A Historical Examination of Raw's Funding of Baloch Insurgents and its Representation in Pakistani Media

Aqsa Iram Shahzadi
(Corresponding Author)
Assistant Professor,
Institute of Media & Communication Studies, B. Z. University, Multan.
Email: mrsaqsairam@bzu.edu.pk

Amna Fazail
Lecturer,
Women University, Multan.
Email: amnafazail45@gmail.com

Abstract

This research study explores the public perception of India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) agents and their alleged involvement in funding Baloch insurgents and engaging in terrorist activities in Pakistan. The study employs a quantitative research approach, utilizing survey data collected from 251 respondents at Bahauddin Zakariya University in Multan, Pakistan. The findings reveal that a significant proportion of the respondents believe in India's involvement in terror activities in Pakistan (88%) and the RAW's funding of Baloch insurgents (88.5%). The study highlights the role of media coverage in shaping public opinion, as well as the potential consequences of such perceptions on bilateral relations between Pakistan and India. The research concludes that efforts should be made to resolve conflicts between the two nations and promote peace in the region, with the media playing a crucial role in fostering a neutral and non-hostile atmosphere.

Keywords: RAW agents, public perception, Baloch insurgents, terrorist activities, Pakistan, India, media coverage, bilateral relations, peace.

Introduction

The influence of mass media in shaping socioeconomic and political views in society is undeniable (Hassan, 2010). People learn and expand their knowledge about the world through the continuous consumption of information and the creation of mental models (Acedo et al., 2005). Media has become the most potent tool for shaping public opinion and influencing the powers that be (Hadeshian, 2006). Several factors contribute to people's perceptions when acquiring information (Schmitz, 2012). One controversial topic in Pakistan is the presence of "RAW agents," who are believed by many to work for the CIA (Kamran, 2016). Espionage, which involves the secret gathering of intelligence, is motivated by various factors, including money, revenge, ideology, and loyalty (Evans, 2017). Military agencies, called intelligence services, operate covertly to carry out their tasks (Wheeler, 2012).

The British Empire established its military agencies in the 1880s to monitor areas of concern (Bigelow, 2012). India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) was established in 1968 to handle external affairs following the failure of the Sino-Indian Intelligence in 1962 (Bajoria, 2008). The agency gained notoriety after its involvement in the 1971 and 1984 events, with its primary objective being to monitor anti-India elements and secure the country's nuclear program (Hardgrave, 1985). Pakistan's intelligence agency, the ISI, was established in 1948 as the successor to Military Intelligence (MI) (Chengappa, 2000). ISI's primary role is to defend Pakistan against internal and external threats and has been involved in various covert operations to this effect, such as the identification of communication systems of terrorists during operation Zarb-e-Azb (Riaz, 2016).

India has used RAW to destabilize Pakistan since its early years of independence, leading to the deaths of over a million people in East Pakistan (Kalam, 2011). After the separation of East Pakistan, India's interference in the region continued, with RAW allegedly coming closer to the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and training its members (Raja, 2015). In March 2016, Commander Kul Bhushan Jadhav, an Indian Navy officer, was arrested in Baluchistan, with Pakistan accusing him of financing the Baloch nation and working to separate Baluchistan and Karachi while also being linked to various terror groups in Pakistan (Zafar, 2016). Jadhav claimed to have started working for RAW in 2001 and was inducted to sabotage the projects of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) (Yousaf, 2016). RAW officers often use social media platforms to destabilize peace in Pakistan and create fake accounts to spread disinformation against the country (Classified Journal, 2017).

Overall, the RAW agents' controversy in Pakistani media highlights the complex web of international relations, intelligence gathering, and covert operations that influence politics and socioeconomic conditions.

Problem Statement

"The presence of Indian intelligence agents in Pakistan and their activities have long been a source of tension between the two countries. With the recent eviction of US troops from Afghanistan, the situation has become more complex, and it is essential to understand the public's perception of this issue, particularly in the Balochistan region. This study aims to analyze the public opinion on the specific issues revolving around the presence of Indian intelligence agency, Research and Analysis Wing in Pakistan, including its funding to Baloch insurgents before and after the eviction of US troops from Afghanistan. The study will provide a historical context, examine the types of activities carried out by Indian agents, assess the impact of their actions on the Balochistan region, and explore the potential implications for the broader Pakistan-India relationship. The hypothesis guiding the study is that the majority of Pakistanis view the presence of Indian intelligence agents and their actions as a threat to national security and sovereignty.

