



Terrorist turned Ikhwan: the lesser-known victims of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir

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ABSTRACT

Terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir had a wide-ranging impact on the lives of people since its inception. Various extrinsic and intrinsic factors within and outside the erstwhile state supported the wave of terrorism during its peak. Eventually, it became the major cause of agony for those youngsters who first supported the wave of terrorism as terrorists and later became critical of it and joined counter-terrorist forces. Those youngsters who supported the counter-terrorist forces in J&K after surrendering their weapons are called Ikhwans. They are crushed dually in the wave of terrorism as once they suffer at the hands of terrorist organisations in the training camps of Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. At another level, they faced criticism from the local supporters of terrorism within J&K after surrendering weapons. In the present research, through the Interpretative Phenomenological analysis of the oral narratives of the Ikhwans, their lived experiences of being terrorists in the terrorist training camps are analysed, and how their surrender has marginalised them in today's context in their present societies is understood. It exhibits Ikhwans as silent sufferers of terrorism firstly, when they became terrorists and then after abandoning the terrorist organisations or Pakistan. Moreover, the role of government in mainstreaming local terrorists in J&K is evident in the present study.

Keywords: *Ikhwans, Jammu and Kashmir, Sufferings, Terrorism, Victimisation*

Historical context

India (Bharat) as a nation has faced the spectre of terrorist violence from the day of its independence. There were about 565 princely states of India and Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) was one such princely state. Partition was accepted by Indians as the outcome of Indian Independence Act 1947 of British Parliament. Similarly, it has to be accepted that it was only the Prince of the Princely State who had to decide whether to accede to India Dominion or Pakistan Dominion or take any other decision. The last Dogra ruler of J&K, Maharaja Hari Singh, signed the Instrument of Accession on 26th Oct. 1947, with Lord Mountbatten,

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which was in the provision of the Indian Independence Act, legitimate, well-considered and wilful (Srivastava, 2021; Sagar, 2014, p.3-4; Prakash, 2008, V-1, p.189).

Despite the accession of J&K with Indian dominion, the territorial integrity of J&K was challenged untimely and repeatedly by Pakistan through the conventional attacks of 1947, wars of 1965, 1971 and 1999, which have altered the demography and territorial lines of J&K. Pakistan having failed to achieve its objective of disintegration of India through costly classical warfare, it goes to its credit to adopt Low-Intensity Conflict (LIC). LIC is a limited politico-military struggle, often protracted in nature and is waged by means ranging from absolute non-violence to a large scale use of means of mass destruction, short of declaration of open war. In J&K, LIC, on the Line of Control (LoC) is a '*no war no peace situation*', where Pakistan is continually involved in the violation of ceasefire and infiltration of terrorists towards India (Chadha, 2005, p.25-26).

The 1987, J&K Assembly elections marked a pivotal moment when various concealed terrorist organisations established an operational nexus to assert their presence in the state. They exploited the elections to incite controversies and chaos within the region. There were strong allegations that elections were rigged by the ruling Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC). The rigging of the election caused violence and abrupt chaos. On sensing the opportunity, Pakistan used it to attack J&K by motivating youngsters to join them. Pakistan has changed its strategy of disintegrating India after 1980's in J&K. It chose religious public appealing and armed training to local population on a promise of a secure future with Pakistan. Thus, the land of Pakistan has acted as a mushrooming ground of terrorism for religiously motivated men coming from J&K. Whereas, the Pakistani Army and Indian-men developed the symbiotic relationship in training camps, which remain beneficial for Pakistan but proved fatal both for the India as well as for the lives of people involved from J&K (Prakash, 2008, p.199-252).

Although terrorism in J&K is said to have started by General Ayub Khan but subsequent governments in Pakistan including that of Benizir Bhutto fully subscribed to programme. A sizeable number of Kashmiri youth had to be recruited in terrorist training camps of Pakistan to achieve their aims for India. During a survey, Indian Armed Forces has obtained the knowledge of about 105 training camps, 49 of these were in Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir, 48 in Pakistan and 8 in Afghanistan (Pandita & Kaul, 2013, p.29-31). There were some training centres in the valley itself. But they functioned for a very short duration and were quickly shifted, leaving no evidence, rendering the task of apprehending the trainers and trainees difficult. A large number of guides and motivators had also been enlisted and were woven into a well-knit organisational training, facilitating border-crossing and indulging in acts of terrorism and allied activities. This is how terror mapping was done in J&K, and terrorism started spreading its roots in J&K (Jagmohan, 2017, p.350). From the

