

ARTICLE

Women's Role in Recruitment for ISIS/Islamist Networks in Pakistan

Imtiaz Gul*

Center for Research and Security Studies, Islamabad, Pakistan

*Corresponding Author: Imtiaz Gul, Center for Research and Security Studies, Islamabad, Pakistan.

E-mail: imtgul@gmail.com

(Submitted 1 December 2017; revised 6 March 2018; accepted 22 May 2018)

Abstract

Historically, women in Pakistan's northwestern territories bordering Afghanistan have played a critical role in providing money and men to jihadist organizations such as the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, and "Islamic State in Iraq and Syria" (ISIS). Lack of education, too little exposure and a male-dominated conservative milieu constitute some of the ingredients of support for these outfits. This was true for over three decades and the phenomenon remained restricted to the rural, backward northwestern regions. But since the early 1990s, outfits such as the Al-Hudda Foundation – an exclusively women-focused organization – began serving as the initial hooks for middle- and upper-class women whom the Foundation targets. It brainwashes women into using *hijab*, and also into believing that they need to forge an alliance against the West and work for an Islamic, Sharia-based state. This advocacy turns many affluent women into religious radicals who can potentially work as the first line of recruits for extremist outfits like Daesh/IS. However small their numbers, these women represent a big threat to the global liberal values of society.

Keywords ISIS; Al-Qaeda; TTP; Pakistan; Daesh

CONTEXT

Pakistan, a nearly 200 million-strong pre-dominantly Muslim nation, is usually known as the hub of the global militant and terrorists, a place which served as the springboard for the U.S.-led anti-Soviet *jihād* in the 1980s, a facilitation center for the obscurantist Afghan Taliban movement, and a birthplace of the vicious Pakistani Taliban (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan; TTP).¹ Parts of it, particularly the northwestern border territories, have also been known to serve as a transit area, a conduit as well as a safe haven for Al-Qaeda and its latest competitor Islamic State (IS) or Daesh.

¹A radical militant warlord and ex-Guantanamo Bay detainee Baitullah Mehsud founded the TTP in December 2007.

Since 2007, these terrorist networks – led by Pakistani terrorist outfit TTP and inspired by both Al-Qaeda and IS – have frequently targeted political leaders, tribal leaders, minority Shia and schools as well as the military and the police.

Little attention is paid to how global geopolitics, too, has contributed to Pakistan's weakness in the face of radical Islam, particularly Washington's campaigns against the former Soviet Union (1980s) and the war against al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism in Afghanistan (post-9/11 attacks).

On both occasions, Pakistan found itself under the rule of military dictators who were looking for international legitimacy, and thus became willing partners in campaigns that were geo-political in nature but entailed disastrous socio-political consequences. During the anti-Moscow jihad, Pakistani army-led authorities welcomed anyone from around the world. Despots “emptied their jails” to help shore up the jihadi forces in Afghanistan, with the help of over US \$6 billion that the CIA funneled into the war (Gul 2015).

IS EMERGENCE

The IS phenomenon stirred up Pakistan's political landscape first in January 2015, when a video message by the students of a female seminary – Jamia Hafsa in the capital Islamabad – surfaced. Through this video, these students invited IS chief Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi to “avenge” the 2007 military raid on the Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) which was adjacent to this seminary.² The video prompted the Islamabad police to report the matter to the interior ministry for advice, saying that the words spoken by the *madrasa* students in the video amounted to “waging war” against the state and ... abetment to wage war [against the state] (Qarar 2015).

For a few days, these females and their supporters faced surveillance and police raids on their residences, but the authorities took no real punitive action against the seminary or those who had released the video. Senior police officials, too, had sought the legal opinion of their prosecution department but the issue apparently got buried – as usual – under the burden of political expedience. Fear of widespread reprisals by militants sympathetic to the seminary kept the government from any meaningful action.

The terror outfit then declared its presence in the country with a deadly attack on a bus carrying members of the Ismaili community – a sub-sect of the Shia Muslims in the southern city of Karachi in May 2015 (Ali 2015). In what was one of the most brazen acts of terrorism recorded since the consequences of the war on terror in Afghanistan began playing out in Pakistan, the masked gunmen first ordered passengers to bow their heads and then shot them all to death. A tattered piece of paper left behind said Daesh carried out this act, thus announcing its arrival in Pakistan.

Only weeks previously, six top commanders of the outlawed TTP, including their spokesman Shahidullah Shahid, had announced their allegiance to Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi of the IS (Sherazi 2014). Shahidullah Shahid, through a press statement to the press, said that he along with five TTP district chiefs had decided to accept IS,

²A raid following months of siege of the mosque in July 2007 left about 150 killed, including the mosque administrator Abdul Rasheed Ghazi. Once avowed to Al-Qaeda, followers of Ghazi and his brother Maulana Abdul Aziz now vowed allegiance to Baghdadi.

also known as Daesh, as their umbrella organizations and that they would act as the IS brigade in Pakistan.

