

The Underlying Reasons behind the Resistance to Political Transformation in Erstwhile FATA: A Qualitative Investigation in Dara Adam Khel, Kohat

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Abstract

Mainstreaming erstwhile FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was considered a landmark decision in order to bring prosperity, peace, and development to the tribal belt. However, due to the lack of consultation with the local stakeholders, the merger received and is still facing resistance from the local people of the erstwhile FATA. This study investigated the resistance to political transformation in the tribal region, focusing on one of the main cities, Dara Adam Khel. Due to the exploratory nature of the problem, a qualitative research approach was adopted for this study. A total of 20 participants were recruited through purposive sampling. The findings reveal that the majority of people do not support the erstwhile FATA's merger due to a lack of fair consultation with the locals before taking such an important decision about their future. Furthermore, there is confusion and a lack of trust about the newly established legal system in the tribal areas. The people fear losing their traditions and values due to the extension of formal laws and policing systems. While the people also fear that the local resources like coal and Marble will be taken by the government. This study recommends that the government should seriously revive and supervise the progress of peacebuilding and development in the region. Moreover, the local stakeholders must be involved in major decisions in order to smoothly transition the post-merger developments.

Keywords: Ex-FATA merger, reforms committee, resistance, F.C.R., socio-political development. Economic development.

Introduction

The Erstwhile FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas), hereafter written, will be as erstwhile FATA, which has a long history. In 1901 British administration imposed oppressive regulations in the name of F.C.R. (Frontier Crimes Regulations) that underprivileged the people of their fundamental human rights. After the establishment of Pakistan, there were some modifications in F.C.R. under articles 103 and 104, but it was not enough for the people of erstwhile FATA, and they persisted under the pledge of F.C.R. (Nisar et al., 2020)

Former FATA people suffered from many problems, like the incursion of Russia into Afghanistan in 1979, and then the 9/11 tragedy happened, which had an effect in terms of immigrants and, as a consequence, narcotics and weapons invasion (Cheema & Nuri, 2005).

The erstwhile FATA region also confronted many challenges because of the Regime's inattention to the political, economic, and social sectors. The people of these areas mainly persisted inaccessible from the rest of the country and were regulated by their specific culture, customs, and rules and regulations to survive their own lives. Concurrently, struggles to the mainstream FATA continued but were revealed on December 14, 2016; the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly approved a resolution to merge the erstwhile FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for structural reintegration and renovation. It was imperative to integrate erstwhile FATA people with the rest of the country, and finally, it was permitted by the federal cabinet on March 2, 2017. On December 26, 2017, the federal cabinet acknowledged establishing the National Implementation Committee on erstwhile FATA Reforms. Erstwhile FATA, which has lately been merged with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was constitutionally by the 25th amendment in the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan by the Parliament on

May 31, 2018, and ended this endowment, and in his final executive result under the article, President Mamnoon Hussain revoked the 1901 regulations (Mehmood & Mir, 2019).

On May 31, 2018, when the erstwhile FATA amalgamated with K.P.K. constitutionally, it was reported that the people of tribal areas opposed this decision and demanded an isolated structure. They were protesting how it could be accepted when the head of the state, Quaid-e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, promised to them that they would be free and would be decided based on his perspective about his geographical and upcoming position in erstwhile FATA (Dawn, 2021).

However, the result of the political transformation to the prevailing erstwhile FATA with K.P.K. (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) was also resisted by the political party Jamiat Ulma-e-Islam J.U.I. (F), and the erstwhile FATA people undoubtedly disagreed from the very first day. When the state recommended the erstwhile FATA merger arguments, it was urged in the beginning that, before merging the erstwhile FATA with K.P.K. (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) initially, the state should provide basic human rights, such as political, social, and economic stability to the former FATA people. At the same time, the state should give rights autonomously to the people of the erstwhile FATA region so that they could make the decision about their future, which should be based on the agreement of the former FATA peoples rather than imposing FATA merger without their concerns (Mehmood & Mir, 2019).