Significance

The significance of this study lies in understanding the public perception about the presence of Indian intelligence agency, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), in Pakistan and its activities, including its funding to Baloch insurgents. Since India and Pakistan have been rivals since 1947, their intelligence agents have been used to destabilize each other. The study aims to provide insight into the media's depiction of India and how it shapes the audience's attention towards news about RAW agents. With the current operations of Counter Terrorism Forces of Pakistan and the progress of CPEC, news regarding RAW agents' presence and involvement in terrorist activities in Pakistan is taken very seriously by the public. The study aims to explore how the exposure of Indian secret agents in Pakistan affects public opinion and how the media's coverage shapes audience perception over respective news stories. This study can provide valuable insights into the current state of public opinion in Pakistan and how media influences it.

Objectives

Following are the objectives of the study

- To analyze the public perception of the news about the funding provided by RAW to Baloch insurgents.

- To investigate the audience's perception of India's involvement in terrorist activities in Balochistan, Pakistan, after the media coverage of RAW agents' activities.

Limitations

The study is limited to the perceptions and opinions of students at Bahauddin Zakariya University in Multan, Pakistan. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to other populations or regions.

The survey method used in this study may have limitations in terms of the representativeness of the sample and potential response bias. Respondents may not have felt comfortable expressing their true opinions, leading to inaccurate data. The study only examines the public perception of news about RAW agents and their alleged funding of Baloch insurgents. It does not consider other factors that may influence public perception or the wider political context. The study did not include interviews with relevant authorities or experts in the field, which could have provided a more in-depth understanding of the issues. The study only focuses on perceptions within Pakistan, and does not consider international perspectives or the views of other stakeholders such as India or Baloch separatists.

Literature Review

It is believed that, when a positive image is given by media through its different activities specially (news) then globally such country considers as peaceful. A number of factors that affect news content, like Shoemaker and Rees described five i.e individual's attitude, media routine, organizational characteristics, advertisers and ideological influence. All these combines to affect media content. Such media content influence public perceptions (Hong; 2007). Diverse news sources and the mechanism of selective perception affect the survival of preference diversity and results in the overall impact of the introduction of the news media is contingent on the diversity of the messages offered by the media as well as the willingness of agents to accept media messages at face value (Liu et al.; 2011).

There are different ways to persuade audience in effective communication. In Elaboration Likelihood Model, two basic routes help audience to be affected by persuasive communication (Petty et al.; 1986). The impact of entertainment and infotainment is impressive due to the highly use of persuasive communication by the help of Elaboration Likelihood Model. The narrative of the sender seeks its clear way to persuade the recipient (Slater et al.; 2002). Media campaign can be successful if the channels for communication use the tactics which are highly congruent with the ideas and thoughts of the recipients. In the same way, behavior can be changed with the persuasive ideas and their implementations (Oliver et al.; 2002).

In 1958, the first martial law in Pakistan, General Ayub Khan assigned ISI that to keep the Pakistan's interest at first, monitor political activities and sustain the military rule. MI and IB were also started its role as the domestic intelligence. In East Pakistan, ISI tried to suppress the anti Pakistan or Bengalis freedom. ISI played its role in 1965 and 1971 war with India but due to Indian intervention in East Pakistan, India succeeded in making Bangladesh (Gregory; 2007). Average Indians are not aware about their foreign intelligence agency RAW. There is no public or official document that reveals its duties. But due to its own protection and safety its less discussed in Bollywood movies and

other related books. Raw played its important role in separating East Pakistan from West Pakistan. Furthermore, it also aids to Tamil separatists in Sri Lanka and helped North alliance in Afghanistan (Shaffer; 2015). RAW with the help of IB used to break the codes of the communication systems of Pakistan forces. Even the telephone calls of Yahiya Khan were also caught by use of such codes that helped RAW for its covert operation in East Pakistan.

The leadership of Naga Phizo was highly in touched with the ISI in 1956. ISI provided them with funds, weapons and training camps. However, those Naga groups joined Burmese for their further struggle. But soon after they didn't find any assistance from ISI, the Chinese based Intelligence agency provided with all their necessities. Moreover, a number of separatist movements in India at that time blamed to be assisting by ISI. Average Indians are not aware about their foreign intelligence agency RAW. There is no public or official document that reveals its duties. But due to its own protection and safety its less discussed in Bollywood movies and other related books. Raw played its important role in separating East Pakistan from West Pakistan.

