



Social Sciences Spectrum

A Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, HEC recognized [Y-category](#) Research Journal

E-ISSN: [3006-0427](#) P-ISSN: [3006-0419](#)

Volume 03, Issue 04, 2024

Web link: <https://sss.org.pk/index.php/sss>

Fifth generation warfare: Role of social media in promoting ethnic rift among youth of Pakistan

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Article Information

Received

September 09, 2024

Revised

October 13, 2024

Published

October 25, 2024

Citation (APA):

Naseer, M. Z., Sharif, S. & Akhtar, S. (2024). Fifth generation warfare: Role of social media in promoting ethnic rift among youth of Pakistan. *Social Sciences Spectrum*, 3(4), 67-80.

Abstract

This paper aims to highlight the contemporary threat of 5th generation warfare in Pakistan with a special focus on the role of social media in promoting ethnic rift among youth of different communities. The growing influence of social media among youth is becoming a cause of ethnic rift because of the propaganda shown on it. This is having a serious impact on social unity among different ethnicities of Pakistan. For our study, Focus group discussions were conducted from students of the Punjab University belonging from different ethnicities. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample of participants ranging between 20 to 28 years of age. Factors ranging from peer influence, propaganda on the social media and emergence of anti-state groups like PTM, BLA are influencing the youth of FATA, KPK and Balochistan against the state. Role of foreign powers is also a major factor for promoting 5th generation warfare inside Pakistan. Finally the paper recommends promotion of preventive behavior among discontented youth of affected areas through social media, educational institutions, conferences, seminars, improvements in local administration system of war affected areas (FATA, Balochistan) and resolving the genuine grievances of people to promote harmony and social cohesion among the Pakistani society.

Keywords: 4th Generation Warfare, 5th Generation Warfare, Social Cohesion, Social Unity, Propaganda, Ethnic Rift.



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Introduction

War is a state dominating phenomenon (Kelshall, 2018). States go to war to pursue politics through other means (Clausewitz 1832). The nature of war is focused on state domination and fight against the state's enemies in order to defeat them. Nature of war is changing at a rapid pace to incorporate the technological progress (Kelshall, 2018). Warfare has evolved from its humble beginnings of first generation to modern day fifth generating warfare comprising of hybrid and asymmetrical strategies (Janjua, 2018).

Evolution of warfare

First-generation of warfare was all about the ancient and classical battles fought among the conflicting parties using significant amount of manpower incorporating line and column tactics (Lind, et al., 1989). Its examples include English civil war, American revolutionary war and Napoleonic war. Second-generation of warfare incorporated early modern tactics implied by using rifled muskets and breech-loading weapons. This continued through the development of the machine guns and the indirect firing capacity. Examples of second generation warfare are American civil war, World War 1 and Iran-Iraq war (Lind, et al.1989). Third-generation warfare incorporated the use of modern technology developed during 1930-40's. Tactics like speed, agility, stealth and surprise to bypass the enemy's lines and destroy enemy forces from the rear. Examples of Third generation warfare were World War 2, Korean War and Iran-Iraq war (Lind, et al., 1989).

Fourth generation warfare is a moral and psychological conflict among competing countries using frustrated non-state actors and violent elements from within the enemy state". Its examples include former Yugoslavia, Libya and Syria. These states were totally destroyed through application of 4th generation warfare during 1990-2000 (Kelshall, 2018). Fourth generation warfare was also applied on the erstwhile Soviet Union to defeat it (Hamid, 2012). Some key elements of fourth generation warfare includes terrorism, attack on the enemy's core ideals, spreading out a network of communication, financial support and use of insurgency guerrilla tactics (Lind, et al., 1989).

Fifth generation warfare is an interesting development, where non-state actors fight the nation states out of sheer frustration without any clear political objectives (Beebe and Stanton 1990). According to a US Army Major Shannon Beebe "this kind of warfare would be motivated by frustration than any other material or ideological objective". US Marine Corps Lt Colonel Stanton writes in Marine Corps Gazette that "the fifth generation warfare is most likely to be executed in enclaves of deprivation and where the vortex of violence threatens peace and order" (Kelshall, 2018). It is necessary to mention here that social media is extensively used as a major tool to pollute the hearts & minds of the target i.e. youth (Janjua, 2018).