beginning of year 1988, a considerable number of youth from J&K had started moving towards Pakistan, owing their allegiance to subversive groups of Pakistan for training in arms. The fragility of political and social structure of the state and the disintegrated cultural ethos has allowed the movement of people unchecked. These youth on return to India were eager to form their own terrorist organisations, all indoctrinated and primed up for action. On August 14th 1988, Pakistan Independence Day, a number of green flags were hoisted in the interior of Srinagar city and other towns of the valley. On August 15th, Indian Independence Day, black flags were hoisted in number of private and public buildings and tricolour were burnt. During the protest marches, processionists kept shouting anti-Indian slogans as '*Pakistan Zindabad*' '*Khalistan Zindabad*'; '*Noor-e-Chashm*, '*Noor-e-Haq*, '*Zia-ul-Haq*, '*Zia-ul-Haq*'; '*Muslim-Sikh Bhai Bhai*, '*Hindu Quam Kahan se Ayee*' throughout the month. The whole environment was charged with anti-Indian emotions and pro-Pakistani hysteria. By and large, the trained terrorists coming from Pakistan had strategically evaded the eyes of the Indian Armed Forces deployed in the state and remained successful in their mission of spreading terror in J&K (Jagmohan, 2017, p. 256-257). The Kashmir valley was not the last stop of terrorists. By October 1989, terrorists made inroads in the districts of Doda, Kishtwar, Baderwah, Ramban, Rajouri, Poonch, Reasi and Udhampur of Jammu division. These peripheral areas have become the breeding ground of terrorism paralleling the intensity of barbarianism perpetrated by terrorists in the valley. Extension of terrorist activity to erstwhile Doda and adjoining areas or from Kashmir division to Jammu division was a part of terrorist's program to valorize the '*Greater Kashmir*' agenda (Teng & Gaddo, 1998, p.106-107). When counter-terrorism got strengthened by Indian Army or JKP in the state, terrorists faced setbacks and discouragement in executing their plans of violence and bloodshed. The terrorist's movement within J&K, underwent a significant change in mid-1995. The youth became somewhat reluctant to offer themselves for the recruitment of terror or secessionist outfits due to disenchantment received by people from Pakistan and the strong holds maintained by Indian Army or JKP with counter-terrorism (Chadha, 2005, p. 125-131, Jagmohan, 2017).

When the process of arrests of terrorists had started, the civil administration and Indian Army or JKP started getting feelers that some misguided youth would be willing to surrender before the authorities and lay down their arms if assured of decent treatment. On taking up the matter with the State Government, the policy of surrenders was not only approved, but even encouraged. However, on August 2, 1990, a group of 5 Pakistan-trained terrorists, along with arms and ammunition, surrendered at Surankot (Poonch) Police station. These were the first ever surrenders, and they set a trend which was later picked up in the Kashmir Valley as well (Bloeria, n.d.). Out of these surrendered terrorists few started working with Armed Forces in various counter-terrorists operations. These surrenderees were known as Ikhwans.

Therefore, the objective of the present research is to highlight the various reasons that motivated youngsters to join terrorist organisations and issues of terrorists in Pakistani training camps that became the cause of their surrender. The paper also examines the role of Indian Government in mainstreaming the radical section of society in Jammu and Kashmir.

The present study has followed the Phenomenological approach. According to Alfred Schutz, phenomenology was focally concerned with the way in which people grasp the consciousness of others while they live within their own stream of consciousness. In his book, *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, Schutz describes understanding is thus, a “rediscovery of the I in the Thou” (Schutz, et.al, 1967; Ritzer, 2011). Therefore, the lived experiences of Ikhwans as a terrorist are comprehended by using the phenomenological approach.

Nine Ikhwans were interviewed for the present research, who crossed the Line of Control (LoC) from J&K towards Pakistan for armed training and then returned to India by surrendering their weapon to the Indian Army or JKP. The conducted interviews were unstructured. As per the ease and safety of the respondents, interviews were conducted at different places in J&K. NVivo-12 software is used to draw various themes (reason for joining terrorism and reason for surrender) from the respondents’ narrations, which are both auto-generated and researcher-generated.

Understanding the word “Ikhwan” and exploring the Ikhwani movement

The Ikhwan is an Arabic word which means ‘*Brethren or brotherhood*’ united by the ties of common membership in the Wahhabi sect of Central Arabia (Webster, 1828). A Muslim Brotherhood movement was organised by Kuka Parray, a pioneer of the counter-terrorist group in Kashmir, which was formed in the early 1990s (Staff Reporter, 2003). The quarrel between the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen terrorist outfit and the Hizbul Mujahideen, another terrorist outfit resulted in the creation of a splinter group, calling itself the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon (there is no difference between the two words as Muslimeen and Muslimoon are both plural for Muslim). Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon was headed by Kuka Parray, whose real name was Jamshed Shirazi; it became the most effective instrument for counter-terrorism in the strategic area around Wular Lake. The defection of the terrorists from the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen due to various internal feuds and external threats from Pakistan led to the formation Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon. The change was made in the last name from Muslimeen to Muslimoon in order to differentiate the counter-terrorist outfit from the terrorist outfit and to encourage the religious association of youngsters towards Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon, in order to save their lives by surrendering weapons (Joshi, 2019).