Moreover, it also aid to Tamil separatists in Sri Lanka and helped North alliance in Afghanistan (Shaffer; 2015). RAW with the help of IB used to break the codes of the communication systems of Pakistan forces. Even the telephone calls of Yahiya Khan were also caught by use of such codes that helped RAW for its covert operation in East Pakistan. The leadership of Naga Phizo was highly in touched with the ISI in 1956. ISI provided them with funds, weapons and training camps. However, those Naga groups joined Burmese for their further struggle. But soon after they didn't find any assistance from ISI, the Chinese based Intelligence agency provided with all their necessities.

Additionally, a number of separatist movements in India at that time blamed to be assisting by ISI. During Russian invasion in Afghanistan, resistance from Pakistan made a decision in Moscow Kremlin that there must be made some insurgency in Balochistan that results destruction in Pakistan. BLA and BSO both worked in different parts of Balochistan. But soon after the Soviet Union failed, these organizations were out of fund. But after Kremlin, Pentagon also supported them. In 2002, Balach Marri, the son of Nawab Khair Bukhsh Marri, an electrical engineer from Moscow, was highly linked with RAW and KGB members who working for separatist movements in Balochistan. Like Balach, a number of youths picked up by Russians and Indians to make these insurgencies faster. Weapons were firstly supplied by Russia through Afghanistan. But later, India opened its way.

All types of weapons and logistic support were provided by India, through the areas of Kishangarh and Shahgarh to Pakistani side. This all was assisted by RAW. The training camps were increased from 45 to 55 with 300 trainees. These insurgents were also paid in Dollar monthly or after some successful operation. USA, Russia, China, India, Iran and other nations showed their positive and negative interests over the Baluchistan because it is the smallest route for trading towards Central Asia and America (Jabeen; 2009). There is a public opinion that ''In Pakistan the war of Terrorism was imposed by America to the nation, as this war wasn't Pakistani's war''. Following such opinion, the disturbance and insurgency in Balochistan is the result of the foreign intervention. During 2009, When Pakistan Armed forces started its operation in Waziristan, Mullah Fazllullah, the leader of TTP, ran to Afghanistan. There he took refuge under shelter of NDS, and he was saved on the order of RAW. Baloch rebels had safe places to be financed from the open border of Afghanistan and Iran. These Baloch rebels with the support of India and Afghanistan killed 3580 lives in Baluchistan during 2004 – 2015. Pakistan Army executed operations in Balochistan to counter insurgencies. Balochistan produces about 40% of the Pakistan's energy. The Indian initiated BLA, leading by Brahamdagh Bugti, want Balochistan as a separate land for the Baloch insurgents. As a result, millions of lives suffered from this revolt (Lieven; 2017). 98% of Pakistanis think that Terrorism is the big problem, while 93% says it is very big problem (Wike; 2013). There is also influence of CIA in Intelligence agencies of India and China. Since CIA has close affiliation with ISI, because of the Afghan-Russian War. CIA didn't put its relations very close to RAW, but on other side there was MSS. CIA didn't

want China to be linked with her, so covert operations were started at border of Tibet. As a result, many Chinese died. CIA provided information to RAW related to MSS and China, in return, India gave information related to Afghanistan (Groffman; 2016).

Theoretical Framework

Selective perception is a perceptual process where individuals perceive and remember messages that align with their pre-existing beliefs and attitudes while ignoring opposing viewpoints (Sincero, 2013). It has been identified as a limitation on media effects, where individuals filter information through their own prejudices and prior knowledge, creating their own meaning of events around them (Hoffner, 2017; Edward, 1950). Baran and Davis (2003) suggest that people alter the meaning of messages to fit with their pre-existing attitudes and beliefs. Therefore, selective perception is a broad term that identifies the behavior exhibited by individuals who tend to "see things" based on their particular frame of reference.

In this study, selective perception is highly relevant as news channels provide information on the issue of RAW agents, which is of interest to the Pakistani audience. Due to several reasons, many Pakistanis perceive India as an enemy of Pakistan, and students learn about the wars between the two countries during the last half-century. Consequently, it has become a firm belief among Pakistanis that "India is the existential threat to Pakistan," as events have shown India's clear involvement and that of its secret agency, RAW, in making Pakistan weaker. This theoretical framework will assist the researcher in examining the pre-existing thoughts and beliefs of the audience regarding the news of RAW agents' arrest in Pakistan. By understanding the selective perception of the audience, the researcher can identify the specific pre-existing beliefs and attitudes that influence how the audience perceives this news.