Pakistan's fault lines and hybrid (5th Generation warfare) challenge

'Hybrid War' is non-linear or non-traditional war waged through multi-pronged strategy against the adversary without employing kinetic operations to achieve the set objective. Being part of the 5th generation warfare, military strategists claim that hybrid warfare aims at targeting the fault lines of the adversary through a tailor-made narrative encouraging the people to stand up against their leaders and the government to take over the state control. Main targets of hybrid war are political, economic and social axis with its grand objective to disintegrate a state from within (Hamid, 2012).

Pakistan has been pushed to evolve a national response to the 'Hybrid War' ostensibly being imposed by its arch-rival India and its allied forces to destabilize the Islamic Republic.(Malik 2018).Gravity of the looming danger has been highlighted by senior military officials and there has been great emphasis on the need for evolving a national response. "We are now confronting hybrid conflict where focus is shifting to subversion on religious, sectarian, ethnic and social issues. This needs a comprehensive national response" (Bajwa, 2018). "Emphasis must be placed for a greater responsibility to ensure that Pakistani society, especially youth stay aware and steadfast against propaganda onslaught being launched through soft offensive" (Bajwa, 2018).

In fact, the state of Pakistan and society is already fighting hybrid warfare. India has launched to destabilize it from within through extremists and terrorists as proxies for thousands cuts strategy. India is not only exploiting the ideological and social differences among Pakistan's society but also busy, constructing and promoting alternative narratives about Pakistan's state and security institutions, for effectively harming Pakistan (Malik, 2018).

Use of Social Media as a tool for waging 5th Generation warfare

Pakistan's arch-rival India has started their nefarious media campaign worth Rupees 7 billion against Pakistan by effectively employing all communication means like television, newspapers, books, social media, films, dramas and radio. As part of the campaign, India has already launched a website and app of its Balochi radio service to influence Baloch youth and spread propaganda against Pakistan. This propaganda can prove too dangerous as the same technique was used before the fall of Dhaka. (Malik 2018) India also started a news channel by the name of "Zee Salam" which broadcasts in "Urdu" language serve the purpose of spreading its propaganda. India has also created about 3500 fake profiles on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, mostly with Baloch and Pashtun surnames to spread the misinformation and propaganda, it also shared 1000's of fake photos and videos of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and FATA on daily basis. Hence systematically manipulating Pakistan's social media with clever misinformation and influencing innocent youth of respective areas (Malik, 2018). Interior Minister at that time Shehryar Afridi had said that "Fifth generation and hybrid war has been imposed on Pakistan and social media is a tool for fifth-generation warfare that affects mind. He also added that conspiracies are being hatched to divide the nation on the basis of ethnicity, creed and culture" (Malik, 2018).

Impact of 5GW on Pakistani youth

The first and foremost sociological implication of this is on Pakistan's social cohesion and social unity amongst different ethnicities of the country (especially youth) which might be seriously affected. Frustrated youth with no clear aim and guidance are being influenced by the nefarious propaganda of hostile powers which can prove as a catalyst for disharmony and further division in Pakistan's already divided society (Malik, 2018). Secondly there is a high possibility that discontented youth would lose confidence in state apparatus and would get influenced by hostile propaganda and would indulge in anti-state activities. Recent example is the emergence of Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement in 2017 pioneered by Manzoor Pashteen of South Waziristan (Hamid, 2012). Thirdly Pakistani youth could also get involved in different anti-social activities like strikes, ethnic clashes among different youth groups, joining terrorist organizations or supporting them indirectly. Since frustration would be the driving force of 5th generation warfare thus unemployed and unguided youth could easily get influenced and become tools for the enemies to wage war against Pakistan.