As this political transformation of erstwhile FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was rejected by some of the mainstream political parties and most importantly by the locals of the erstwhile FATA, particularly the people of the Dara Adam Khel region, they started protesting against this transformation in different ways. As this is one of the major decisions and has a great impact on the history of the erstwhile FATA region, the researcher wants to dive deep into the reasons and issues that make this transformation more controversial. In this study, the researcher deeply

explored the socio-cultural, political, and economic reasons behind the resistance shown by the local people against this transformation. The researcher used qualitative research to understand the reasons in depth and then offered some recommendations for the stakeholders to deal with this resistance.

Problem statement

During the recently conducted local body election for the first time in the erstwhile FATA, it has been reported that the locals strongly opposed such activities. In Dara Adam Khel, they even broke down the ballot boxes and threw them on the roads. Furthermore, the resisters also attacked the various schools and burned the documents, which affected them with a lot of destruction. And also, like, interference of police, confusion in the legal system of Pakistan, threats to resources, land laws, and peace and stability in the region. These are the main concerns and issues that emerged due to the FATA merger, and it is vital to study to analyze the main reasons behind the resistance. So this study attempts to highlight the Socio-Cultural, Political, and Economic reasons behind the resistance shown by the locals against the merger of the erstwhile FATA.

Research Objectives

- 1) To explore the reasons behind the socio-cultural resistance to the erstwhile FATA merger
- 2) To find out the reasons behind the political resistance to political change in the erstwhile FATA
- 3) To investigate the economic reasons behind the resistance to the political transformation in the erstwhile FATA

Research Question

What are the major reasons behind the resistance to political transformation in the erstwhile FATA?

Significance of the Study

The investigator's study is helpful to underline the significant reasons behind the resistance to political transformation in erstwhile FATA to attract the attention of the state towards this issue, which can obligate the state to resolve these concerns regarding the erstwhile FATA merger. It is also vital to investigate the people of erstwhile FATA, specifically the Kohat Subdivision people, who mainly opposed and protested against the merger. And look for the genuine demands of former FATA people as to why they are not feeling safe and secure within the new merged system. This study also provides insight into why people resist the FATA merger.

Literature Review

Erstwhile FATA and F.C.R. (Frontier Crimes Regulations)

In 1849 when the British adjoined Punjab, they wanted to hold on to the North West Frontier (from now on, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). Even though there was British political rule, they still experienced disgust and local resistance from the rebellious side. For the sake of power and control in these areas, the British tried to impose numerous strategies such as the Closed Border Policy, Forward Policy, and Frontier Crimes Regulations in the 1870s (Baha, 1978).

Before the erstwhile FATA merger, political agents and the local Jirga structure were solving regional disputes. And the lack of a court system made local conflicts not accessible to solve the native convict's cases due to article 247, even though any verdict of native people can

also be challenged and appealed by P.A. when they were not satisfied with the Jirga. It can't be denied because of the ultimate power of the administrative structure of erstwhile FATA before the start of the FATA Tribunal (SDP, 2006).

In the 1973 constitution, further, more minor changes were made, such as the "centrally" name changed to "federal," although the supremacy and political administration remained in the same condition (FRC, 2014, citing Safi, 2013). Additionally, increased quotas constructed schools, colleges and roads were recognized in different regions in erstwhile FATA by the P.P.P. regime in the 1970s. In addition, the progress of socioeconomic status and infrastructure provides access to passports that they traveled to foreign for the sake of earning to improve the standard of living (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2009).

