/>.

sponsored various sectarian groups in Pakistan, leading to the use of proxy forces.²⁶ Pakistan has the second-largest population of Shias, surpassed only by Iran. There has been a ban on the existence of such sectarian organizations. Following the concepts of Hybrid Warfare, hostile agencies continue to fund sectarian groups to cause unrest in Pakistan to fulfil their agendas and disintegrate the opponent from the inside out. After 2005, the number of sectarian killings grew dramatically due to the Taliban's entrance into Pakistan from Afghanistan.

State Actors

External state actors, mostly India, coordinate with non-state groups to utilize hybrid threats within or outside Pakistan. There are numerous elements to these dangers, including social, political, and financial. On the home front, Pakistan faces several security concerns (in both kinetic and non-kinetic realms) posed by non-state groups financed and supported by India and other adversaries. TTP and Daesh are leading the charge to undermine Pakistan's security landscape. Even while Pakistan has achieved considerable victory, the threat is not yet eliminated, as each day brings a new challenge. The unplanned or hurried withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Afghanistan further complicates the situation.

In Pakistan, India continues to fan the flames of sub-nationalism, religious extremism, and sectarian strife. In 2016, Pakistani security forces detained Kulbhushan Jadhav, an Indian Naval officer working with the Indian spy agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) in Pakistan since 2003. Pakistan's Counter-Terrorism Department has supplied evidence of RAW's participation in sectarian violence in Karachi.²⁷ Under the sponsorship of RAW, the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) was responsible for the murder of Pakistani soldiers and officials.²⁸ In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, RAW aided and financed the Pashtun Tahafuz

²⁶ For a detailed account on sectarianism in Pakistan, please see: Khaled Ahmed, *Sectarian War: Pakistan's Sunni-Shia Violence and Its Links to the Middle East*, 1st ed. (Oxford University Press Pakistan, 2012).

²⁷ Muhammad Saleh Zaafir, "Pakistan Seeks Details about Kulbhushan Yadav from Iran," The News International, April 18, 2017, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/199313-Pakistan-seeks-details-about-Kulbhushan-Yadav-from-Iran>.

²⁸ Radio Mashaal, "Two Pakistani Soldiers, Three Suspected Militants Killed in Balochistan Attacks," *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, August 9, 2023, <https://www.rferl.org/a/pakistan-balochistan-attack-soldiers-killed/32541111.html>.

Movement (PTM) in opposition to state institutions. The Pakistan Army disclosed the relationship between foreign intelligence organizations, specifically RAW, and PTM.

In hybrid warfare, a state employs many methods to conduct war, such as political subversion, proxies, coercive deterrence, and intervention. India has attempted to sow political discord in Pakistan through a variety of instruments. On the diplomatic front, India has announced a policy of international isolation against Pakistan. In 2016, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that India would try to isolate Pakistan globally; thus, India launched a diplomatic isolation campaign on a global scale. In the presence of the US President, Modi made war-mongering threats against Pakistan at a rally in Houston, which demonstrates the US's diplomatic support for India. The U.S. also created a counter-terrorism center in India intending to train Indian military personnel. Similarly, its allies openly support India's abrogation of Article 370 and oppression of innocent Kashmiris by its security forces.²⁹ A prominent US congressional representative remarked publicly, "India is a vital ally, and we support its stance on Kashmir;" however, the U.S. State Department clearly stated, "No change in US policy on Kashmir."³⁰ In addition, Israel offers India help and sustenance in other ways. Decades have passed during which India, aided by right-wing Europeans, has spread propaganda against Pakistan and China. India has portrayed Pakistan as a center of terrorism and militancy, and its mainstream and social media routinely disseminate fake news against Pakistan; for instance, in October 2020, footage of an explosion caused by a gas leak was fraudulently portrayed as a civil battle in Pakistan. Nonetheless, EU DisinfoLab identified a major Indian disinformation effort against Pakistan.³¹

The Psychological Subversion of Pakistan

Psychological subversion could be called a crucial aspect of hybrid warfare because it relies on instability and disillusionment. Different modes of hybrid warfare have been used to

²⁹ Justice (r) Fakhar-un-nisa Khokhar, "Abrogation of Article 370 and 35A by India," The News International, September 7, 2019, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/523121-abrogation-of-article-370-and-35a-by-india>.

³⁰ Anwar Iqbal, "No Change in US Policy on Kashmir, Says State Dept," DAWN, February 11, 2021, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1606744>.