Reports of IS activity inside the country had in fact begun emerging in 2014 against the backdrop of two ongoing military operations against the TTP and its affiliates in Pakistan's border regions including North Waziristan and Khyber Agency. Wall chalkings and graffiti in favor of the group in some districts of the northwestern Khyber Pakhtukhwa province, that shares borders with Afghanistan, offered evidence of some emerging support for the group in the last quarter of 2014.

This happened after a three-member IS delegation reached Pakistan from Syria, prior to the December 16, 2014 terrorist attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtukhwa province. A militant source said the high-level delegation comprised three IS members who reached Pakistan from Syria. The delegation was headed by Zubair Al Kuwaiti and included Uzbek Commander Fahim Ansari and Sheikh Yusuf from Saudi Arabia (Akbar 2015). The delegation (reportedly) met with various militant commanders to enlist their support and to convey the message of IS leader Abu Bakr Al Baghdadi: If all splinter groups develop an understanding among themselves, they can secure IS support. Some agreed to join forces with the IS and others politely refrained from any commitment.

Although the emergence of IS also caused the splintering of the deadly TTP, with its chief Maulana Fazlullah rejecting Baghdadi's claim to the caliphate, yet signs of support for the group – at least as per the claims of intelligence and police officials – keep surfacing every now and then. For instance, police arrested eight suspected members of the IS group (in December 2015) for planning to establish a terrorist network and carry out attacks. The anti-terror police picked them up from their hideout in Daska, a small district of the central Punjab province. Rana Sanaullah, Punjab's Law Minister, told media that "All of them are young and in their 20's. Police also seized Daesh literature and CDs" during the raid (Daily Times 2015).

The minister claimed those arrested were taking instructions via the Internet from a person named Abu Muawiyah. A senior Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) official confirmed the arrests and said that some of the suspected militants were former members of Jamaat-ud Daawa (JuD). Sanaullah later disclosed that, by January 4, 2016, as many as 42 suspected militants with alleged links to the militant "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" (ISIL) (Daesh) group had been arrested in the province. "The arrests were the result of raids in four Punjab cities over the weekend," he said, adding that those arrested had been tasked with setting up sleeper cells for ISIL (Daesh), and included the purported ISIL Islamabad chief Amir Mansoor, his deputy Abdullah Mansoori and the group's chief for Sindh province, Umer Kathio. The minister said the raids also yielded IS literature and weapons (Daily Messenger 2016).

In Karachi, Pakistan's largest commercial city in the south, police officials had earlier (December 2015) stumbled upon a similar cell of four well-educated men – all allegedly involved in the execution of the Ismaili Shia Muslims, while their wives and their accomplices were accused of brainwashing educated and rich women through sermons and videos about the militant IS group and other terrorist outfits (Daily Messenger 2016). But much before this, the CTD of the southern Sindh province had confirmed preparing a list of some of 53 IS-linked terrorists. The list identified another suspected terrorist as Shahid Khokhar from Hyderabad (The News 2015).

The chief of police in the southern Sindh province, Ghulam Hyder Jamali, too, had confirmed before a Senate Standing Committee on the Interior in Islamabad that Daesh was involved in the attack on the Ismaili community bus in Safoora Goth and that Daesh was linked to the banned rabidly anti-Shia terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. Referring to the Safoora attack suspects, he told the senators that they had been involved with Daesh for at least a year and had been receiving instructions from one Abdul Aziz located in Syria. Nearly half a dozen laptops were also recovered from the suspects, which eventually helped nail down the masterminds.

As a whole, as of early 2016 four trends were discernible as far as Pakistan's militant landscape is concerned: first, the IS cause and its narrative resonated with some of the local militant outfits either on pan-Islamist ideological or sectarian grounds – represented by the TTP breakaway Jamaat-ul-Ahrar as well as by many ex-TTP militants who rallied around Saeed Khan Orakzai as the chief of Daesh Pakistan. Second, the IS managed to set up small cells in Karachi, Lahore and Sialkot. Most of the IS proponents are in fact defectors from existing terrorist groups (such as al Qaeda, TTP, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT; also called Ju-D) and Afghan Taliban). They turned eastern Afghan province Ningarhar into their organizational headquarters for activities on both sides of the border, particularly the Achin district. They call the region Wilayat Khorasan. While the IS may hold promise for some in Pakistan, many also found themselves at a crossroads elsewhere in the world too, particularly after thousands of European, American and Australian returned home following disappointments on the field in Syria and Iraq.

Even in Pakistan, two youngsters from Karachi, who were destined to join Daesh before being arrested by the Iranian border guards on the border to Syria, renounced their affiliation with the IS, following psychological counseling. Raja Umar Khattab, the CTD chief in Karachi informed the media on January 17, 2016 that both youngsters in their twenties, whose identity was kept secret, no longer possessed extremist tendencies to join terrorist and militant groups (The News 2016a).