Methodology

Research Design

The researchers employed qualitative methods to explore the views of youth about fifth generation warfare with specific focus on the role of social media as a tool of propaganda for instigating ethnic rift among youth. Interpretive approach was used to have a deep insight of the research topic under consideration (Silverman, 2013). Three focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with the youth (male and female) from University of Punjab, Lahore. Using an inductive approach, a theory was developed through analysis of the data collected during fieldwork (Mason, 2002).

Study Instruments

Open ended questionnaires were used to gather information. A note taker was responsible to write down all the important points or queries discussed during the FGD's. The note taker was also responsible for observing the behavior of respondents during the group discussion. As interviewer we maintained a very conducive, comfortable environment and allowed each participant equal time to participate and give their honest opinion on any issues regarding the topic. Our study used semi-structured interview guide, which allowed us to strictly follow certain topics but was also open to new lines of inquiry and discussion according to respondents' response. (Bowling, 2009) "Open-ended questions were formulated on the basis of this little available previous qualitative work done as a part of the dissertation project, articles, conference papers as well as interviewers' personal judgment and review of literature on the topic". While developing the interview guide, we held informal discussions with the respondents and made necessary amendments as required. The duration of our FGDs was between (1-2 hours). We also took permission of the participants to record and write down notes during the interviews. Interviews were conducted in the respondents' first language, Urdu and (later translated into English).

Participants' Characteristics

The respondents were carefully selected from the Department of Political Science, Department of History and Centre for South Asian Studies of University of the Punjab, Main campus, Lahore. The main reason for selecting students of the aforementioned departments was due to the fact that these students have an understanding of the concept of 5th Generation warfare because of their academic background. The better understanding of the topic provided us with the correct information that we required. Ages of the respondents were between 20 to 28 years. The participants had different educational background ranging from Graduation level to Doctorate and Post-doctorate level. Some participants from rural areas of KPK were also part of our FGD's while majority were from Punjab province.

Participants' Consent

The consent of the respondents was taken in both written and signed form. Our interviews were conducted in a very conducive environment at the respondent's respective departments to make them feel comfortable and extract the desired information.

Data Analysis

All audio-recorded during FGD's were transcribed verbatim by the note taker. The transcripts were then translated into English. Analytic induction and constant comparison strategies were carried out by systematic examination of similarities between the respondents' views of both

remote and settled areas in order to develop concepts or ideas (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). After multiple readings of the transcript, first, the researcher identified the common themes extracted from the interviews and analysis; second, the themes were coded into thematic categories to discover the patterns; third, data were searched for similar occurrences or repeating ideas of the same phenomenon; and fourth, the findings were translated into theoretical constructs that were refined continuously until all the instances of contradictions and similarities were explained. (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). In order to preserve the validity of the responses, the note taker shared the initial transcript with the interviewer, with whom he co-led all the interviews. Finally, the results were discussed with some of the available study participants and senior academicians. The interviewer's, academicians' and participants' reviews of the transcript provided corrections to errors and clarifications on specific points.

Limitations and Strengths

Like all qualitative studies, this study had some limitations. First, the sample size was small because the data collected was from just three FGDs of only three departments at University of the Punjab, Lahore. Secondly, small numbers of respondents from remote and most affected areas (i.e. FATA & Balochistan) were part of our research and thus accurate information was difficult to find. Thirdly, our findings represented the views of students belonging from mostly settled areas of Pakistan (i.e. Punjab & KPK). So these findings may not represent the views of youth of all the provinces, especially views of youth living in war affected and remote areas. Fourthly, our sample excluded uneducated youth due to lack of resources and time availability. Fifthly, the available literature was not sufficient to help us in conducting our research on the topic of 5th Generation Warfare because this is a recent emerging phenomenon on which not a lot of researches are conducted. Finally, our youth has not yet able to fully comprehend the concept of 5th GW so before the interview, we had to explain them about this topic and this phenomenon in detail. The strength of this study is that it is one of the pioneer researches in this area of 5th GW and its social impacts especially on youth which shall help in further researches in this area in the future. Finally this research will provide guidance to the academicians, civil society, policy makers, and politicians alike to take concrete steps in tackling this threatening phenomenon of 5th GW and mitigate its negative impact on our youth.