³¹ Gary Machado Alexandre Alaphilippe, Roman Adamczyk, and Antoine Grégoire, "Indian Chronicles: Deep Dive into a 15-Year Operation Targeting the EU and UN to Serve Indian Interests," EU DisinfoLab, December 9, 2020, <https://www.disinfo.eu/publications/indian-chronicles-deep-dive-into-a-15-year-operation-targeting-the-eu-and-un-to-serve-indian-interests/>.

generate a systematic effect on the psyche of the populace in the creation of a problem. Psychological Subversion is achieved through a variety of means, including unrest in the political domain and attacks of terrorists, the APS attack, kidnappings, etc. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are a crucial component against developing states such as Pakistan to sow confusion and conduct initiatives that create Psychological and political subversion. Due to religious, ethno-nationalistic, and geographical divides, Pakistan can readily be influenced by such organizations, whose aims are disguised as charity or development.

Susan Headley gave the term psychological subversion (Psych Sub) to a process of verbally manipulating people for information. In practice, it is comparable to so-called social engineering and pretexting, but with a military emphasis. Headley created it as an extension of the knowledge she gathered from hacking sessions with famed early computer network hackers such as Kevin Metnick.³² Ideologically striking a nation is an attempt to brainwash society's members. This is referred to as demoralization. The second step of ideological brainwashing, following demoralization, is destabilization. Demoralization is an irreversible process. The crisis would result in a violent transformation of power, structure, and economy and would be followed by normalization as the last step. A discouraged individual is unable to evaluate accurate information. It is a perilous policy for a nation, as it harms the next generation. Demoralization takes decades to accomplish. A continual process leads to catastrophic crises by progressively eroding the nation's economic, political, and social underpinnings and rendering society fragile.³³

Implications for Pakistan

Whenever Hybrid warfare against any state is employed, there are far-reaching implications in every sector and corner of that state. As far as Pakistan is concerned, the implication of hybrid warfare has been quite drastic, it had been blowing drastically negative impacts on the society, political harmony, and above of all economic development. Following are detailed explanations of the implications for Pakistan in hybrid warfare.

³² Katie Hafner, "Kevin Mitnick, Unplugged," Tomandmaria.com, November 27, 1995, <https://www.tomandmaria.com/ST297/Readings/hacker%20books%20-%20pub%20weekly.htm>.

³³ Mehmood Ali Rakhshani, "Fifth-Generation Warfare and Its Challenges to Pakistan," Hilal Publications - ISPR, June 2022, <https://hilal.gov.pk/eng-article/detail/NjI1Mg==.html>.

The Human Loss in Pakistan

The human loss could be posed as the greatest and the most damaging consequence of any conflict. Pakistan is no exception to the fact that it is set by conflict. Pakistan has suffered heavy human loss as a result of the War on terror. Terrorism has put a cost on Pakistan in the shape of terrorist attacks, political unrest, and ethnic and sectarian splits. The reason for this is the majority of terrorist, sectarian, and ethnic-nationalist organizations are now intertwined.

The human fatalities were observed by the international watchdogs and as provided by the Pakistani state authorities. Meanwhile, which reveals that the numbers have been mounded from time to time and injured have also increased drastically as a consequence of the terrorist activity by the militants. Furthermore, clashes between security forces and militants; operational attacks by security forces; suicide attacks; sectarian violence and clashes; ethno-political violence; target killings, including drone strikes and political targeting; and sectarian violence and clashes are also included in the list. Some provinces/regions, such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and Balochistan, bore a greater number of casualties than others.

In comparison to other regions of Pakistan, certain cities have experienced a disproportionate amount of violence and loss of life. The bloodshed has occurred most frequently in Peshawar, Quetta, Kurram Agency, Khyber Agency, and North and South Waziristan. The proximity to Afghanistan and lack of border control systems were the greatest challenges for these regions. Since the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, the locals have maintained close ties with their Afghan counterparts. Extremist elements manipulated the populace with the aid of fake material on Jihad. The Northern regions proved to be their breeding grounds because they invoked religious sentiment. The lack of education and illiteracy that was prevalent in the region made people susceptible to their propaganda thus increasing the number of recruitment in these regions, which caused the eruption of violence in the region.