Lastly, female support for Daesh emerged as another phenomenon – both alarming as well as shocking for officials and observers (Waseem 2016).

VIEWS ON ISIS/DAESH IN PAKISTAN

In a recent survey, strangely, some 62% of the respondents refrained from expressing a definite opinion on IS. Of the people surveyed in Pakistan, 28% had a negative view while 9% viewed the group positively (Figure 1). The data show a stark contrast to how IS is viewed in Pakistan as compared with other Muslim countries. Not a single Muslim country had fewer than 60% people viewing IS negatively other than Pakistan (Poushter 2015).

Senior CTD officials believe that “vibrant, efficient and hardcore radicalised” elements of different militant, sectarian and pan-Islamist organisations which at some point shared the ideology of Daesh are joining the IS. These outfits include Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), Hizbut Tahrir (HuT), al-Qaeda, JuD and even political parties like Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) (Shahzad 2017).

The crackdown on militant elements by the authorities, particularly after the deadly attack on the Peshawar Army Public School on December 16, 2014, considerably dented the operational capacity of banned groups, a majority of which had

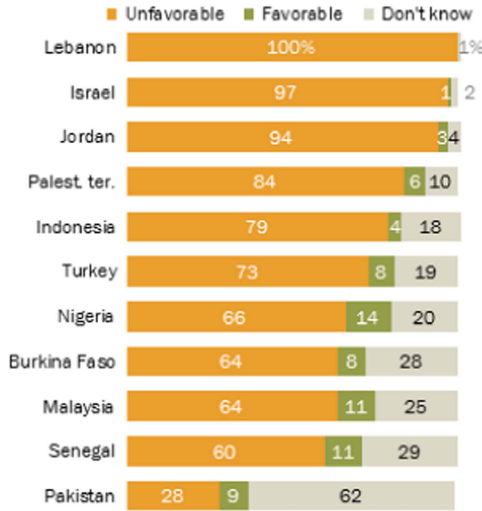


Figure 1. Views of “Islamic State in Iraq and Syria” (ISIS) Overwhelmingly Negative (Poushter 2015)

turned into sleeper cells, particularly in urban areas. Radicals, hence, now see Daesh as an active platform to perform on, officials conclude (Shahzad 2017).

COMMON DENOMINATOR OF IS CELLS

A comparative study of the IS cells in Karachi, Daska and Lahore reveals that notwithstanding variations in their structures and the profiles of their members, they were all bound by a few common denominators.

A factor common to the Karachi, Daska and Lahore cells was that these were personal initiatives of their respective members, who consciously decided to join IS.

Another common factor was shared religious–ideological and militant view-points and also the backgrounds of the members of these cells, who were found to be against democracy and the Constitution. They considered the Pakistan Army as the custodian of a colonial system and police as the guards of the power elite. There is nothing new in their religious and political views, as all militant and radical forces use the same argument to justify their cause, but they were greatly inspired by the IS approach to achieving the ultimate objective. (Rana 2016)

The educational profiles of the members of all these cells were also similar and their social backgrounds had little variation, says Rana (Rana 2016). They came from varying income groups of the middle class but shared the same religious and social values. Like the normal middle class, they had dreams of a better life but their dreams had a religious orientation.

The members of the Daska cell originally belonged to JuD, but at some stage they switched loyalties to join IS. At least two families of the Lahore cells had been associated with the same group, suggesting that the JuD is losing its members to IS.

This also reflects the internal divisions and external pressures that leave many members confused and frustrated because of conflicting ideological vibes from their top leadership. JuD, for instance, was originally a militant group that contributed significantly to the proliferation of the jihadist mindset and the spread of an extremely militant world view in the country. But since the traumatizing terrorist incident at the Peshawar School, the organization finds itself in a relatively hot spot and struggling to retain and propagate its concept of *jihad* – that used to be Kashmir centric but colored in pan-Islamism. Forced by the circumstances, the outfit is now focusing on developing a profile that projects it as a charity organization. And, says Rana (2016), this dichotomy in original indoctrination and current practice is alienating its members.

Little is known about the families' involvement in the Daska cell, but the Karachi cell was advanced, had a complete family syndicate, and its members were not in search of pure lands but eager to perform the obligation of "*jihad*" inside Pakistan. Their techniques for raising funds and recruitment were quite advanced. The female members were active and, according to media reports, sent requests to well-off women seeking donations for IS through sophisticated messaging. They were also tasked with arranging the marriages of their operatives (Rana 2016). The Daska investigation also revealed that a Pakistani national, Abu Muavia Salfi, was in charge of Pakistani militants in Syria, indicating that there could be more Pakistanis who have interacted with or are members of IS.

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT WITH IS

The level of engagement of these cells with IS has varied: the Karachi cell was a family syndicate; the women associated with the Lahore cells took the initiative themselves; while the Daska members had not involved their families in the terror business.