Kuka Parray, a resident of Hajan, was a folk singer and dancer, earning living by performing at marriages and festive occasions. With the outbreak of the terrorist rebellion in Jammu and Kashmir, Kukka Parray joined the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, and when that organisation split, he followed Islamists like

Hilal Baig into the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimmen. Later, he joined the anti-Hizbul drive. Kuka Parray was originally a source cultivated by the BSF and handed over to Rashtriya Rifles. Beginning with a band of sixty men, he was aided in building up a thousand-man 'private army' or counter-terrorist group, which was funded by the administration (Joshi, 2019).

Kuka Parray had surrendered before the Indian Army in 1993-94 along with his loyalists and has since then worked with the Indian Army in various counter-terrorist operations in the state. Parray, who was trained in Pakistan, had turned against the pro-Pakistan terrorist outfit Hizbul-Mujahideen, after which he motivated around 250 terrorists to join mainstream India and even fought terrorism in north Kashmir. He organised a strong group of former terrorists who were fed up with the atrocities of the extremist and foreign terrorists in his area of operation and opposed them boldly. Even Jamat-i-Islami activists had to leave the area to save their lives and could not pursue their anti-national activities where Parray was operating. Parray was alleged to have also killed many Jamat-i-Islami and Hizbul-Mujahideen activists. He became the poster boy for other terrorists to surrender and join the mainstream. However, his death jolted the movement of the surrender of terrorists in J&K. Later, in 2003, the Indian Army raised a Territorial Army (TA) Battalion comprising surrendered terrorists (Ikhwanis) in J&K as part of their plan to boost the morale of surrenderees or other terrorists following the killings of their leaders like Kuka Parray. Setting up TA for the Ikhwanis has provided them with a legal framework to operate in counter-terrorist operations, apart from a regular income and continuity of employment (Pandit, 2003; Santhanam, 2003; Prakash, 2008, Naushad, 2023; Masoodi, 2003).

Therefore, many youngsters from Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen, and other terrorist organisations supported by Pakistan, later shifted their allegiance to India under the name head of outfit Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon because of various reasons as mentioned by Ikhwans in their narratives. They collectively worked as a pro-Indian government militia and restored its 'brotherhood' by motivating terrorists to feel attached to Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon and surrender their weapons. Kuka Parray, along with his trustees, gave momentum to the Ikhwani movement in J&K, which was formed by surrendered terrorists or groups of Ikhwans and sided with the Indian Armed Forces to fight the Islamist terrorists backed by the Pakistani Forces.

Dynamics of Pakistani training camps

During the peak of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir from 1989 to 1995, thousands of local men crossed the border back and forth from J&K to Pakistan to receive armed training in terrorist camps located in Pakistan, Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) and even Afghanistan. Subsequently, these men were used as sleeper cells or active operatives by Pakistan in J&K. This conscious or unconscious involvement of local men from J&K in the Pakistani terrorist camps, and their return to Indian land has subjected them to

unending trials of agony and suffering today. Many local men from J&K were enticed by promises of luxurious lives, the glory of weapons, and the allure of so-called freedom when approached to join terrorist training camps in Pakistan. However, the truth about these training camps turned out to be quite different from what local men or trainees had imagined.

After detailed analysis of the narratives of Ikhwans it came to light that men in the terrorist training camps from Jammu and Kashmir were not viewed as rightful heirs of Islamic lineage by Pakistani trainers. Instead, Pakistan regarded their race of people in Pakistan as pure Muslims and outrightly rejected Indian Muslims as true inheritors of Islam. Trainees were seen as less efficient or lack courage to fight India or Armed Forces. Thus, are seen less of man. Pakistani forces even blamed youngsters for living in India for long years even after partition. Thus, terrorist organisations have given them an option to correct their mistakes of the past. A sense of worthlessness came among the youngsters while living in the camps because of the treatment they received by the Pakistan handlers.

Additionally, there existed discrimination in the acceptance of locals from Jammu and Kashmir in comparison to foreign mercenaries, such as Sri Lankans, Syrians or Afghanis, within the terrorist training camps. Foreign mercenaries were perceived as more reliable by Pakistani officials than Indian youngsters. Despite the hard training, local men from J&K in the camps were kept one step behind their foreign contemporaries. Consequently, locals from J&K encountered discrimination and exploitation in the camps. This dominance and subordination elicited feelings of inadequacy among the trained youngsters in the camps.