Research Questions

On the basis of the literature review following research questions are formulated.

1. How does the public perceive the news of RAW's funding to Baloch insurgents after being exposed to related news stories?

2. How does the public perceive the news of RAW agents involved in terrorist activities in Pakistan?

Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant association between the level of interest in intelligence agency news and the perception of RAW's funding to Baloch insurgents.

H2: There is a significant association between the level of interest in intelligence agency news and the perception of Indian involvement in terror activities in Pakistan.

Method

To address the research questions and test the hypotheses, the researcher used a quantitative research method. This method focused on objective measurement, statistical analysis, and numerical data collection through a survey questionnaire. The research design was based on a quantitative approach to collect data regarding the contemporary level of the case and to elaborate "what exists" with respect to variables or state in a position. This design helped to establish the association between the variables used by the researcher and described the study in a logical and organized order.

To gather primary data for hypothesis testing, the researcher used a survey method. The survey questionnaire consisted of sixteen closed-ended and three open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions provided comprehensive options for respondents to answer, while open-ended questions aimed to uncover hidden opinions. The survey was distributed among diverse disciplines to ensure a broad representation of public perception. To select a representative sample, the researcher used probability sampling. Simple random sampling was conducted among 275 respondents from the Faculty of Social Sciences at Bahauddin Zakariya University in Multan, Pakistan. Seventeen students from each of the 16 departments of social sciences were randomly selected to participate in the study, resulting in a sample size of 251 respondents. However, students pursuing PhD and MPhil programs did not have an equal chance to participate due to the fixed number of seats available for postgraduate students.

For data analysis, the researcher used tables and graphs to represent the data. Chi-square and Cramer's tests were applied to find the relationships between variables. Chi-square is helpful in finding the associations between variables. These statistical tests were conducted with the assistance of a statistician expert.

Empirical Findings and Discussion

The findings of the study explained the hypothesis that are accepted or rejected. The frequency of occurrence of all variables is mentioned below.

Frequency Tabulated Data

Table 1.1

Title: Age

	Frequency	Percentage
18 years - 24 years	219	87.3
25 years - 32 years	29	11.6
33 years - 40 years	02	.8
49 years and above	1	.4
Total	251	100.0

Respondents of age 18 years and above were taken as the sample. The presence of recipients from age 18 years to 24 years were 219. The respondents of age 25 years to 32 years were 29. Individuals from 33 years to 40 years were 2, while only 1 person was belong to last category. Total 251 respondents were organised in 4 categories. The age group of 18 years to 24 years was most responded among all.

Table 1.2

Title: Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	165	65.7
Female	86	34.3
Total	251	100.0

65% males responded to the questionnaires distributed by researcher, while 34% were females. Here the participation of males was more than females.

Table 1.3

Title: Educational Status

	Frequency	Percent
Graduation	136	54.2
Masters	72	28.7
MPhil	42	16.7
PhD	1	.4
Total	251	100.0

Respondents with educational status of Graduation were the most frequent among all. 136 individuals belonged to Graduation status, 72 belonged to Masters Status, 42 belonged to MPhil status, while only 1 was from PhD educational status.

Table 1.4

Title: Preference of Media in Daily Routine

	Frequency	Percent
TV	43	17.1
Internet	193	76.9

Radio	1	.4
Newspaper	14	5.6
Total	251	100.0

251 respondents were asked about the preference of media in their daily routine. The highest rank was of internet. Out of 251 respondents 76.9% individuals prefer Internet in their daily routine. 17.1% people prefer television, 5.6% prefer newspaper, while only 0.4% prefer radio as media preferred in daily routine.