But IS, or for that matter other networks such as Al-Qaeda, have been smart in hunting manpower: they often prey on professionals at university campuses or information technology (IT) institutions. For example, the suspected mastermind in the bus attack, Saad Aziz, was a graduate of Karachi's most prestigious business schools: the Institute of Business Administration (IBA). Similarly, another "highly educated" terror suspect Owais Raheel turned out to be a graduate from the IBA. A master in business administration, Raheel was teaching at a private university until his arrest. He also holds an engineering degree from the NED University, Karachi.

The city's CTD chief Mazhar Mashwani claimed to have "seized loads of hate literature from Raheel's residence in the upscale neighborhood Clifton. He was involved in brainwashing young men into jihad. He also had ties with a number of banned outfits," Mashwani told the media (News Media Live 2015).

These outfits know that professionals – as message multipliers – can be effective tools of propagation and recruitment, and thus they reinforce the group's prolific and powerful propaganda machine, which includes both electronic and social media tools such as inspirational videos and the continuous stream of messaging. That is why, soon after the arrest of the IBA professor, intelligence officials embarked on a vigorous investigation campaign, involving several university professors suspected of supporting IS or other jihadist outfits.³

³ Author's interview with intelligence official in Karachi (March 2016).

WOMEN AS INSTRUMENTS OF RECRUITMENT AND PROPAGATION

As of January 2016, a definite trend of female involvement with and for Daesh in Pakistan was discernible. For example, three Lahore-based families, led by women, had apparently moved to Syria to support the dreaded organization. A married couple was arrested in the same city for sending people to fight in Syria. Three women were arrested in Karachi in December for spreading Daesh literature and fund-raising for the group. Six other women were detained a week later while 13 men were arrested for suspected involvement with the terror group. While kidnapping cases of women have been registered, family members confirmed that some women had contact before moving to Syria (The News 2016b). These instances suggested that IS had gradually managed to make inroads into religio-political circles in Pakistan's major urban centers (Karachi and Lahore being the largest cities, respectively) where preying on existing militant networks and their disgruntled activists or vulnerable youth is no big deal.

It is also quite evident from these scattered examples of women's role in IS recruitment and ideological propagation that women as mentors, teachers and force multipliers very much remain a critical link for all jihadist groups, including IS – true in the case of Karachi as well. Kamran Gujjar, a suspected terrorist arrested from Punjab, for instance, made the startling revelation during the investigation that his wife and sister-in-law had been working in Karachi for Daesh. Dunya News TV quoted the accused as saying that both women were experts in brainwashing. They had been collecting funds for the terrorist outfit in the name of a welfare organization (Dunya News 2016). Kamran Gujjar also revealed that other several women had also joined their group.

Weeks before this, in December 2015, Karachi police officials had disclosed the presence of a 20-member group of female IS supporters in the city (Pakistan Today 2016).⁴

One academy for women in Karachi's Baloch Colony neighborhood, for instance, served as the recruiting conduit by playing IS videos in classrooms. The 20 female students then reached out to middle-class and wealthy Karachi women, urging them to donate money in the name of religion to the IS cause of establishing a caliphate. Several women were detained, including the wife of a suspected IS operative, but were released after questioning (Associated Press 2016).⁵

The women's wing of the Middle Eastern terror outfit was mainly responsible for generating funds. Once the money had been collected, the women would give it to the male members of the group, who then passed it on to their managers. "Another code came into play when the middle man came to receive the money: 'Amanat de do [Please return the keepsake],' he would say. These words were enough" (Khan 2015).

This story in the English-language daily *The Express Tribune* offers a fascinating glimpse into the *modus operandi* of the busted women's wing. The group, it says, usually "met at The Faith Academy school. 'They [women] sent darkhwasts [requests] to well-off women, seeking donations for IS by using the name of the school,' explained an official of the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD). 'After

⁴Note: information is multi-sourced.

⁵This story was originally reported by the *Associated Press* in March 2015, and quoted Raja Umer Khitab, Karachi police's top counter-terrorism official, on his department's new challenge flowing from the presence of the IS and its encroaching influence over women.

collecting the money, they used to hand it over to the male wing of the outfit,' he added. Then Adil Butt, the recently-arrested CEO of the College of Accounting and Management Sciences (CAMS) used to hand over the funds to a person, identified as Omar, alias Jalal Chandio, who used the code word 'Amanat de do.'" (Khan 2015)

Raja Omar Khattab, city's top counter-terrorism official spoke of a group of women tasked by the militant group to arrange for marriages of their operatives and also raise funds for their activities. Though this group comprises about a dozen women, six of them were particularly active in collecting funds from different parts of the city, he said, according to the paper.

One of these female activists was the wife of Omar alias Jalal Chandio, a key suspect of the Safoora bus attack (in which some four dozen Ismaili Muslims were shot to death), while another is the spouse of Adil Butt, arrested on December 2 from his residence in the Defence Housing Authority for his alleged role in the assault.