They mentioned that trainees were from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities in the training camps. There existed a hierarchal division in the training camps, where those superior in the hierarchy enjoyed more freedom and privileges than those below them. Individuals with better combat skills or education attained a dominant position in the hierarchy over others with less learned basic combat skills during the training phase. Furthermore, those men who underperformed during the training period were sent to India behind schedule against those who had performed well. Eventually, they were tasked with transporting weapons across the border into India. The men were eager to complete their training and reunite with their families as soon as possible. However, men of exceptional talent were prevented from returning to India, as Pakistani trainers exploited the skills of trainees to maintain their network of terrorist activities. With this stratification, routine tasks were also divided according to the positions within the camps. Superiors were assigned to supervision, control, planning, and plotting various tasks, while inferiors were obliged to follow them submissively. Anyone who disobeyed a superior faced consequence. Moreover, trainees developed a sense of fight amongst themselves to attain a better position in the hierarchy over others or become acceptable members. Every day, there was a

fight to become a better combatant, thus a chaotic rush always prevailed in the environment of the camps.

The respondents mentioned that a significant number of terrorists were renounced by the terrorist organisations in Pakistan due to injuries during training or attacks, rendering them progressively unfit for their designated roles within terrorist organisations. Consequently, these individuals were relegated to menial tasks, such as maintaining sanitation facilities, performing laundry duties, preparing meals, and fulfilling the role of porters, which was deemed unsatisfactory for the youngsters who joined terrorism for the sake of power, guns etc. Youngsters felt a decline in their perceived value over time, resulting in feelings of reduced necessity within the terrorist organisations. Furthermore, the initial motivation that motivated local men from Jammu and Kashmir to move to Pakistan began to diminish gradually for the injured personnel as time elapsed in the training camps.

There was a fearful environment in the training camps. Upon understanding the motives of Pakistani men towards the locals of J&K, youngsters are frightened to speak their minds. They fear that they might face death or torture if they confront trainers or go against their wishes. Submissiveness became the only way for the trainers to save their lives from Pakistan, and they merely sought a moment to escape the camps.

The study reveals that, consequently, upon gaining an understanding of the dynamics surrounding terrorist training camps, many trainees made the decision to escape the camps. A considerable number of terrorists surrendered voluntarily or upon being repatriated to India for terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir, were apprehended and subsequently surrendered to the Indian Army or the Jammu and Kashmir Police (JKP). Many of these terrorists, who surrendered to either the Indian Army or JKP due to the discrimination they faced at the hands of Pakistan, later integrated into the mainstream Indian Army or JKP with the aim of combating the nexus of terrorism in J&K. The surrenderees were well-versed in terrorist strategies, planning, routes, organisation, and weapons. Consequently, their experiences and skills were effectively utilised by the Indian Army and JKP to mitigate the wave of terrorism in J&K. Under the Rehabilitation Policy for local young trainees engaged in terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, a significant number of men have surrendered their weapons in an effort to reintegrate into their society. Many of those who surrendered under this policy have subsequently been assimilated into the Ikhwan Battalion or Ikhwani force, which operates as an anti-terrorism unit based in Kashmir, established in 2003. However, the involvement of surrenderees with the Indian Army or the JKP has made their identity incoherent. Today, Ikhwans are perceived by the locals of Kashmir as renegades or traitors and unfaithful by Jamaatis who initially sponsored their border crossing from J&K to Pakistan.

Thus, the local young terrorists from J&K who sought arms training in Pakistan and joined terrorist organisations later surrendered their weapons to the Indian

Army or JKP, often due to estranged treatment in terrorist training camps or a change of heart. Amongst the surrenderees, those men who voluntarily started working with the Indian Army and JKP in the anti-terrorist operations of the state are commonly called Ikhwan in J&K. The Ikhwanis find themselves marginalized within contemporary society. Their acceptance among individuals outside their group remains minimal. Although they anticipated achieving a peaceful existence by disassociating from terrorist organisations, they continue to be affected by the repercussions of terrorism. The distress caused by terrorism has profoundly impacted their lives and the lives of their families in the current societies of their residences.

Rehabilitation policy: role of government in facilitating surrenderers

The erstwhile state of J&K formulated a policy known as the Rehabilitation Policy or the Reforming Policy for local terrorists in J&K. The aim of the state behind the policy was to reduce the number of locals of J&K to cross the Indian borders into Pakistan; to decrease the level of violence in the state; and to neutralise terror and terrorist outfits in the valley. The policy also sought to counteract the support of Pakistani forces in J&K. Furthermore, it served as a motivation or a source of refuge for those who became victims of Pakistan's agendas in training camps in Pakistan or PoJK. The Rehabilitation Policy became a validated step under the guidance of restitutive laws. Emile Durkheim distinguished between repressive and restitutive laws. The former is punitive, while the latter is cooperative, with the primary aim of restoring order when a misdeed has been committed by anyone in society (Abraham, 2011). India has restitutive laws enshrined in its constitution. Terrorists are a menace to society, whether they reside in Jammu and Kashmir or are based in Pakistan. Therefore, it became necessary for the state to incorporate these individuals back into society by providing them with a chance, under the Rehabilitation Policy, to surrender their weapons and dissociate themselves from terrorism.