Findings

The findings of our research concluded that respondents found the concept of 5 GW a bit difficult to comprehend initially but after thorough discussion and interviews respondents understood the nature of the topic and its importance. To follow a clear path for ease of research we developed 7 major themes from which we further developed 26 major codes. The breakup of our themes, sub-themes and major codes are as follows:-

Table 1: List of themes, sub-themes and codes

Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
1) Concept of 5 th Generation warfare	• 5th Generation warfare • Target of 5th generation	• In respondents opinion narrative building is the main motive of 5th generation warfare • 5th gen warfare does not require any physical presence of militias or groups to fight the state but ordinary frustrated and discontented youth • Respondents believe youth both educated and uneducated are the main target of 5th gen warfare

2) Ethnic rift/ Social Disharmony	- Promotion of Ethnic rift - Effects of ethnic rift on society - Intensity of these rifts for disharmony in society	- Respondents believe that ethnic rift is increasing due to 5th gen warfare - Respondents view the negative effects to be severe on society and could hinder its smooth functioning - Strong resentment was observed in respondents belonging from most affected/under developed areas
3) Social media as a tool of 5 th generation warfare	- Role of social media - Exposure of youth to social media - Negative influence of social media on youth	- Respondents view the role of social media as the main factor for inciting psychological warfare - Respondents confirmed that they have a high level of exposure to social media sites - Social media sites are negatively affecting the thought process of respondents especially those from most affected areas
4) Weakening of Pakistani Federation	- Threat of 5th generation warfare for Federation - Disintegration of Federation	- Respondents view the threat of 5th generation warfare as serious for smooth functioning of federation - Some respondents were of the view that 5th generation warfare could prove as a catalyst for disintegration of the federation - Some respondents showed a very positive and patriotic feelings about Pakistan and responded aggressively to this question put forward
5) Influence on youth of small provinces/ Underdeveloped areas	- Exposure to social media sites - Role of social media in spreading anti-state narrative - Involvement of youth in anti-state activities	- Respondents belonging from smaller provinces had relatively less exposure to social media - There is restriction on social media sites from state institutions (because of security concerns) - Respondents responded in affirmative regarding role of social media in spreading fake and exaggerated propaganda to promote anti-state narrative - Respondents agreed to the fact that youth are involved in anti-state activities examples include PTM, Baloch Student Council, and Seraiki Student Council.
External influence	- Involvement of foreign powers - Indirect attack on Pakistan - Objectives of external powers	- Respondents were of the view that there is strong involvement of foreign powers to instigate 5th generation war inside Pakistan - Respondents view 5th gen warfare as a cost effective way to attack Pakistan indirectly - In respondents opinion objectives of external

	• Pakistan as the only target of 5th generation warfare	powers include weakening of Pakistani federation, inciting ethnic tensions, creating civil war like situation and ultimately break up Pakistan • Respondents believe that Pakistan is not the only target of 5th gen warfare (countries like Syria, Iraq and Yemen are its classical examples)
State's response	• Steps taken by the state • Role of security agencies • Ability of the state to tackle 5th generation warfare	• Respondents believe that state has started to take serious steps to curb this problem (e.g. merger of FATA with KPK, Job creation for Baloch youth etc.) • Seminars and conferences conducted in schools, colleges of KPK and Balochistan to remove misconceptions and propaganda of foreign powers regarding mistreatment and exploitation of respective areas • In respondents view security agencies have understood the gravity of threat and serious steps are taken to control it (For example National Action Plan, NACTA function ability etc.) • Respondents believe that state has the will and ability to tackle 5th generation warfare but might face serious problems due to political and economic conditions

1. Concept of 5th Generation warfare

Majority of participants were aware about the concept of fifth generation warfare. Some had no idea but they were on same track of discussion after being introduced to the topic.

i. 4th Generation warfare

Participants were able to distinct between 4th and 5th fourth generation warfare was war of bullets and gun and some respond that fourth generation warfare was much formal as it was target oriented in which target was clear. Discussing about fifth generation warfare majority of the participants were of view that it is in soft and fluid form to achieve its objective and some responded that it is war of strong words and opinions. The findings indicate that youth of educational institution were aware of warfare concepts.