Table 1.5

Title: RAW funding to Baloch Insurgents

	Frequency	**Percent**
Yes	222	88.5
No	19	7.6
Don't know	10	3.9
Total	251	100.0

251 respondents were asked that do they think that RAW funded Baloch insurgents. 88.5% individuals said yes, RAW funded Baloch insurgents. 7.6% people said that No, RAW didn't fund to Baloch Insurgents. While 3.9% people said that they don't know about the issue of RAW's funding to Baloch Insurgents.
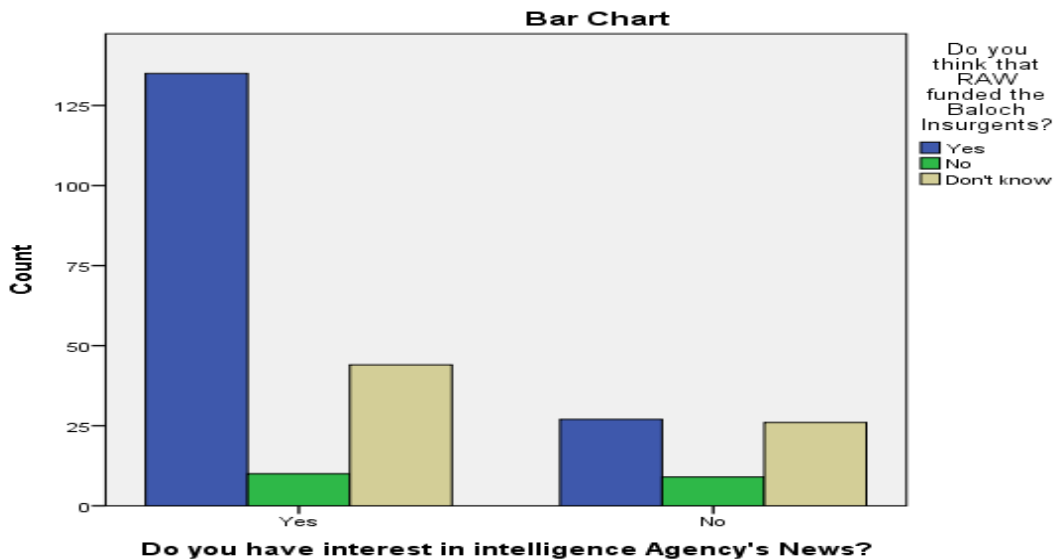
Table 1.6

Title: Indian Involvement in Terror activities in Pakistan

	Frequency	**Percent**
Yes	221	88.0
No	14	5.6
Don't know	16	6.4
Total	251	100.0

In above Table respondents were asked about the involvement of India in terror activities in Pakistan. 88% said, yes India is involved in terror activities in Pakistan. 5.6% people said no India is not involving in terror activities in Pakistan. While 6.4% persons respond to don't know.
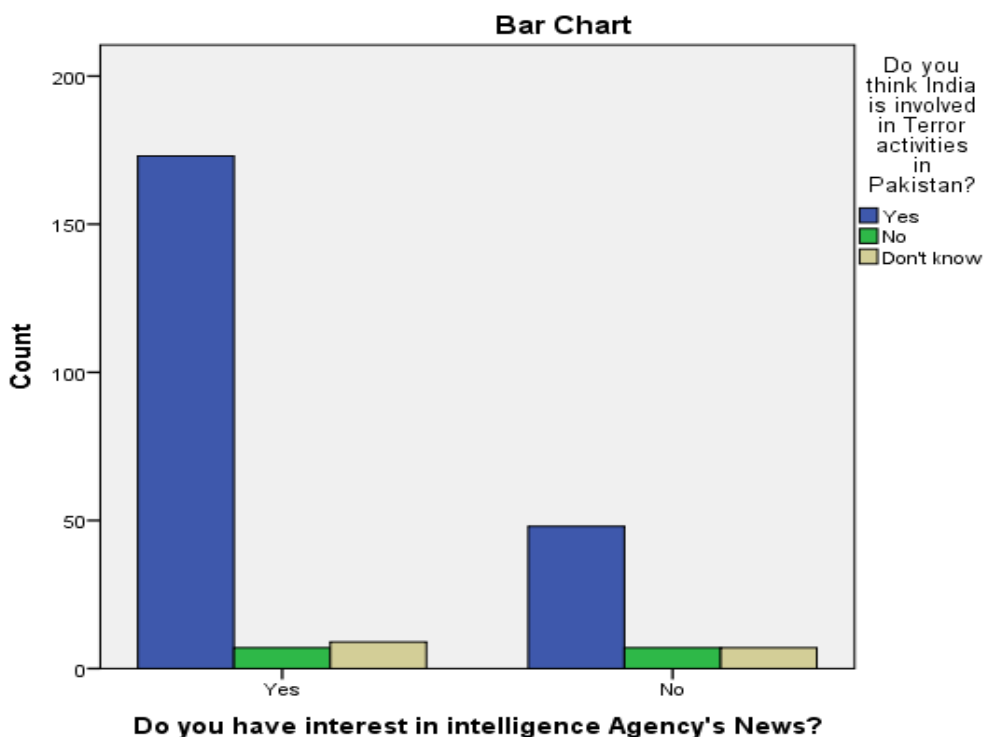
Graph 2.1: *Association between interest in Intelligence Agency's news and Perception about RAW's funding to Baloch Insurgents*