Officials claim the women's wing is being operated by the families, particularly the wives of the suspects arrested in connection with the Safoora carnage and other terrorist attacks in Karachi. Saad Aziz's wife and mother-in-law are key suspects in the case. So are the wives of Mufti Tauseef and of Khalid Yousuf Bari, a retired engineer of Pakistan International Airlines, the national carrier. Wives of both Bari and Mufti Tauseef, and some other women are operating a strong network, officials claimed in December 2015.

"Bari's wife has a vital role in generating funds and brainwashing well-off women to garner support for IS. She also organised Aziz's wedding," an official told the *Express Tribune*. "Bari's wife also used to run an organisation – Idara al Zakra Academy – comprising around 20 women who were collecting donations, zakat and khairaat for the terror outfit," explained Raja Omar Khattab. "Their other responsibility is to recruit women into the organisation through sermons and videos about IS by distributing USBs," he added (Khan 2015).

As a whole, the confirmation of the involvement and direct participation of women in terrorist activities via Daesh opens up a whole new front in the war on terrorism for the Pakistani authorities.

After the woman involved in the San Bernardino attack was reported to have had some links with the Al Huda schools in Pakistan, the world's attention is now focusing on how radicalization of Muslim women can be prevented (The News 2016b).

The San Bernardino attack on 2 December (2015) had involved a married couple – Syed Rizwan Farook and his wife, Tashfeen Malik – who authorities said had been "self-radicalized." They ended up killing 14 people in a San Bernardino school in what has been described as the deadliest terrorist attack on U.S. soil since 9/11. Officials at the Al Hudda center in Multan, southern Pakistan, said that the woman, Tashfeen Malik, enrolled in an 18-month course to study the Quran in 2013, just as she completed a degree in pharmacology at a nearby public university. But she left before finishing the course, telling administrators she was leaving to get married (Masood and Walsh 2015).

Most of those who sneaked out of Pakistan to reinforce Daesh ranks in Syria belonged to the hardcore Wahabi/Salafi school of thought, mostly represented by JuD (ex-LeT). One of the women, Bushra Cheema, who apparently left for Syria with four of her children in September 2015 had taught at Noorul Huda Islamic Center, a Salafi girls' *madrassa*.

Another teenager, Ms Irshad Bibi, also went to Syria in April 2015 to join the militant outfit, while Irshad's younger son Bilal had already fled to Syria in February 2015 on the pretext of leaving Pakistan to work in Dubai (Shahzad 2017). She too reportedly taught at a *madrassa* near Sakim Mor, Lahore.

Mother Fatima Bibi says Irshad Bibi had left home saying she was going to attend a *Dars-e-Quran* in Okara, but never returned. Irshad's daughter Ammara later found a diary in which the former had written a goodbye note to her mother and daughter. Sometimes, Irshad calls her mother from Syria, asking for forgiveness and prayers. She told us that she had left to serve, recalls mother Fatima.

SPRINGBOARDS FOR RECRUITMENT/FINANCE MOBILIZATION

Ostensibly, besides the radical Sunni Salafi mosques and seminaries, institutions such as Al-Hudda Foundation also serve as the recruitment centers and the springboards for the "*jihād*." Most of these religious institutions are directly or otherwise affiliated with radical outfits such as LeJ, HuT, al-Qaeda, JuD/LeT and even political parties like JI. Teachings at Raiwind, the mass-preaching center on the outskirts of Lahore, where tens of thousands of Muslims keep turning up for short-, mid-term and long-term meditation courses, also feed into the narrative peddled by trans-border radical groups such as Al-Qaeda and IS. Female wings of these institutions attract as many followers as do those dedicated to men.

FEMALE CANNON-FODDER

A 14-year-old girl, Khansa, illustrates another case of female being recruited and used as foot-soldiers. She reportedly abandoned her family to join Daesh in Syria (Shahzad 2017).

Khansa's father died of electrocution about five years ago. Her mother Kiran first lived with her in-laws in Lahore, the capital of Pakistan's largest province Punjab, before moving to her parents in the outskirts of the provincial capital in August 2015.

In the first week of September, Khansa's paternal grandmother, 70-year-old Fatima Bibi, and a family friend, Farhana Hamid, approached Kiran and requested to take the teenage girl with them. Assuming the aging grandmother wanted Khansa's company and help, Kiran allowed her to go. "Three days later, I received a call from Fatima Bibi saying Khansa had gone missing," mother Kiran said.

Khansa's is not the only story about attraction to IS by young women with a religious bent of mind.

CONCLUSION: CONTINUOUS CHALLENGE AT HAND

The following conclusions can be drawn from the previous discussion.