During FGDs, majority of participants told that they remain in touch with media and news on daily basis and aware of current political scenario of the world.

ii. 5th Generation warfare

In respondents opinion narrative building is the main motive of 5th gen warfare. 5thgen warfare does not require any physical presence of militias or groups to fight the state but ordinary frustrated and disgruntled youth. During FGDs, one of the participant said, "Fifth generation warfare is a new shape of imperialism to achieve particular political agendas. This war." The research found that majority of the youth is able to differ among 4th and 5th generation of warfare. They highlighted that 5th generation warfare is a soft shape of imperialism that has influences like 4th generation warfare.

iii. Target of 5th generation warfare

Respondents believe youth both educated and uneducated are the main target of 5th generation warfare. Participants told that all anti-capitalist economies including (Russia, China, and Pakistan) are main target of this war. During FGDs, one of the participants said, "Due to CPEC alignment, Pakistan may be a clear target of this war." The findings indicate clearly that most of the developing countries of the world are main target of 5th generation warfare.

2. Ethnic rift/Social Disharmony

Ethnic rift and social disharmony are harmful for stability and harmony of any state. Both destroy the peace and give birth to too many social evils. These ethnic rifts also create unpleasant environment among people of a group, nation and country.

i. Promotion of Ethnic rift

Respondents believe that ethnic rift is increasing due to 5th gen warfare. Participants discussed a number of movements which are creating ethnic rift in Pakistani state including, Balochi, Sindhi, and Pashtun movements. Participants indicated that different political parties use these rifts for their political interests and give birth to social evils like sectarianism and other conflicts.

ii. Effects of ethnic rift on Pakistani society

Respondents view the negative effects to be severe on society and could hinder its smooth functioning. During FGDs, one of the participants said, "Ethnic rifts may stop the process of nation building in our society. It may create hatred behavior among provinces and can lead toward different sects which may be harmful for the peace of state of Pakistan."

iii. Intensity of these rifts for disharmony in society

Strong resentment was observed in respondents belonging from most affected/underdeveloped areas. Participants belonging from different areas of Punjab and KPK were part of the discussion. They highlighted how small ethnic groups are emerging in remote areas which are destroying peace. These groups are creating rifts like anti-nationalism, disputes among different groups and brainwashing against military. During FGDs, one of the participants mentioned, "Absence of one defined national identity will create different competing groups that will adversely affect the social fabric of Pakistani society." The findings indicate ethnic rifts are harmful for the peace and can destroy the social structure of a country and state.

3. Social media as a tool of 5th generation warfare

Social media is used as tool for waging 5th generation warfare primarily because it is the most cheap and widely used media outlet. Ordinary people have easy access to Social Media apps which the attacker exploits to influence people's mind.

i. Role of social media

Respondents view the role of social media as the main factor for inciting psychological warfare. Participants discussed that social media increase interaction coupled with flow of information and disinformation leads toward shaping ethnicity centers, narrative which breeds frustration and hatred among people of a country. One of the participants during FGDs, mentioned that, "He feels powerless and controlled while using internet and social media sites". It indicates the mind controlling and influencing nature of social media.

ii. Exposure of youth to social media

Respondents confirmed that they have a high level of exposure to social media sites. They told that their day starts with the use of social media including (Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter) use of Google search engine and YouTube is also common in our country. The availability of cheap smart phones, tablets and laptops had made it very easy for youth to access internet facilities and social media applications.