In 2002 the formation of the FATA secretariat was prolonged in 2006 to the civil secretariat of erstwhile FATA, and later on, the Agency council was recognized and also introduced the FATA tribunal in 1997 and 2011 for the development and empowerment of the former FATA regions (FRC, 2014, citing Safi, 2013). Furthermore, reforms made in F.C.R., such as the Extension of Political Parties Order 2002 to FATA (2011), Frontier Crimes Amendment Regulations 2011, FATA Local Government Regulation 2012, FATA Reforms Commission Report 2015, FATA Reforms Committee Report 2016 (Altaf & Hassan, 2018). Although these reforms brought mostly permissible and constitutional essentials of human privileges for the erstwhile FATA regions, further work was needed to bring them into the mainstream (FRC, 2014).

Erstwhile FATA and Merger with K.P.K. (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)

The planning of the erstwhile FATA merging with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was made in November 2015, when the FATA reform commission formed at the Cabinet level. This board

arranged many meetings with many participants in all seven erstwhile FATA, such as local elders(Maliks), governmental administrations, local entrepreneurs, mass media staff, local public individuals, and young people of erstwhile FATA (Noor et al., 2018).

Sartaj Aziz, chairman of the constituted reforms committee, directed this committee. The main purpose of this commission and meetings with the erstwhile FATA was to achieve the upcoming aims and find an easy way regarding the erstwhile FATA merger. In the beginning, Sartaj Aziz arranged jirgas in different regions with the local tribal Malik and elders roundabout with three thousand people of erstwhile FATA, while many remarks were acknowledged, up to 29,000 individuals agreed that abolish the F.C.R. and erstwhile FATA merged with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In Aug 2016, it was dispatched to P.M and denied that most former FATA people demanded that the past FATA association with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was the most satisfactory choice (Ali, Ansari, & Firdous, 2020).

The erstwhile FATA region also faced many hurdles because of inattention by the Regime to the dogmatic, financial, and communal parts. The individuals of these land regularly persisted far away from the rest of the republic, and they mainly spent their life by their particular principles, traditions, values, and procedures. Although work for the unification of erstwhile FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continued and it was exposed on December 14, 2016; the resolution regarding the erstwhile FATA merger was approved in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly for the arrangement of restoration and renewal. It was vital to make former FATA individuals with the rest of the state, and lastly, it was legitimized by the central cabinet on March 2, 2017. On December 26, 2017, the federal cabinet admitted the creation of the National Implementation Committee on erstwhile FATA Reforms. Erstwhile FATA, which has latterly been fused with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was constitutionally by the 25th modification in the 1973 Constitution of

Pakistan by the Parliament on May 31, 2018, and finished this legacy, and in his final administrative result under the article, President Mamnoon Hussain repealed the 1901 F.C.R. systems (Mehmood & Mir, 2019).

In 2018 the outstanding bill of erstwhile FATA was approved by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on May 31, 2018, and all the political parties agreed to this 25th amendment except Jamiat ul Islam-F (JUI-F). Maulana Lutfur Rahman, the opposition candidate from JUI-F, claimed that this move from the government side was based on injustice with the erstwhile FATA region. Further, he urged that we stand with them and it was the right of erstwhile FATA inhabitants that they decide their interest regarding the erstwhile FATA merger rather than it decided without their concerns. When the question was asked from Maulana Fazlur Rehman about the erstwhile FATA merger, you were opposing it while it was a good move to abolish the "Black Law" such as F.C.R. and merge with other regions to adhere equal Regulation. Then he replied that when the erstwhile FATA merger didn't empower and develop them, the erstwhile FATA people themselves resisted this decision (Express Tribune, 2021)