Chi Square p value (0.000<0.05) and Cramer's Value 0.000

Graph no 2.1 shows the association between interest in intelligence agency's news and perception about the RAW's funding to Baloch insurgents. The significant value of Chi Square and Cramer's Value is 0.011 that is less than 0.05. So hypothesis no 1 approved here.

Graph 2.2: *Association between interest in Intelligence Agency's news and Perception about Indian Involvement in terror activities in Pakistan*

Chi Square p value (0.011<0.05) and Cramer's Value 0.011

Graph no 2.2 shows the association between interest in intelligence agency's News and perception about Indian involvement in terror activities in Pakistan. The significant value of Chi Square and Cramer's Value is 0.011 that is less than 0.05. Hypothesis no 2 approved here.

Discussion

The topic selected by researcher is the most current issue in Pakistan. As there always remain a tussle between Pakistan and India, so the conflicts remain in the air. Meanwhile, when a RAW Agent and an India International terrorist confess about his criminal activities in Pakistan, then main stream media give a huge coverage to respective content. News related to RAW Agent and its presence in Pakistan seems like a crucial time in the relations of Pakistan and India. Media coverage is also based upon the preexisting ideas and thoughts of public.

This study concludes that RAW Agents in past has made their entry within Pakistan to derail the peace and progress process. News related to RAW Agents, activities of RAW Agents and their presence in Pakistan make opinion among audience. Such events can be harmful for the existence of people on both edges. India must stop sponsoring the terrorists either they belong to Baloch insurgents or TTP etc. Peace is the only way for the progress of region. But the conflicts between Pakistan and India must be resolve. In this purpose media can play its key role to make the hostile atmosphere in the neutral one.

Study shows that 88% said that there is involvement of India in terror activities in Pakistan while 88.5% said that RAW Agency funds the Baloch Insurgents.

Conclusion

So, in above mentioned discussion, researcher used selective perception theory to articulate the perception and response change among respondents after receiving news of RAW Agents arrested in Pakistan. In the exact way audience respond to the answers which are mostly congruent with their preexisting ideas. Media also played its role to attract viewers, so that they remain consistent with that of their beliefs.

In a recent claim of Senator Rehman Malik, he said that "RAW paid for the book of Raymond Davis against Pakistan and ISI", (2017, July 07) Dawn News. Raymond Davis was spy of CIA in Pakistan and he was accused of being a spy (AFP; 2011).

In the end, researcher find out the similar results about the perceptions of India and RAW, as they were back in history. From creation of Pakistan to this day India and its Intelligence agency RAW worked to destroy peace and progress of Pakistan. The wars of 1948, 1965, 1971 and Kargil War reflects that both countries have serious issues to be handled. But in this age of nuclear weapons, the conflicts must be resolved with negotiations. The secret agents and their terror activities within Pakistan are not acceptable at any cost. Pakistan knows that RAW involved in creating BLA, BRA and BSO in Balochistan. The funding of India to TTP, JamatUlAhrar Group and other banned outfits are the consequential as well. This funding shows that India and RAW sponsor terrorism to Pakistan. A report titled "Body Count: Casualty Figures after 10 years of the War on Terror" in 2015, concluded that near 80,000 Pakistanis died in the last years of War against terrorism (International Physicians' Organizations; 2015). This war in Afghanistan and Pakistan is also over looked by India. India support terror groups in Afghanistan.

Suggestions

This research although covers a lot of aspects about the issue of RAW Agents' presence in Pakistan. But due to time hurdles and some other constraints any interview cannot be conducted with any high officer of Pak Army or LEA. Researcher advise the future researchers to add intensive interviews so that a deep study over this issue can be conduct. As the arrested spy Kul bhushan Jhadev is near to his death sentence and public is highly concerned with this case, so a study must be conducted on the after effects of the death sentence. Furthermore, the life of Army soldiers and LEA's must be briefed in a study which reflects their efforts and patriotism of these jawans.

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