



Governance Gaps in Emergency Management during Critical Incidents of Terrorist Attacks and Related Disasters in Pakistan

Dr. Bashir Kakar^{a*}, Alam Tareen^b

^a *Institute of Social and Cultural Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.*

^b *University of Baluchistan, Quetta, Pakistan.*

^a *Email: bashirchurmai@yahoo.com*

^b *Email: zararkhanpk@yahoo.com*

Abstract

This research was conducted to reveal the governance gaps in disaster management and suggests measures to overcome these institutional gaps and incapability. Since very long Pakistan is facing complex and multi-faceted natural and human induced risks, crises and disasters. Due to absence of comprehensive policies and effective risk management strategies and approaches critical Disasters has always huge impact then it is perceived. Being a frontline state Pakistan in war against terrorism insecurity and terrorism have been firmed their roots in the country more than thousands of Pakistani have been killed as direct reaction of this war. Many initiatives to counter terrorism have been taken by Pakistan by failed to reduce the impact of terrorism in the country. Law enforcement agencies and disaster management authorities are lacking skills to respond to terrorist attacks timely and proactively hence these attack causes many deaths and casualties. As revealed during the previous attacks and emergencies the overall structure of responding to disaster of terrorist attacks is very weak with many visible weakness and gaps.

Keywords: Governance Gaps; Emergency Management; Critical Incidents; Terrorist Attacks; disaster management

* Dr. Bashir Kakar.

E-mail address: bashirchurmai@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

This research aims to highlight the governance gaps in disaster management and during critical incidents of terrorist attacks and to suggest strategic measures to overcome these institutional gaps for good governance to make a difference. Governance can be strengthened not only by devising policies but also effectively implementing the plans on grounds. Moreover, effective planning and management is required including transparency of current structures, preventive measures, preparedness, response policy and action, mitigation, monitoring, developing resilience, and reviewing the plan at the end of any disaster. Effective risk reduction and disaster governance is a cyclic process having three phases. These are risk assessment and analysis, mitigation efforts to minimize the impact, and response after a disaster strikes [1].

Pakistan is facing increasingly complex and multi-faceted natural and human induced risks, crises and disasters. Governance under risk situations essentially demands comprehensive approach to decision and policy-making processes based on principles of cooperation, participation, and effective risk management [2]. There are cultural practices of negligence along with inefficient governance that are not upgraded according to technological complexities. Safer cultures and reliable organization can be built through good governance. Learning lesson from past disasters may help reduce future incidents yet it can be counteracted by multiple situations such as lack of data and information and lack of political and organizational commitment. The vulnerability of organization towards disaster and crisis is juxtaposition with institutional resilience. It can be used to analyze connection between disaster and governance.

From planning, emergence response and to recovery all the institutions, departments have failed to deliver despite they have observed and dealt with many such emergency situations.

“Everyone’s troubles make a crisis,” writes Michael Walzer. “‘Emergency’ and ‘crisis’ are cant words, used to prepare our minds for acts of brutality” [3].

Since more than a decade the insecurity and sectarian violence have been growing in Pakistan. Being a frontline state in global war against terrorism, Pakistan is the victim of direct reaction of this war; apart from other impacts more than 50,000 Pakistani Nationals have been killed [4]. The terrorist groups have very strong roots in Pakistan and they have developed linkages with different criminal groups like extremist of Sunni and Shia Militant groups and they have been very successful in achieving their desired results. Terrorist activities have been taking place almost everywhere in the country. Due to domestic insecurity and other socio economic challenges, the terrorism and sectarian violence has extremely very high impact on the economy and it has severe psychosocial impacts on Pakistani society.

Pakistan has taken initiative on many strategies to counter terrorism and sectarian violence but failed to stop the attacks and mortalities. Terrorists have been changing their strategies and target focusing the vulnerable groups and easy targets throughout the country. Law enforcement agencies and disaster management authorities have failed to respond to terrorist attacks timely and proactively and fail to reduce the impacts of these attacks, due to which many deaths and casualties are caused by the terrorist attacks. To respond to the emergencies caused

by terrorist attacks, the disaster management system is very feeble. In such situations no fixed responsibilities have been given to the specific departments, organizations, authorities and agencies. The developed strategies to cope with emergencies and crisis do not work when dealing with practical situation.

Sectarian groups have established militant groups, some reportedly aided by the enemy neighboring country and some by the actors/countries of proxy war (supporting Shia and Sunni sects), the Taliban groups initially established and trained by the security agencies to fight against the invasion in Afghanistan, supported by the government agencies were early working for the state agencies later on these strengthened and challenged the government and state agencies and started sectarian violence and terrorist attacks in the country. Most of the terrorist groups have their networks within the country hence they can easily achieve their targets by focusing the vulnerability and easy access to the targets.