Hybrid Warfare and Economic Implications

The Pakistani economy has suffered tremendous damage in the wake of terrorism. However, this economic collapse can never be attributed exclusively to the threat of terrorism, because of various reasons. Other reasons include the financial crisis of 2008, huge power issues, and natural disasters, such as floods and earthquakes. In the wake of the

worldwide war on terrorism, the economic vulnerability of Pakistan was always prominent, and it became a significant problem during the war on terror. The worldwide war on terrorism has cost Pakistan billions of dollars, for a developing nation, it is a substantial amount. Pakistan has lost a total of 150 billion USD due to the war against terrorism, including both direct and indirect expenditures.³⁴ These costs include both direct and indirect expenses (low investment, a decline in the stock market, and the decline of the tourism business)

The economic loss of Pakistan could be considered as the consequence of self-imposed conflict if perceived on a greater scale of things. The Institute of Global Security Analysis estimates that the losses suffered by September 11, 2001, assaults on the World Trade Centre amounted to approximately 100 billion U.S. dollars; however, the losses incurred by Pakistan because of war are significantly greater.³⁵ This situation was exacerbated by the eastern neighbor, which pushed Pakistan into a state of extreme upheaval. Doval doctrine has been utilized by India to create a kind of platform for the nations whose efforts would be collaborated against Pakistan in the form of hybrid warfare.³⁶ The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was proving itself as a serious threat to India and as a lifeline for Pakistan, which made India and its regional allies to form a coalition against it as New Delhi is acting as the bulwark against Beijing and wants to counter China for its geopolitical gains. Due to CPEC's anticipated tremendous expansion and Pakistan's geostrategic location, it is anticipated that India likely will employ hybrid warfare against Pakistan the most. For the geopolitical and hegemonic interests of India, which were to counter China, it kept Pakistan in a state of political turmoil through hybrid warfare techniques of using ethno national sentiment. Due to bombings and terrorist assaults, the index of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan has also dropped during the past few years. That is another methodology of hybrid warfare aimed at isolating a nation from the sphere of the global financial system.

Crisis on National Image

³⁴ Khurshid Ahmed, "'War on Terror' Has Cost Pakistan More than \$150bn in Losses since 9/11, Officials Say," Arab News, September 12, 2021, <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1927131/world>.

³⁵ Charles Phillips and Alan Axelrod, *Encyclopedia of Wars* (New York: Facts On File, Cop, 2005), 1231.

³⁶ Tahama Asad, "Doval Doctrine Distorting Pakistan's Image: An Appraisal," Hilal Publications - ISPR, October 2022, <https://hilal.gov.pk/eng-article/detail/NjY2MQ==.html>.

When Pakistan was made a frontline state by the US in the global war on terror which resulted in great human and economic losses, Pakistan's image was also tarnished by states such as India, Afghanistan, and the United States itself. Pakistan was considered a nation that financed terrorism in the international community. India's recent action to blacklist Pakistan at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) meeting is part of a broader strategy to create greater difficulties for Pakistan. However, after Pakistan's firm commitment to meeting the conditions of the FATF, the organization removed Pakistan from the grey list on October 20-21, 2022.³⁷

Hybrid Warfare and Social Implications for Pakistan

The societal repercussions of hybrid warfare against Pakistan are quite influential. Exploitations of perception to achieve the desired interests in the political or social domain have always been the most prominent in hybrid warfare. There has always been the existence of ethno national sentiment that has turned out to be the vulnerability of Pakistan. This has caused a national identity crisis, which has been used by the opponents in the domain of hybrid war against Pakistan. In cities such as Karachi, Quetta, and others, the indications of an identity crisis are apparent. Conflict-induced internal displacement renders individuals susceptible to exploitation by anti-state forces, leveraging their vulnerability to hybrid techniques. This susceptibility is exacerbated by the psychological trauma incurred from witnessing war and experiencing the loss of families in conflict.

Conclusion

When compared to different forms of hybrid threat victims, the characteristics of hybrid warfare against Pakistan are unique. Pakistan has been subjected to all the principal hybrid warfare instruments over the previous two decades. There are numerous local and international concerns. Pakistani internal and external adversaries use societal fissures to create problems on numerous fronts for Pakistan. Varieties of hybrid warfare are synchronized for different aims, which could range from socio-political destabilization to the construction of antithesis to Pakistani narratives on foreign fronts. Hybrid warfare could be seen in the form of terrorist organizations such as the LeJ and TTP number of terrorist

³⁷ Financial Action Task Force, "Outcomes FATF Plenary, 20-21 October 2022," Fatf Gafi, October 21, 2022, <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/en/publications/Fatfgeneral/Outcomes-fatf-plenary-october-2022.html>.

attacks, an almost two-decade-long battle, targeted killings, and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks. Over the past two decades, a range of players, including states, state-sponsored organizations, non-state actors, and self-surviving groups, have employed hybrid warfare strategies against Pakistan. This realization has emerged only in the last few years. Islamabad must promptly take action to grasp the principles of hybrid warfare, as it is the sole nation confronting the full spectrum of hybrid warfare. Comprehending these aspects of hybrid warfare is crucial for devising strategies to address Pakistan's present and future challenges and maintain peace.