First surrender policy: 1995

The first surrender policy was formulated with the objectives of offering inducement and incentives to terrorists to leave the path of violence and join the main stream and to ensure that the surrendered terrorists do not revert to terrorism (Khosla et al., 1977). In J&K, it was introduced in the year 1995 under the Governor General K.V Krishna Rao's administration. The policy offered a one-time fixed deposit of Rs. 1.5 lakhs and a monthly stipend (Karthi, 2019). The impact of the surrender policy remained encouraging after its announcement. 1317 terrorists have surrendered from August 15, 1995 to September 30, 1997 (Khosla et al., 1997).

Second surrender policy: 2004

The next policy set in under then Governor of J&K, Narendra Nath Vohra. The objective of the policy was to offer facility to those terrorists who undergo a

change of heart and eschew the path of violence. Those who were ready to accept the integrity of India and the Indian Constitution were given a chance to reintegrate back into India. The policy also mentions about the incentives for surrendered weapons by the surrenderee (Annual Reports, Ministry of Home Affairs).

Third surrender policy: 2010

The next surrendered policy was focused on policy and procedure for return of terrorist to J&K (India). This policy was also implemented by Governor Narendra Nath Vohra. It was applicable to those youngsters who went to PoJK or Pakistan between 1 January 1989 and 31 December 2009; their dependents were also eligible for consideration under the policy. The policy also mentions the entry points restricted for the surrenderees to enter the India through JCP Wagah-Attari or through Salamabad or Chakan-da-Bagh crossing on the Line of Control or through the Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi (Ministry of Home Affairs | Government of India, n.d.). The policy was of no help to some youngsters who returned via Nepal, which was not one of the approved routes in the policy; hence, such surrenderees did not receive any benefits (Khajuria, 2019; May 6; Annual Reports, Ministry of Home Affairs, n.d.).

The modification of the existing policy: 2019

Upon the advice of the J&K Governor Satya Pal Malik, the state government revised the policy in 2019 (Bhayana, 2019). It was advised that the terrorists, returning to the mainstream, will be called “*renouncers*”, and they will be entitled for a fixed deposit of ₹5 lakh or ₹6 lakh after a period of three years, subject to their good behaviour (Khajuria, 2019).

Findings of the study:

By analysing the narratives of the respondents using the software NVivo, the following reasons for joining and surrendering Ikhwan are concluded:

Reasons for joining terrorist organisations:

Various reasons for joining terrorism were narrated by the Ikhwan, which are mentioned below:

- 1. Religious indoctrination:** Islam became the major binding force or a cause that motivated respondents to join the terrorist network and training camps in Pakistan. Respondents felt that fighting jihad for Islam against India and the Armed Forces has become a pious deed in their lifetime. They could not shed their shoulders from the responsibility they owe towards their religion. Thus, anyone who failed to follow the commands of Jamaatis or religious leaders of their ‘*Calling to Pakistan*’ were seen as less of a man or traitors in Jammu and Kashmir during the peak of terrorism. The cause raised by Pakistan to do the ‘Islamization of J&K and its secession from India’ has played a vital role in binding volunteers of Jihad not only from J&K but also from other countries. One of the respondents narrated ‘*Jamatiyon ne hume bulaya aur bataya ki yar*

apko pta he agar app jihad karenge to apko jaannat milegi, behtar hure milege, jihad yeh he, vo he, bhut kuch bataya...kyunki jab usko bolte he behtar hoore milege, Shaheed hone ke bad, tab usko kuch samaj nahi ata'.

2. Aazadi (freedom): The concept of so-called aazadi became a positive incentive for youngsters to cross the border from Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) to Pakistan. Aazadi, for them, is materialistic driven. To seek money and wealth that could provide them with a future luxurious life has motivated youngsters to become the propagators of aazadi under the aegis of Pakistan's influence. Unfortunately, the real meaning of aazadi was unclear to youngsters until they reached Pakistan training camps. Thus, aazadi became more of a rhetoric to capture the minds of locals in Jammu and Kashmir.

3. Glorification of terrorism in their surroundings: Terrorism became a fascination among the youngsters living in Kashmir. The guns, money, power, and fame fascinated and influenced youngsters to reach Pakistan. Youngsters were encouraged by jamaatis and separatists in the name of religion to choose terrorism as a religious duty. Death on the path of terrorism was too glorified by terrorist organisations, thus, to die while achieving goals dictated by jammatis was highly rated and normalised in society. The people did not see death in Kashmir as a loss; rather, it turned out to be an epitome of sacrifice.

4. Enthusiasm for Pakistan: While travelling towards Pakistani training camps, Ikhwan were enthusiastic and determined to unleash the course of the journey, irrespective of difficult paths and security threats. Ikhwan reported that their brothers (group members) died on their journey to training camps from India to Pakistan or back to India. The urge to reach training camps and hold guns, abandoning homes and homeland to conquer freedom (azadi) has reinforced Ikhwanis to overcome emotional bondages, structural barriers and moral ethics hindering their paths to training camps. The leaders escorting Kashmiri men to Pakistani camps have fueled every border crossing man with the sentiments of hatred for India and the morality of choosing the righteous paths for their religion and freedom (azadi) over their lives. Thus, men were never out of enthusiasm.