To respond to terrorist attacks governance gaps are very visible and revealed during the previous attacks and emergencies. Terrorist attack and emergencies are mostly unexpected but to combat with the situations arising after terrorist attacks, appropriate measures may reduce the impact of these attacks/disasters.

2. Rational of the study

During the last two decades, around three million lives have been lost as a direct result of hazardous events and at least 800 million people have suffered adverse effects such as loss of property or damage to health.[5]. During the last 30 years, About 1.3 million persons have been killed directly in disasters between 1992-2012 and 4.4 billion persons affected. Whether it is a natural disaster like Earthquake in 2005 or technological disaster like fire in a factory in Karachi (2012) and in terrorist attacks in many parts of the country, most recently Punjab Home Minister Mr. Shuja Khanzada and eighteen others were killed in recent attack of terror attack near Attock, Initially several people including Shuja Khanzada were trapped under the debris. Rescue workers tried to rescue them but due lack of capacities, resources and mismanagement after 6 hours most of the trapped individuals were found dead. Effective governance is a key aspect in handling disaster's preparedness, response and recovery. It is essential to understand the role of institutions and governance in dealing with disaster situations.

Disaster risk and the impact of disasters and emergencies have continued to pose challenges to human safety and sustainable development over the last 20 years, despite increased efforts by many stakeholders. It is argued that actors and organizations in disaster reduction policy processes will be enabled or constrained by the institutional system within which they operate [6].

In Pakistan developing the situation of disaster risks are being aggravated by weaker institutions and governance gap between actual practices and formal strategies i.e. (what is written in policy and planning documents) arise. It causes poor institutional response to disaster situation. Especially in un-percept emergencies and situation arises after terrorist attacks. Unfortunately in Pakistan due to poor institutional capacities, ambiguous institutional responsibilities, poor planning and allocation of limited resources to the concerned institutions, disaster have always very high impact than its actual.

Based on the gaps and issues identified, the study will help the government for initiating coping strategies to

overcome these gaps and issues exist in the institutions/departments. The findings of this research will also help the institutions/departments to assess their strengths and weakness and these findings can be anticipated as lessons learnt for by institutions and department. To deal more efficiently with incidents of terrorist attacks and sectarian violence, institution can be strengthened, capacitated, and evolved considering the findings and recommendations of the research. More broadly this research is contribution for understanding the situation arises after critical incidents of terrorist attacks and related disasters in both in Pakistan context and internationally

3. Method and Materials

- Methodological Approaches:

Methodology of this study was designed by following the approaches of inclusiveness encompassing the wide range of viewpoints on the issue under study. Qualitative approach was adopted by conducting Key Informant Interviews with the target respondents.

- Geographic Scope of the Study

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with the target groups was conducted in the headquarters of all provinces of the country and in capital territory of Islamabad.

- Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Key Government officials from all the provinces and capital territory, Representatives of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMA), community representatives and other relevant stakeholders were selected as the target groups for conducting Key Informant Interviews randomly.

- Techniques and Tools of Data Collection

The following techniques were used for retrieving information from secondary literature and collecting primary data from the selected sample of the population:

- 1.1. Desk review of relevant literature;
- 1.2. Conducted Key Informants Interviews (KIIs) for collecting the data for getting in-depth understanding and insight of the issue under study

Interview Guides were developed and used for collecting the data by conducting Key Informant Interviews.

4. Limitation of the Study

- 1.3. The study is limited in scope because of qualitative research methodology. Therefore quantitative research is needed for more findings