Recently on December 19, 2021, when local body elections were contested for the first time in erstwhile FATA, almost every region of the tribal area resisted it, but especially many strikers came out and attacked various polling stations in Dara Adam Khel Subdivision Kohat and stopover publics powerfully from voting and due to unfavorable situation the Election Commission canceled the polling. According to native peoples, voting was started unworried on the schedule diagonally in Dara Adam Khel, and numerous individuals came to the polling station to cast their votes. But unexpectedly, later on, at one o'clock, a notable figure of the mob originated with black flags and bikes. And they stopped the voters from casting votes, took the ballots' packets and equipment, burned various school documents, and damaged the infrastructure. Furthermore, these

people with black flags were shouting to oppose the erstwhile FATA merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and were claimed for the old situation of erstwhile FATA before merging with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and they were also given a warning that no one stopped us even the local administrative body and law enforcement agency. There were 62 voting centers in Dara Adam Khel, while according to authorized, there weren't remain any polling centers that they left without damaging them. While the fire was also set in some places; however there were no casualties rather, they only targeted the polling stations of whole Dara Adam Khel Sub-Division Kohat (Express Tribune, 2021).

As the merger of erstwhile FATA into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa happened recently, the literature is available on the impact of the merger on FATA. One of the major issues that was found in the literature is the shifting of the governance system from the FCR and tribal Jirga system into the formal administrative and justice system (Muhammad et al., 2024). The second issue discussed in the literature is bringing and applying the new judicial system and law enforcement, as the local people were mostly dependent on the local Jirga system, and there was no concept of policing in erstwhile FATA (Makki et al., 2024). Apart from these issues, the literature has also discussed the gap in the development of the erstwhile FATA region and mainstream Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in terms of education, human development, economic development, and local infrastructure (Muhammad et al., 2024).

The research gap that has been identified by the researcher was that the opinion of local people of erstwhile FATA in this process was missed. Being a local of Dara Adam Khel, I personally feel that by investigating the local people qualitatively and deeply, the concerns and reasons for the resistance shown by the local people against the merger of erstwhile FATA into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa may be clearly visible.

Research Methodology

Research Approach

The interpretive paradigm is based on subjective senses; that's why this approach mostly focuses on participants' constructive ideas broadly regarding any particular expertise of individuals and various ideas established by participants to specific phenomena and things based on their interactions with the environment, because there is no single reality exists (Creswell, 2014). Hence, the social construction of the participant's views and their contextual interpretation of the situation was studied, which fulfills the scholarly assumptions of the interpretivist approach.

Research Design

The research uses a case study as a research design for this study. According to Creswell (2014), the case study is a detailed study of particular phenomena, such as activities, procedures, or persons, which is wholly based on widespread data gathering. This study was based on a Case Study design for a detailed and in-depth comprehension of the issue at hand, and the people of Darra Adam Khel were taken as a case.

Universe of the Study

The study was conducted in Dara Adam Khel T.S.D. Kohat ex-FATA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which is located between Peshawar and Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, due to the recent resistance toward socio-political change from this bulge of the region in the FATA merger transition period.

Sampling Framework

In order to conduct the research study, the researcher opted for non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is the way of selecting a sample in which there is no possibility of everything being chosen rather than the researcher knowingly choosing the sample based on the study purpose (Kothari, 2004).

The non-probability sampling strategy was utilized for recruiting participants. In non-probability sampling, a purposive sampling technique was used to recruit participants for this study. A total of 20 in depth detailed interviews were conducted with participants to know about their views and opinions regarding this issue.

Data Collection Method

In this study, the In-depth interview method was used to gather facts about the issue under consideration because in an in-depth interview, the researcher gives a maximum chance to participants and fully concentrates on the individuals' points of view to know the depth of information of the researcher's study (Marvasti, 2004).

Data Analysis

Data analysis is one of the essential portions of any sort of research, while in the qualitative research method, generally, data exists in the form of audio archives, notes, graphics, video recorder, and transcriptions which will be further analyzed (Walliman, 2016).

Data analysis is a process in which the researcher emerges themes from the interview transcriptions, explains the data in meaningful parts, and presents the data understandably to the read. Various steps are involved in the data analysis processes, such as transcription of raw data,

an iterative process of reading the transcribed data for patterns, organizing data, themes, and describing or explanation of themes (Creswell, 2014). The researcher maintained the same procedures of this data analysis technique, i.e., thematic analysis, and analyzed the data in thematic form.