- (i) In a predominantly Muslim society, supply of women supporters for radical causes will most probably never dry up. We must bear in mind that women in rural Pakistani regions, particularly in the northwestern and south Punjab territories, grow up as Muslims in a conservative male-dominated social milieu. Most have traditionally been supportive of religious causes or movements raised in the name of Islam. Because of ingrained religiosity,

conservative social surroundings, and little exposure to modern knowledge that can help them think critically, they have often upstaged men in donating sons and material assets for the cause of *jihad*. For instance, immediately after the war on terror in Afghanistan began unfolding on October 7, 2001, Pakistani militants readied themselves to support the Afghan Taliban. Most of the donations that came in support of the *jihad* were cash and gold jewelry – donated by women of the Swat region. As a journalist, the author himself witnessed women coming out in droves to donate to forces of Mulla Soofi Mohammad and his dreaded son-in-law Mualla Fazlullah. In those days, both clerics had encouraged women into donating valuables to the mosques of their respective localities. And women at times would upend men in the zeal to donate to what they had been made to believe was a sacred cause.

- (ii) Trans-border jihadist networks will always be able to slip recruiters into Pakistan. The arrest of Yousaf al Salafi, a Pakistani Syrian, in Lahore (January 2015) underscores this continuous challenge that authorities are likely to face for a long time to come. Officials claimed al Salafi confessed to represent IS in Pakistan. “Al Salafi is a Pakistani Syrian who reached Pakistan through Turkey five months ago,” said one source. ‘He crossed into Turkey from Syria and was caught there. Somehow he managed to escape and reached Pakistan to establish ISIS (IS).’” (Reuters 2015)

An official described Hafiz Tayyab, a prayer leader in Lahore, as one of al Salafi’s accomplices, and claims he was involved in recruiting Pakistanis for the fight alongside IS in Syria. He was charging IS about \$600 per person, he says, quoting al-Salafi’s confessions. It will be extremely difficult to prevent Pakistani origin diaspora from entering Pakistan. Neither will they be able to be completely kept off their local social support infrastructure.

- (iii) The undocumented nature of Pakistan’s economy coupled with the propensity among scores of so-called “God-fearing businessmen and traders” sympathetic to the Islamist causes will always allow financiers to dodge the system and set funds aside for causes they deem sacred. Particularly traders with an extremist religious bent hate to pay taxes (since they do not accept the current system) but love to donate to Islamist/religious causes.
- (iv) Even if a terrorist network like IS is decapitated and degraded, it will continue to represent threat to the stability of the country because of (a) religious motivations, and (b) external drivers of terrorism (al-Qaeda, IS and agents of proxy wars among India, Afghanistan and Pakistan).
- (v) As long as the reasons behind proxy wars exist, the possibility of survival of organizations like Daesh will remain strong because they can easily be used as an instrument of destabilization.
- (vi) This would require as much as possible documentation of the economy, indexation of business transactions with national ID cards, discouraging business through non-banking channels (business deals and money transfer) and constant non-intrusive watch of religious institutions (schools, mosques, seminaries as well as those institutions which pride themselves as seats of learning but are mostly imparting a religious mindset). These are some of the steps that shall have to be taken at the state level to minimize sources of terrorist financing and reduce the possibilities of frustrated youth falling victim to the extremists’ narratives.

- (vii) As long as institutions such as Al-Hudda Foundation or similar educational entities freely impart an essentially anti-Western radical Islamist ideology, they will keep serving as nurseries and recruiting grounds even for affluent females. In the absence of any state regulation on the curricula and literally non-existent oversight of their activities, they are likely to attract zealots ready to offer life and material for radical causes.
- (viii) Pakistan and other Muslim countries should probably emulate Turkey's example in regulating and monitoring functions of religious education institutions.
- (ix) Even if the IS or Daesh phenomenon loses its so-called ideological pull, we should be mindful of the fact that – regardless of numbers – it is able to recruit the virulent mindset and to continue infecting men and women, thus supplying the group with foot-soldiers. It is a challenge that requires a constant watch and continuous propagation of the counter-narrative through better law enforcement and development of the soft power.

References

- Akbar, Ali. 2015. "From TTP to IS: Pakistan's Terror Landscape Evolves." *Dawn*, March 9, 2015. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.dawn.com/news/1169542>).
- Ali, Imitaz. 2015. "43 Killed in Attack on Bus Carrying Ismailis in Karachi." Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.dawn.com/news/1181698>).
- Associated Press. 2016. "IS Recruiting Trained Professionals from Pakistan." *Dawn*, March 2, 2016. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.dawn.com/news/1243094/is-recruiting-trained-professionals-from-pakistan>).
- Daily Messenger. 2016. "42 Militants of Daesh Arrested in Punjab Province." *Daily Messenger*, January 4, 2016. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://dailymessenger.com.pk/2016/01/04/42-militants-of-daesh-arrested-in-punjab-province/>).
- Daily Times. 2015. "Eight IS Militants Arrested from Daska." *Daily Times*, December 30, 2015. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/national/30-Dec-2015/eight-is-militants-arrested-from-daska>).
- Dunya News. 2016. "Number of Those Leaving Pakistan to Join Daesh Not More Than Hundred: Sanaullah." January 4, 2016. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://dunya.com.pk/2016/01/04/Number-of-those-leaving-Pakistan-to-join-Daesh-not-more-than-hundred-Sanaullah>).
- Gul, Imtiaz. 2015. "Pakistan and the Crucible of Terror." *East Asia Forum*, March 10, 2015. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2015/03/10/pakistan-and-the-crucible-of-terror/>).
- Khan, Faraz. 2015. "Assistants of Terror: How Women Raise Funds for Da'ish in Karachi." *The Express Tribune*, December 21, 2015. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1013558/assistants-of-terror-revealed-how-women-raise-funds-for-daish-in-karachi/>).
- Masood, Salman and Declan Walsh. 2015. "Tashfeen Malik, San Bernardino Suspect, Attended Conservative Religious School in Pakistan." *The New York Times*, December 7, 2015. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/08/world/asia/tashfeen-malik-attended-conservative-religious-school-in-pakistan.html?_r=0).
- News Media Live. 2015. "Professor Arrested in Karachi for Terror Links." *News Media Live*, October 6, 2015. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.newsmedialive.com/professor-arrested-in-karachi-for-terror-links/>).
- Pakistan Today. 2016. "Another Group of Women Working for Daesh Revealed in Karachi." *Pakistan Today*, January 4, 2016. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2016/01/04/national/another-group-of-women-working-for-daesh-revealed-in-karachi/>).