1.4. Due to lack of resources and access the 100 % of the intended focused population were not accessed.

5. Findings of the Study:

- In Pakistan there is no specific force or authority for dealing with terrorist attacks and related emergency situations. Though the Rescue team in Punjab and special group/commandos on a small scale in the police are formed but have limited capacity to deal with the post terrorist attack emergencies. The army is trained for war and has the capacity, but with their engagement and other roles and responsibilities they have limited role in dealing with such type of emergency situation during response and recovery phase.
- Forecasting intimating terrorist attacks and other emergency situations is the most important, though Pakistani intelligence agencies have very strong networks throughout the country and they are intimating the planned/intended terrorist attacks and sectarian violence, but the local law enforcement agencies and authorities are not taking this intimation/information serious and initiate no preparation measures for the forecasted attacks.
- Dealing with terrorist attacks and emergency situations there must be strong linkages/ coordination among all the actors. Proper information sharing and coordination mechanism is required to be in place but unfortunately in Pakistan no proper coordination mechanism is developed among the institutions/agencies. When an incident occurs then our institutions start working without pre planning, appropriate actions and responses. As a result major human and material losses occur.
- No specific TORs/SOPs exist for institutions/ departments dealing with such emergencies situations. Each organization/institution/department must be given specific responsibilities/duties and they should remain within their specific area of working and in case of failure, the concerned institution/department to be held responsible.
- Poor planning rather no planning for emergency and crisis management is an issue. The institutions involved working in crisis management wait for the occurrence of incidents/crisis and then take action without any planning which is always causing huge failure while dealing with emergency/crisis situations.
- The managers responsible for the crisis/ incident management are lacking decision making ability or authority about the situation due to poor policies by the government. Weak managers are usually appointed on political influences or references without meeting the requirements/technicalities of the positions and at the time of crisis they do not take appropriate decisions. Reaction approaches are very nonresponsive and nonprofessional.
- So called planning is only in black and white on paper. To manage crisis and incidents need proper implementation strategies but unfortunately when it comes to implementation, no proper implementation has been observed/practiced during the past incidents/crisis in the country. Strategies required for Crisis phases have not been adopted or implemented.
- The institutional capacities to deal with crisis/emergencies and incidents are very poor. The human resource of the crisis management institutions has not been capacitated on the crisis/incidents management. They are lacking very basic skills for timely dealing crisis and incidents, further these institutions are lacking basic facilities required for coping with such situations.
- Public awareness and support in crisis and incidents management is very important, hence the public awareness and motivation campaigns are very basic component to be launched to cope with such crisis

/incidents/emergencies on self-help bases and for extending their support to agencies/organizations/institutions working for crisis/incidents management. Whereas in Pakistan no initiatives have been taken by government or relevant agencies to raise public awareness for emergencies and crisis/incidents.

- Due to many flaws in the government approaches and strategies in crisis and emergencies, management practices revealed in the previous crisis and emergencies situations to the masses/public; the Government/concerned institutions has lost public trust, support and acceptance.

6. Recommendations

On the basis of findings and conclusion, the recommendations are:

To be more effective in dealing with incidents of terrorist attacks and sectarian violence, the below recommendations are suggested in light of the finding of the study/project undertaken.

6.1 Planning

The development of goals, strategies, task lists and schedules required to achieve the objectives of a business. The planning process is a fundamental function of management and should result in the best possible degree of need satisfaction given the resources available [7].

Planning is the most important phase for any event but unfortunately in Pakistan planning for any incident has often overlooked or not given emphasis which is always resulting in great failure while combating with an incident/emergency. For dealing with an incident there must be proper planning and along with contingency planning and with alternate plans as well.

“Good Risk Management fosters vigilance in times of calm and instills discipline in times of crisis.” [8].

Based on the planning other steps for preparedness, coordination and response may be developed.

Proper planning must include the following points:

- Evaluating the situation.
- Understanding the severity of the incident
- Devising appropriate strategies.
- Fixing responsibilities of the concerned departments/institutions

Planning is a basic management function involving formulation of detailed plans to achieve optimum balance of needs or demands with the available resources, identifies the goals or objectives to be achieved, or we may say to formulates strategies to achieve them though most of the emergencies are un-expected but taking action without any planning which is always causing huge failure while dealing with emergency/crisis situations.

All actors/departments/institutions need to have good planning for any kind of emergency situation. As per fixed

responsibilities concerned to their mandate and vision they must be prepared to respond to an emergency situation. All the preparedness measures have to be adopted. Early planning will help the actors to remain within their domain and respond the situation in a better way; this will surely reduce the impact of the disasters.

6.2 Specifying TORs of the concerned institutions/departments

Institutions/departments/actors related to incidents/emergency during terrorist attack and sectarian violence should have much specific responsibilities than having very general TORs. All the key actors having role in such incidents; Police, Intelligence Agencies, Health department, Crisis and emergency Management Cell and others actors should have very specific responsibilities as per their mandate and capacities.

The institute which is specifically formed for Crisis and emergency management has the following five general TORs:

- Manage a round the clock Operational Control Room;
- Collect information on emergencies of all sorts in the country;
- Coordinate with Provincial Crisis Management Cells (PCMCs);
- Coordinate with other agencies to gather relevant information; e.g. casualty figures etc.
- Coordinate plans for emergency response in case of crisis situations;

Being a specific institution for the emergency and Crisis Management, it has only five points as very general TORs. The government has to develop broader TORs of the Institutions/departments and these responsibilities should be on the basis of required actions as per ground realities and very practical approach that could make a difference and enhance the performance of the institutions/departments after the incidents to reduce the impact of the incidents.