Results and Discussion

This chapter discusses the results based on the responses recorded from the study participants in the study universe. These themes were generated after going through the process of data transcriptions, coding, pattern identification, and different theme generation. The following main themes regarding resistance to the erstwhile FATA merger were extracted from the interviews' transcriptions. i.e., Political Reasons, Social Reasons, and Economic reasons which are explained in detail.

Political Reasons

The study indicated that people of the area mainly opposed mainstreaming of erstwhile FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to various political reasons, which are explained in detail in sub-themes, i.e., merger imbroglio and ground reality, legal system, perceptions concerning F.C.R., Jirga vs. court system, and peace.

This study found that most people in the study universe had no support for the merger; some claimed that it was a foreign conspiracy, while others viewed it as a government interest in natural resources. The participants presented their views during in-depth interviews. As one of the participants gave his opinions in detail;

FATA merger was based entirely on a foreign conspiracy and the Sartaj Aziz committee which was asserting that we visited different regions of the erstwhile FATA and we met

with local elders (Maliks), and others local people but in fact, the committee was based on self-selected delegation and generally arranged meetings with those people who even did not know about the geography, cultural and traditional aspects of the erstwhile FATA. Further, the Sartaj Aziz committee called the six F.R.s (subdivisions) to the Peshawar governor's house while I was also present at this session. When they asked about the merger, 99% of people rejected this decision, but only one person who belonged to Subdivision Peshawar showed his agreement with the merging of erstwhile FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Despite the majority of members' rejections, the Sartaj Aziz panel has released a false report claiming that most of the people of erstwhile FATA agreed to merge with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. I am disappointed by the government's hypocrisy as human rights violation was committed, and I oppose this illegal decision.

Jirga Vs Court

In Pashto, a Jirga is a meeting to find a mutually acceptable way to resolve particular issues in Pashtun society (Atayee, 1979). Jirga is a local interpretation of the Pashtuns, which is based on their communal perception, including Pashtunwali principles. At the same time, it is the utmost medium for resolving conflicts and bringing peace among particular parties (Zaman, 2018).

One of the participants told the researcher, while asking about the comparison of Jirga and the court system, that he expressed his views and said that

The Government of Pakistan is trying to end our strong traditions which came from thousands of years. We have been living here for hundreds of years and solved the local conflicts through the Jirga system, and it is perfectly workable for the erstwhile FATA people to maintain the peace in the region. To compare the Jirga system with the court system, the interviewer responded that they show me 3% of cases which is solved,

especially in Darra Adam Khel T.S.D., through the Thana police and the court system. The state is trying to impose a system on us of which we are unaware. On the other hand, the Jirga system was a speedy justice process through which we directly approached local elders in case of any disputes. During the interview, he told the researcher that recently, there was a serious incident had happened in Darra Adam Khel T.S.D. regarding a coal dispute in which two people were killed, and 11 people were injured. The whole state machinery failed to bring peace between them. But when our local elders interfered and kept Teggah (Truce) among them within one month, the disputes were solved by local elders through the Jirga system. The state should work on Education, health, and infrastructure while empowering the Jirga system instead of imposing police and the court culture on us. Further, he said that people are not used to affairs of government offices and institutions and are unable to comprehend the complicated, tricky procedures of the court system, which erstwhile FATA people will face.

Peace in the Region after the Merger

The government of Pakistan claimed that the erstwhile FATA merger integration would bring peace to the region. According to Mehmood and Mir (2019), numerous operations were carried out to bring peace to the erstwhile FATA, which paved the way for integrating the former FATA merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The present study underlined that a minor agreement was founded on peace maintenance in the region after the erstwhile FATA merger. During the interview, one of the participants shared their perspective and said that

As far as I know, since the 1730s, there has not been a single case in which any being was killed by an unknown killer, but before and after the merger, many incidents have appeared. The people of erstwhile FATA still feel threatened by terrorism. You can also

analyze the recent protests in different regions where people are demanding to bring peace in their regions. The state has so far failed to bring peace. Then how the state claim that the decision to merge will bring peace in the region?