5. Forced by terrorists (death threats, torture, and killings): Ikhwan and their families had faced torture at the hands of terrorists to join the terrorist organisations. Those family members who refused to send their children to the path of Jihad or to Pakistan for training were looked down upon in society. It somewhere became a compulsion for families to join the wave of terrorism or else face torture from terrorists. To safeguard their lives, youngsters moved towards Pakistan for training.

6. To get weapons for the security of family members: Those youngsters whom the terrorists harassed to join them without their willingness saw going to Pakistan as an opportunity to protect their families from the attacks of terrorists.

They knew guns would give them power over others. Therefore, Pakistan was chosen as a better ally to save their families.

7. Peer influence: The Ikhwan also remarked that they were free and had no work during the peak of terrorism in J&K. Everyone around them was joining terrorist organisations, and it was deemed disgraceful if any family did not have a member involved in such a group. When we, too, found ourselves with nothing to do, we thought, let's head towards Pakistan to see what opportunities awaited us. Furthermore, as our friends were going, we also wanted to go to Pakistan.

8. For power and identity: Guns and their associations with terrorist organisations became a source of power and identity in Kashmir. Men carry their firearms wherever they go and are simultaneously respected by society. These men controlled the daily routines of the people in Kashmir, and their advice and decisions were taken into consideration by the populace. Therefore, in pursuit of power and an exhilarating identity, youngsters crossed the border for training in camps of Pakistan.

9. Thrill seeking & guns flaunting: To procure guns became a thrill for youngsters to experience in a lifetime. They were eager to carry guns on their shoulders after their return from Pakistan. Guns gave them confidence that they wear proudly on their shoulders.

10. Less convincing personal reason for joining terrorism: The majority of the Ikhwan were young when they joined training camps in Pakistan. Every Ikhwan after surrender went through self-introspection to realise the factors that pushed them to choose terrorism over their family and peace, without any knowledge of its consequences. However, some respondent failed to justify their reasons for joining terrorism. They either blamed their peer group, the access to money and fame or the environment of their surroundings for their decisions. Thus, some of them have fewer convincing reasons to join training camps. Some joined when the terrorists pressured them to join them, and no other option was left with them.

Reason for surrender of Ikhwan:

In training camps, terrorists faced various physical and adaptive challenges, which ultimately led to their surrender. Some of these challenges are outlined below.

1. Undervalued human life: The youngsters from J&K in the terrorist training camps were in abundance. The loss of some of them wasn't as challenging for the Pakistani forces to handle. Thus, witnessing their lives in danger, trainees were forced to surrender to JKP or the Indian Army in order to save their lives.

2. Inability to question Pakistani teachings/brainwashed: Terrorists in the training camps were unable to question the dictates of the Pakistani forces. Their inability was due to the fear of death that has gripped their minds while living in

the training camps. Majority of the men agreed to the manifestos of the Pakistan because it was the last option for them to sustain their lives in the camps. Those who dared to go against the Pakistani heads they face death or torture.

3. Loss of belongingness: In the Pakistani training camps, trainers had instructed the Indian men to cut off unnecessary belongingness with anyone in the camps. Respondents revealed that they failed to ask their brothers, with whom they crossed the Indian border from Kashmir, about their well-being for months in the camps. Respondents, over time, experienced a profound sense of isolation within the training camps. Consequently, the secluded environment exacerbated the feelings of isolation among the youngsters. In an effort to save themselves from this situation, trainees abandoned the training camps when found the opportunity and voluntarily surrendered to the Indian Army.

4. Severed ties with family: Respondents revealed that while crossing the Indian border, they never imagined breaking their ties with families. But when they entered Pakistan, men were forced to cut off all the ties. Respondents revealed that they failed to contact their families for a year. They didn't know whether someone was dead or living in the family. Those who dared to contact their families in India from Pakistan have endured torture in the camps. Out of fear, other trainees in the camps remained silent about their wishes and desires.

5. Loss of individual identity: Affiliating oneself with terrorism or any terrorist organisation signifies a surrendering of one's identity to Pakistan. Individuals must relinquish their previous selves in order to adopt new identities. This shift is accompanied by a loss of personal freedom and the essence of life. The existence of trainees in training camps must be conducted in accordance with the dictates of Pakistan. Consequently, the prospect of losing one's identity in the process of embracing terrorism was deemed unacceptable by men in the training camps; thus, they ultimately chose to surrender to the Indian Army or the Jammu and Kashmir Police.