6.3 Intimation and warning incidents

In Pakistan intelligence agencies are making efforts to intercept the plans and information and intimate the concerned authorities for any terrorist attack and sectarian violence but mostly concern departments are not taking that intimation serious and they are lacking capacities to stop that incident or ensure their preparedness to reduce the impact of the incidents.

To strengthen the preparedness measures, effective coordination among actors/institutions including community is very crucial. Considering the ground realities and community based approach are required to be established. The very immediate target is mostly community and need to be informed about the threats or the any such suspected planned activity and their involvement to be sought in identifying risks and measures to mitigate such risks. Recommendation of the community should be incorporated in the planning.

6.4 Risk assessment

“The starting point for reducing disaster risk lies in the knowledge of the hazards and the physical, social,

economic and environmental vulnerabilities and of the ways in which hazards and vulnerabilities are changing in the short and long term, followed by action taken on the basis of that knowledge and information.” [9]

Risk is the probability of harmful consequences of an incident that is casualties; other damaged resulting from the accordance specific incident. Risk assessment is the process of estimation impact of an incident; through proper assessment of a risk may reduce the impact of the disaster.

“Risk management is about people and processes and not about models and technology.” Levine [10]

6.5 Understanding the situation

Assessing the risk and understanding the situation is very important. Assessing the situation helps in avoiding overlapping and duplication of efforts, and builds on existing information and capacities. This must be done through a systematic inventory and evaluation of existing risk assessment studies, available data and information, and current institutional framework and capabilities.

Assessment allows for the determination of the acceptable level of risk, defined as the level of losses that is acceptable without destroying lives. Once the current and acceptable levels of risk are determined, disaster risk reduction plans and strategies could be revised or developed so that they have the measurable goal of reducing the risk to acceptable levels.

6.6 Setting priorities and development of guiding principles

While combating with terrorist attacks and sectarian violence the institutions/departments in Pakistan are facing very basic problems i.e. lacking of required resources, institutional capacities, absence of comprehensive policies and guidelines, inter agencies/departmental coordination and many other problems that provides opportunities to the terrorist group to achieve their desired results.

To deal with incident with such limitations the institutes/departments have to set priorities and to develop guiding principle for reducing the vulnerabilities and the impact of the incidents. The following considerations would help to achieve the desired results:

- Community and local level preparedness culture should be strengthened and promoted.
- Most vulnerable social groups; e.g. children, women, elderly persons should be focused.
- Multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approaches must be adopted
- Social knowledge and ground realities must be sorted
- Partnerships amongst multiple sectors that is intelligence agencies, other government line departments, media, civil society Organizations and community must be established and strengthened.

6.7 Institutional capacities

Institutional Capacity Building is considered as one of the main types of Capacity Building efforts, along with

Human Capacity Building. Both are closely inter-related and complementing each other.

Institutional Capacity Building addresses Capacity Building beyond the provision of education and training of professionals. It aims to enhance the capacity of governments, non-governmental groups and communities to plan and manage the incidents with minimum impact. This also aims to improve institutional arrangements for incidents. Institutional capacity building helps in addressing Capacity Building on a long-term, strategic level. This will ensure security and safety of public lives, injury prevention and property protection and help to combat with emergencies in appropriate manner.

“The only virtue of being an aging risk manager is that you have a large collection of your own mistakes that you know not to repeat.” [11].

6.8 Public awareness and support

A public awareness strategy should be closely linked with hazard identification and risk assessment process similar to mitigation activities. Public awareness includes awareness and outreach activities. Public awareness is on-going, long-term and strategic, and forms the foundation for effective public information during the incidents/disasters. There is a correlation between effective public awareness and coordinated, effective disaster response and recovery outcomes.

Public awareness campaign provides for informing and educating the public concerning threats to life, safety and property. These activities include information about specific threats, appropriate preparedness measures, and actions to mitigate the threats including protective actions.

Having an informed public that takes steps before and is prepared for actions during an incident is a complex endeavor, and is difficult for any jurisdiction to achieve.

Taking an appropriate approach to public awareness will likely require additional costs associated with research, planning, implementation and evaluation.

However, there are measurable and immeasurable benefits to life safety, injury prevention and property protection, as well as the public's added confidence in government leadership and capabilities, which likely compensate programmatic investments.