Social Reasons

Social reasons regarding resistance to erstwhile FATA are comprehensive while not limited to the specific area of ex-FATA; however, different regions have different social concerns. This study discovers how individuals of the study universe notice merging ex-FATA with the mainstream administrative system of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa jurisdiction. The people in this area were more unwilling towards the merger than others. The study indicated that people of the area were mainly opposing mainstreaming of ex-FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to different social reasons, which are explained in detail in sub-themes, i.e., Post-merger Education and health care system

Education After the Merger

In the previous study, the researcher claimed there was no proper way to get the best possible Education. It was found that the educational condition in the erstwhile FATA region was the worst and needed to recover as soon as possible. Furthermore, female Education was negligible compared to males due to social constraints in erstwhile FATA (Ullah, Jan, Rani, Ahmad, & Khan, 2021). During the interview, one of the participants expressed his opinion in-depth discussion in detail;

We haven't seen any positive changes regarding the education sector in the erstwhile FATA region from the government, and no single school or college exists in the region that provides quality education. Most of the kids are admitted to Peshawar schools and

colleges to get a quality education, but it is time-consuming and a loss of money. Here I want to express my views about the FATA University. If you analyzed this project, this was also established before mainstreaming ex-FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Still, on another side, if I talk about desecrated schools and colleges due to insurgency in the region, they mostly occur under construction. We have seen no technical or infrastructural development before and after the merger regarding the education sectors. Our Dara Adam Khel T.S.D. social activists are mostly engaged in providing basic facilities to education institutions. While asking about female Education, he replied that I was the first person in the region that hire female teachers in my school. We are not against female Education; rather, we are focused on educating the females under our traditions, customs, norms, and values.

Health Care Development After the Merger

The present study tried to explain the ground realities in the selected universe to understand public opinion regarding the issue. This study explored that majority of people in the study universe were founded that have not been satisfied before and after the merger of health care facilities. And they argued that government promises regarding health care sector improvement after the merger of ex-FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were based on false claims by the government. However, few were appreciated by the government regarding health care after the merger. The participants share their views during in-depth interviews. As one of the individuals presented his views in detail;

According to my knowledge, in the modern technological era, our region is still deprived of the quality of well-equipped health facilities from the government side. And it is not associated with before or after the merger of the ex-FATA while we are spending our

lives in the worst condition over the decades regarding health issues. We provide health facilities to the region. The Qasim Khel welfare hospital is in front of you, which the local social activists made. But still, we approached Peshawar hospitals in case of any severe incident while local civil hospitals do not exist in that condition which could rehabilitate the emergency cases.

Economic Reasons

Economic reasons are very vast about resistance to ex-FATA merger, although it is not restricted to the specific area of ex-FATA, though unlikely regions have dissimilar financial concerns. This research study explores how inhabitants of the study area remark about merging ex-FATA with the mainstream governmental system of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa authority. As the people belonging to this area were found to have more refusal towards merger than others based on different economic reasons, which explain in detail in subthemes. i.e., Local business concerns, threats to resources, and taxation.

Local Business Concerns after the Merger

As we know, the study area Dara Adam Khel T.S.D. Kohat is the hub of manufacturing a large number of arms ammunition. Many arms ammunition manufacturing factories exist in the region, while the region's economic condition is mainly based on local business. That's why they have many concerns about the ex-FATA merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, i.e., before the erstwhile FATA merger, every middle-class and lower-class worker could manufacturing their products in Dara Bazar while also mostly working in their homes, but after the merger, many those peoples will suffer who are not able economically to register and legalized the local arms ammunition business. At the same time, it is only beneficial for local dealers. This study explores

how people of the study universe perceive merging ex-FATA with the mainstream executive system of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, as the people belonging to this area were more reluctant to merge than others. While one of the participants expressed his views and shared their opinions in detail;