6. Loss of real names in Pakistan: during the interviews, respondents never disclosed their real names. They felt comfortable revealing the code names assigned to them by the Pakistanis in the training camps. The primary reason for this is the fear that respondents have of being caught or quoted after the interview, which could put them and their families in the crosshairs of terrorists' guns. Despite having relinquished their affiliations with terrorist organisations several years ago, the Ikhwan have been unable to abandon the codenames assigned to them during their training in Pakistan nor have they been able to resume their former identities within their respective societies due to an inherent fear of punishment. Tragically, terrorism has effectively deprived them of their individual identities. They experience unease upon hearing their true names publicly. Pakistan has succeeded in thoroughly eradicating personal identity from their consciousness, instilling a pervasive sense of fear and shame that causes individuals to remain apprehensive about revealing their identities in

their homeland throughout their lives. Loss of real names is a great loss of one's self.

7. Sex slave: While training in Pakistani camps, respondents encountered unnatural sexual activities. Their sense of masculinity was challenged, leading to feelings of shame and dishonour regarding their bodies. There is mortification of individual voice in the camps to protect one's self. In resentment, if men would show anger, they would be further burdened by the torture in the camps. Thus, loss of self in protecting one's self is the greatest loss youngsters suffered in the training camp. Many were reluctant to discuss these experiences with researchers or others after leaving terrorist organisations.

8. Internecine strategies of Pakistan: Pakistan has cultivated various terrorist organisations in J&K with the hidden motive of using trainees against one another when necessary. Men from different terrorist organisations, trained in Pakistan's camps and affiliated with various groups, found themselves confronting each other, driven by the pressures of Pakistan. Clashes erupted among the trainees regarding Pakistan's decision on the merger or independent status of J&K. Those terrorist organisations that opposed Illaq-e-Pakistan (merger with Pakistan) eventually became enemies of Pakistan. Consequently, orders were issued from Pakistan to compel these terrorist organisations to either align with Pakistan or face death. As a result, Kashmiri men found themselves in dire straits, caught between killing or being killed by their fellow trainees over their chosen allegiances. The underlying aim of these clashes became clear to the trainees, albeit only after heavy loss of life in Kashmir. Thus, to avoid becoming the targets of guns of their fellow trainers or Pakistan, men surrendered to the Indian Army or JKP. Upon surrender, men and their families were brutally killed and tortured by Pakistani terrorists because the Ikhwan had done something beyond the imagination of Pakistan. Consequently, the Pakistani terrorists showed no mercy to the Ikhwans, regardless of how much these trainees supported Pakistan and their cause at one point in time.

9. Religious indoctrination: In the training camps, respondents were given continuous religious teachings which focused on killing men from the Indian Armed Forces and creating mass fear among the residents of J&K by killing and torturing them. Religious teachings also made respondents ready to die or kill anyone on the path of jihad. Hence, respondents were brainwashed to such an extent in the training camps that death became a reason for the glorification in the camps. But it was not acceptable to all, those who failed to resonate with this glorification chose surrender as a last hope to save their lives.

10. Compromised promises of financial security to terrorists: The commitments made by Pakistani terrorists to the youth they recruited from J&K-offering ongoing financial support to their families-were never honoured. Once the respondents abandoned their homes in J&K, those promises faded into nothing. Consequently, the youth developed a sense of distrust towards Pakistan.

Respondents had previously followed Pakistan without question, prompting them to distance themselves from Pakistan and its motives.

Therefore, all the above-mentioned reasons became the reasons for the terrorists to surrender their weapons in order to save their lives.

Challenges and issues faced by the Ikhwans after surrender

The study reveals that Ikhwans faced a lot of challenges once they surrendered and few of them are as underlined:

1. Stigmatized identity: Ikhwans carry a stigma of *traitor* / *gaddar* / *badzat* / *nabeedh* in today's society. Their identity is somewhere lost between a terrorist and anti-terrorist and their self-respect is compromised in today's context. Even before introducing themselves, their names and chosen work with JKP and Indian Army introduced them to society after surrendering. Goffman explained stigma as an attribute that is deeply discrediting (Goffman, 1963). Today, Ikhwanis are suffering from discreditable stigma, where they try and assume that their differences (differences of virtual and actual social identity) are neither known by those present around them nor immediately perceivable. Thus, Ikhwanis's dramaturgical problem is managing the information and the tension produced in society from their involvement with the Indian Army and JKP and their past involvement with terrorists. An effort is always made by Ikhwanis to hide their identity or to remain unknown to the audience because, after their surrender, they are looked down upon in society for their work as Ikhwan. Society pressurised them to re-drag themselves again to be a terrorist; thus, being a terrorist once becomes an in-erasable stigma on their identity. Ikhwans are, to date, labelled as terrorists even when they do not want to associate themselves with their previous identity. They have to bear the shame and guilt associated with their work once with terrorist organisations, even after decades of serving with the Indian Army and JKP against the terrorists. Thus, a struggle to live with a stigmatised existence is all terrorism has given to them.