- Poushter, Jacob. 2015. "In Nations with Significant Muslim Populations, Much Disdain for ISIS." Pew Research Center, November 17, 2015. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/17/in-nations-with-significant-muslim-populations-much-disdain-for-isis/ft_15-11-17_isis_views/).
- Qarar, Shakeel. 2015. "Report Cites Lal Masjid, Jamia Hafsa 'Waging War' Against State." *Dawn*, January 9, 2015. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.dawn.com/news/1155717>).
- Rana, Muhammad Amir. 2016. "The Task Ahead." *Dawn*, January 3, 2016. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.dawn.com/news/1230345>).
- Reuters. 2015. "Islamic State Commander Arrested from Lahore." *The Nation*, January 21, 2015. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://nation.com.pk/national/21-Jan-2015/islamic-state-commander-arrested-from-lahore>).
- Shahzad, Muhammad. 2017. "How a Teenage Girl Ended up in Syria." *The Indian Economist*, May 27, 2017. Retrieved October 4, 2018 (<https://www.magzter.com/news/764/2677/052017/8ants>).
- Sherazi, Zahir Shah. 2014. "Six Top TTP Commanders Announce Allegiance to Islamic State's Baghdadi." *Dawn*, October 14, 2014. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.dawn.com/news/1137908>).
- The News. 2015. "Daesh Network Exists in Sindh: CTD Prepares List of 53 Terrorists." *The News*, October 14, 2015. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/9012-daesh-network-exists-in-sindh-ctd-prepares-list-of-53-terrorists>).
- The News. 2016a. "Two Youths Lured by Daesh Renounce Extremist Tendencies." *The News*, January 17, 2016. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/91779-Two-youths-lured-by-Daesh-renounce-extremist-tendencies>).
- The News. 2016b. "Editorial: Daesh in Pakistan." *The News*, January 2, 2016. Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/85855-Daesh-in-Pakistan#sthash.tqtr1U7n.dpuf>).
- Waseem, Zoha. 2016. "Daesh in Pakistan: An Evolving Militant Landscape – Part I." Retrieved June 22, 2018 (<https://strifefinal.wordpress.com/2016/02/06/daesh-in-pakistan-an-evolving-militant-landscape-part-i%E2%88%97/>).

Abstracto

Históricamente, las mujeres en los territorios del noroeste de Pakistán que limitan con Afganistán han desempeñado un papel fundamental en el suministro de dinero y hombres a organizaciones yihadistas como los Talibanes, Al-Qaeda e ISIS. La falta de educación, la poca exposición y un medio conservador dominado por los hombres constituyen algunos de los ingredientes de apoyo para estos grupos. Esto fue así durante más de tres décadas y el fenómeno permaneció restringido a las regiones rurales y al noroeste. Pero desde principios de la década de 1990, grupos como la Fundación Al-Hudda, una organización exclusivamente enfocada en las mujeres, comenzaron a servir como los ganchos iniciales para las mujeres de clase media y alta a quienes apunta la Fundación. Les lava el cerebro a las mujeres para que usen el hijab, y también les hace creer que necesitan forjar una alianza contra Occidente y trabajar para un estado islámico basado en la sharia. Esta promoción convierte a muchas mujeres adineradas en radicales religiosas que pueden trabajar potencialmente como la primera línea de reclutas para equipos extremistas como Daesh/IS. Por pequeños que sea su número, estas mujeres representan una gran amenaza para los valores liberales globales de la sociedad.