6.9 Guidelines for Public awareness

- Devise community awareness strategic plan based on outcomes from the hazard identification and risk assessment process.
- Identify the audience and appropriate communications media to maximize the reach, frequency and consistency of the message.
- Identify and engage public awareness stakeholders.
- Develop clear and concise messages that are based on the nature of hazards and risks.

- Ensure the sustainability of the plans.

6.10 Mitigation and prevention

Prevention, Mitigation, and Preparedness is the channel, which can decrease the vulnerability of the target and helps to prepare for rapid respond and effective management of the incident.

To improve prevention of terrorist attacks and sectarian violence, preparedness, mitigation and response, the concerned institution/departments in close consultation and cooperation with intelligence agencies, local stakeholder, and community should adopt below mitigation, prevention and preparedness measures:

- Ensure effective use of local and national resources for disaster reduction activities.
- Ensure the participation of all actors/stakeholder in disaster planning and management including women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities.
- Disseminate information on disaster-resistant approaches.
- Develop strategies to upgrade/strengthen the disaster-resistant initiatives
- Develop fixed responsibilities and communication channels among the various functions and stakeholders in pre-event disaster management, mitigation and preparedness activities.
- Ensure broad-based participation in disaster preparedness activities by giving to the population living in the vicinity of a percept incident and ensure dissemination of the information on the potential hazards.
- Develop strong communications, and response and decision-making capabilities of the concerned authorities and institutions.
- Development of contingency plans.

7. Conclusion

Pakistani disaster management institutions stay very vulnerable during emergencies arias after the incidents of terrorist and related attacks. The disaster Management institutions/department failed every time to respond to the emergencies caused by terrorist attacks, and other related attacks/incidents. The disaster management institutions are lacking very basic capacities for responding the situations arises after the incidents. As revealed in this paper during the terrorist attack and related incidents there are no specialized departments or institutions for specific emergencies, lack of Coordination and linkages among concerned stakeholders/actors, planning is missing at every stage, TORs of the Institutions and individual are not defined and fixed. Many terrorist attack and other related crucial incidents have been experienced by the disaster management institutions but still these institution has not integrated their approaches and capacities.

Disaster Management institutions in Pakistan has faced many situations arises after the crucial incidents which can be availed as opportunities for these intuitions for developing proper planning, devising coping strategies and assuring smooth implementation at all levels. To reduce the impact of the crucial incidents, Government has to strengthen the emergencies Management Institutions, developing good policies and strategies, ensuring good management and control, assessing risk, Community awareness and community involvement. Community as victims but also community as actors it is important to engage with in such incidents.

“Risk models only have value if they are used effectively in combination with a limit management and control process” [12].

Reference

- [1] S. F. C. Aubrecht, “Integrating the Concepts of Foresight and Prediction for improved Disaster Risk Management,” 2011.
- [2] H. N. Bang, “Governance of disaster risk reduction in Cameroon : the need to empower local government : original research,” 2013.
- [3] “Michael Walzer’s Just and Unjust Wars.” [Online]. Available: http://www.academia.edu/8014904/Michael_Walzers_Just_and_Unjust_Wars. [Accessed: 30-Aug-2015].
- [4] Dawn, Pakistan, “Pakistan most terror-hit nation,” Islamabad, 2014.
- [5] E. L. B. Susan M. Wachter, “Rebuilding Urban Places After Disaster,” in *Rebuilding Urban Places After Disaster*, p. 416.
- [6] “Policy development and design for fire and emergency management.” [Online]. Available: http://www.academia.edu/3062624/Policy_development_and_design_for_fire_and_emergency_management. [Accessed: 30-Aug-2015].
- [7] “What is planning? definition and meaning,” *BusinessDictionary.com*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/planning.html>. [Accessed: 30-Aug-2015].
- [8] “About B&B Analytics - B&B Analytics.” .
- [9] Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, “Disaster Risk Assessment Process,” *M&E Studies*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.mnestudies.com/disaster-management/disaster-risk-assessment-process>.
- [10] “Risk Quotes,” *Riskczar Corporation*. .
- [11] Donald R. Ven Deventer, “Kamakura Corporation.” [Online]. Available: <http://www.kamakuraco.com/Blog/tabid/231/EntryId/112/Common-Pitfalls-in-Risk-Management-Part-2-Disco-is-Dead-Why-Net-Income-Simulation-and-Saturday-Night-Fever-are-Necessary-but-Not-Sufficient.aspx>.
- [12] Jawwad Farid, “Riskviews,” 18-Dec-2014. [Online]. Available: <https://riskviews.wordpress.com/>.