2. Migratory lifestyle: Fear of Pakistan has uprooted Ikhwanis permanently to ever build a stable settlement in future. For a long time after the surrender, Ikhwanis failed to build their homes in their native villages. They are displacing from one state to another to remain safe from the guns of terrorists. Ikhwanis have lived in rented accommodation for many years while displacing from one place to another. Even today, when Ikhwanis feel threatened in Kashmir, they shift with their families to the Jammu region or to any other place where they find security in life. Thus, even after long years of abandoning terrorist organisations, terrorism and its impact have not abandoned Ikhwanis. They will forever remain the targets of Pakistani guns.

3. Difficulties faced by the families of Ikhwan: Today, the families of Ikhwans are also undergoing the pressure of survival. They are also restless with the fear of death surrounding their lives. Many Ikhwanis have lost their families in the

terrorist attacks after their surrender. Thus, Ikhwanis prefer to live far from their families to secure their lives. The separation of Ikhwanis from their families due to their work with the Indian Army or JKP led to the development of frustration, homesickness and a sense of disconnectedness in them. They have left their families to live on their own to save them from the eyes of terrorists.

4. Fear of death after retirement: Ikhwanis were recruited with the Indian Army or JKP after surrender and certain relaxations in age and education were given to them in order to regularise them in the Force. But survival is the biggest question among the Ikhwanis who are going to retire within 1-2 years from their battalions. They have served long but have failed to make a secure home for themselves. Deep in their hearts, they knew terrorists would target them once they were out of their battalion after retirement. Thus, their lives are a burden to them. They cannot kill themselves because they have families but the thought of killing themselves is not new for them. Ikhwan may choose self-inflicted death after his retirement if he fails to make his life better for living.

5. Under-confident social interactions: Interacting with locals, Ikhwanis often felt uncertain and confused, leading to mental pressures that hinder their social interaction, integration, and decision-making abilities today. They have lost the confidence to present themselves in public gatherings. They avoid social gatherings and interactions as much as possible to remain away from the eyes of terrorists. Therefore, the pressure of being conscious and alert in their surroundings always dominates their lives. Hence, all they are capable of today is using guns against terrorists in the field and counting and preparing for another encounter.

After the surrender, when surrenderees joined the Indian Army or JKP as an Ikhwan, they became the target of the guns of on-ground terrorists. Not only they but their families too became the targets of the guns. Their lives after surrender became a challenge for them, and till date, Ikhwanis are fighting in society to become an acceptable part of it. They failed to secure acceptance but have remained loyal to their anti-terrorist stance.

Conclusion

The narratives of the Ikhwanis are evidence of the fact that living in the camps of Pakistan was difficult and challenging for the youngsters of Jammu and Kashmir, who thought that after joining terrorism, luxuries would be available to them and life would be easy. Despite various reasons that motivated men to join terrorism, youngsters at one point became disillusioned with the promises of Pakistan. When men undergo training in terrorist camps in Pakistan, they eventually felt betrayed by the policies of Pakistan, which were more Pakistan-centric and less Kashmir-centric. Those who failed to take the load of training in the camps felt isolated and helpless with the restrictions of the camps. The religious indoctrination by the religious teachers in the camps has made men ready to die or kill others for the Jihad. Men have become propagators of violence on the dictates of Pakistan. But on realizing the futility of dying for the

missions of Pakistan has somewhere enlightened the local terrorists of Kashmir to surrender their guns and ideology. But it was never easy for the trained-men to surrender what once pushed them to leave India towards Pakistan. The deconstruction of the reality in front of them has forced them to shift their choices from Pakistan to India. Thus, trained men surrender their weapons to Indian Armed Forces in order to save rest of their lives. The very terrorism that led men in Kashmir to betray India, the same terrorism and its organisations are not allowing their trained men to live rest of their lives with peace in J&K after their surrender. The journey of terrorists from being terrorists to Ikhwan is evidence of the fact that terrorism and its organizations have made their own people their victims, the targets. When such distracted men (terrorists) want to amend their past mistakes, terrorism does not allow them to do so. It pressured them to stick to their old ideals and commitment rather than securing their lives under the Indian Forces. Thus, Ikhwan became a sufferer or a victim of terrorism not once or twice but thrice in J&K. Firstly, when they joined terrorists due to their brainwashing, false promises of money, protection and luxuries. Secondly, when these men were tortured and discriminated against by their fellow terrorists for various reasons in the terrorist training camps, which compelled them to surrender and become Ikhwan. Thirdly, after becoming Ikhwan, when they started working with Indian Armed Forces, these Ikhwans were the targets of terrorist's guns for the rest of their lives. Thus, a life where Ikhwan is running to be saved is all he gets after years of working as a terrorist and counter-terrorist. These sufferers or victims of terrorism are lesser known which are too affected by terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

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