Palabras clave: ISIS; Al-Qaeda; TTP; Pakistán; Daesh

Abstrait

Historiquement, les femmes dans les territoires du nord-ouest du Pakistan à la frontière de l'Afghanistan ont joué un rôle crucial en fournissant de l'argent et des hommes à des organisations djihadistes telles que les Talibans, Al-Qaïda et ISIS. Le manque d'éducation, une exposition trop faible et un milieu conservateur dominé par les hommes constituent

quelques-uns des ingrédients du soutien à ces groupes. C'était vrai pendant plus de trois décennies et le phénomène est resté limité aux régions rurales et arriérées du nord-ouest. Mais depuis le début des années 1990, des organisations telles que la Fondation Al-Hudda - une organisation exclusivement féminine - ont commencé à servir de point d'ancrage initial pour les femmes des classes moyennes et supérieures que la Fondation vise. Il endoctrine les femmes dans l'utilisation du hijab, et leur fait croire qu'elles doivent forger une alliance contre l'Occident et travailler pour un État islamique basé sur la charia. Ce plaidoyer transforme de nombreuses femmes riches en radicales religieuses qui peuvent potentiellement travailler comme la première ligne de recrues pour des groupes extrémistes comme Daesh/IS. Même si leur nombre est modeste, ces femmes représentent une grande menace pour les valeurs libérales mondiales de la société.

Mots-clés: ISIS; Al-Qaïda; TTP; Pakistan; Daech

摘要：

历史上，巴基斯坦与阿富汗接壤的西北领土上的女人在向塔利班、基地组织和伊斯兰国等圣战组织提供金钱和人方面发挥了关键作用。教育缺乏、过度封闭和男性主导的保守环境构成这些组织的部分支撑因素。这是三十多年来的事实，而且这种现象仍然局限于落后的西北地区农村。但自20世纪90年代初以来，一些像Al-Hudda基金会的组织——一家专门以女性为重点的组织——开始为作为基金会主要目标的中等阶层和高等阶层女性服务。它洗脑妇女，使其使用头巾，并且让她们相信自己需要结成反对西方的联盟去为伊斯兰教的国家服务。这种倡导将许多富裕的女性变成宗教激进分子，可能是为Daesh / IS等极端主义组织招募的一线工作者。尽管数量不多，但这些女性对社会的全球自由价值观构成了巨大威胁。

关键词：伊斯兰国、塔利班、基地组织、阿富汗、TTP，巴基斯、Daesh (达什)、陆军公立学校，叙利亚、Al Huda (哈达)、Lal Masjid (红色清真寺)

الملخص

تاريخيًا، لعبت النساء في المناطق الباكستانية الشمالية الغربية المتاخمة لأفغانستان دورًا حاسمًا في تزويد المنظمات الجهادية مثل طالبان والقاعدة وداعش بالرجال والمال. وبشكل الافتقار إلى التعليم وقلة التعرض والوسط المحافظ الذي يهيمن عليه الذكور بعضًا من مكونات الدعم لهذه الجماعات. كان هذا صحيحًا لأكثر من ثلاثة عقود حيث ظلت هذه الظاهرة مقصورة على المناطق الريفية الشمالية الغربية المتخلفة. لكن منذ أوائل التسعينيات، بدأت بعض مؤسسات الملابس مثل مؤسسة الهدى - وهي مؤسسة تركز بشكل خاص على المرأة - في العمل كخطافات أولية لنساء من الطبقة المتوسطة والعليا اللاتي تستهدفهن المؤسسة. فتقوم بغسل أدمغة النساء لاستخدامهن الحجاب، ولحثهن على الاعتقاد بأنهن بحاجة إلى تشكيل تحالف ضد الغرب والعمل من أجل إنشاء دولة إسلامية قائمة على أساس الشريعة. تحوّل هذه الدعوة العديد من النساء الأغنياء إلى متطرفات دينيات يمكنهن أن يعملن كخط أول من المجنّدات للأزباء المتطرفة مثل ملابس داعش. وعلى الرغم من قلة أعدادهن، تمثل هؤلاء النساء تهديدًا كبيرًا للقيم الليبرالية العالمية في المجتمع.

الكلمات الرئيسية

باكستان، داعش، مدرسة الجيش العامة، TTP داعش، طالبان، القاعدة، أفغانستان، تحريك طالبان باكستان Lal Masjid سوريا، الهدى، للمسجد

Imtiaz Gul is currently the Executive Director at the Center for Research and Security Studies, an independent think tank established in January 2008 in Islamabad, Pakistan. Gul is also the editor of

Strategic Affairs, in the English-language national daily *The Daily Times*. For his experience in issues such as militancy, radicalization and counter-terrorism, the author is a member of the steering committee of the National Counter-Terrorism Authority and of the counter-radicalization Resolve Network, set up by the U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington, DC. Besides writing and commenting on various national TV channels, Guls is also a visiting lecturer to the National Police Academy, National Institute of Management (for central civil services), and the National Defence University, Islamabad.

Cite this article: Gul, I. 2018. Women's Role in Recruitment for ISIS/Islamist Networks in Pakistan. *International Annals of Criminology* 56: 79–92, doi: 10.1017/cri.2018.15