The Government of Pakistan has concerns that we supplied weapons illegally throughout Pakistan, but in many things happen illegally. In reality, we have skillful gun-making technicians who make handmade quality guns and ammunition from local iron materials without proper machinery. If the government facilitates them, they will give economic strength to Pakistan. Furthermore, he stated that the government claimed that we would provide a good equipment state apart from Darra Adam Khel, but it will not be workable for the local region because, as you know, in our region, there is the poorest artisan who works in their home and they don't have enough access to the requirements of the legalization process. Instead, this government should declare the whole Darra Adam Khel as an industrial zone where everyone can get economic benefits. (Individual interview)

Resource Threats after the Merger

Dara Adam Khel T.S.D. Kohat is the new center of the coalfield. There are many coal mines here from where these people of the region extract large quantities of coal deposits from the local mountains in the study area. Apart from local business now in the region, this is the highest economic source in the area that's why they have many concerns about the ex-FATA merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, i.e., before the erstwhile FATA merger, every individual has autonomously held on to their local resources without any worries but post-merger they feel fear to lose their resources while also the government hasn't any serious policies regarding the resource. This study explores how people of the region noticed the integration of ex-FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

province, as the people belonging to this area were found to have more hesitancy towards the merger than others. While one of the participants expressed his opinions and shared their views in detail;

The people of erstwhile FATA own resources, and we should be given the right to sovereignty over our resources. The government of Pakistan only focused on our resources rather not on the local social, economic, and peace development of the region. When ex-FATA becomes part of the K-P administration, we will no longer remain sovereign regarding resources. Everyone can do a lease without our consultation, which is an injustice to the erstwhile FATA people. Despite the government providing new incentives to the region while they try to capture our resources. Through these resources, we can also economically help our country, Pakistan, if they have autonomously given rights regarding our resources.

Conclusion

This study investigated the genuine reasons behind the resistance to political transformation in erstwhile FATA. The research site was chosen, Darra Adam Khel T.S.D. Kohat Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, due to their predominant resistance towards the erstwhile FATA merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study was based on a qualitative research method, a case study approach. The data was collected through in-depth interviews with participants under the semi-structured interview guide, while analyzed by thematic analysis.

The residents of Dara Adam Khel Subdivision, Kohat, which recently unified with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, do not constructively view the merging of the former FATA. During analysis, it was concluded that the ex-FATA merger decision was based on fabricated delegation, and no local

representatives were involved in the erstwhile FATA reforms committee. Furthermore, based on the present study findings, people of the region prefer the F.C.R. and Jirga system to resolve the local disputes and maintain peace and crime regulation in the region as compared to Pakistan's legal system. Peace was the elementary motive for the ex-FATA merger, but before and after the political changes in the erstwhile FATA, peace and prosperity were still a nightmare for the people of this region.

Likewise, it was claimed by the government that the erstwhile FATA merger would bring social, political, and economic development to the region, but it was based on untruthful pledges which are not been rewarded by the state. After the merger, the area is still in the underprivileged stage, and they mostly approach other sites for quality education and health care facilities.

Dara Adam Khel T.S.D. Kohat region opposes ex-FATA merger due to their economic concerns, as we know the region has primarily black money and resources. After the merger, they worried about local businesses and resource autonomy. It is deduced that local businesses should be legalized indiscriminately to all the business classes. It should be declared an industrial zone, and the resources owned by the local people should not be taken away by the government entirely. This way, the smooth social functioning in the region will be maintained, and the social structure will be regulated.

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Conflict of Interest: Author (s) declared no conflict of interest

Citation: Khan, Z. U., & Khan, Z. U. (2025). The underlying reasons behind the resistance to political transformation in FATA Erstwhile: A qualitative investigation in Dara Adam Khel, Kohat. *Journal of Social Practices*, 1(1), 1–25.

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