iii. Negative influence of social media on youth

Social media sites are negatively affecting the thought process of respondents especially those from most affected areas. Media is busy in capturing mind of our youth, brain washing, promoting ethnic rift and turning youth against military. During FGDs, participants mentioned that, "Youth use internet for entertainment, watching videos on YouTube, playing video games, using face book and what Sapp. Students occasionally use internet for studying purpose which is an irony of our education system." One of the female participant said, "Social media is creating gap between social relations. Today, in our society people have no time for their family, friends and neighbors. They are too close to social media and too far from one another. Social media is creating a situation of alienation and man is losing his identity. Use of Social media means man is busy in nothingness." The research found that world in nowadays has become globalized and social media has provided different ways of interaction. Social media can be a major source to promote 5th generation warfare in most of the developing nations.

4. Weakening of Pakistani Federation

The participants discussed a number of different emerging issues including political interests of different parties, emergence of sub identities and practices of these sub identities in weakening Pakistani federation. These sub identities are funded by foreign powers to target Pakistani federation to achieve their purposes.

i. Threat of 5th Generation Warfare for Federation

Respondents view the threat of 5th generation warfare as serious issue for smooth functioning of federation. Process of nation building would stop and disharmony in state will increase.

ii. Disintegration of Federation

Some respondents were of the view that 5th generation warfare could prove as a catalyst for disintegration of the federation. Some respondents showed very positive and patriotic feelings about Pakistan and responded aggressively to this question put forward. Influence on youth of small provinces/Underdeveloped areas Participants responded that due to lack of education and development, youth of small provinces are targeted by foreign powers. Some responded, youth of urban areas are more influenced but majority of the respondents were of the opinion that remote areas are easy targets. Youth of small provinces are influenced systematically for creating ethnic and sectarian rifts.

5. Exposure to social media sites

Respondents belonging from smaller provinces had relatively less exposure to social media. There is restriction on social media sites from state institutions (because of security concerns) especially in Tribal Areas and some parts of Balochistan.

i. Role of social media in spreading anti-state narrative

Respondents agreed regarding role of social media in spreading fake and exaggerated propaganda to promote anti-state narrative which are creating self-identities. Pakistan's arch rival India is using social media sites like (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), mostly with Baloch and Pashtun surnames to spread its misinformation and propaganda, sharing fake photos and videos of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and FATA. On daily basis, systematically manipulating youth's minds with its clever misinformation. One of the participants mentioned that, "Anti state movements like Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement is the result of wrong policies of state".

ii. Involvement of youth in anti-state activities

Respondents agreed to the fact that youth are involved in anti-state activities e.g. Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement, Mehran Student Council, Baloch Student Council and Seraiki Student Council etc. Majority of participants mentioned that no of movements are emerging not only in small provinces but also in public and private educational institutions bringing youth at one platform for anti-state activities.

6. External influence

There is a strong external influence in prompting 5th generation warfare inside Pakistan where anti Pakistan forces have found a cost effective way of exploiting the fault lines of our country and waging their propaganda to weaken Pakistan from inside.

i. Involvement of foreign powers

Respondents were of the view that there is strong involvement of foreign powers to instigate 5th generation war inside Pakistan. Many of the participants during FGDs stated that foreign powers like, (America, Israel and India) are involved in this warfare against Pakistan.

ii. Indirect attack on Pakistan

Respondents view 5 generation warfare as a cost effective way to attack Pakistan indirectly. One of the participant during FGD, s stated that, "India and Afghanistan are neighbored countries to us but both do not want peace in Pakistan. Both countries in collaboration with America and Israel are involved to destroy peace of Pakistani state by attacking indirectly through 5thgen warfare"

iii. Objectives of external powers

According to the participants point of view the main objective of foreign power is to break, unstable political and social structure of Pakistan. One of the participants' said "Due to start of CPEC Pakistan will become a trade and business hub in future but foreign powers do not want this to happen. "In respondents' opinion, objectives of external powers include weakening of Pakistani federation, provoking ethnic tensions, creating civil war like situation and ultimately break up Pakistan.

iv. Pakistan as the only target of 5th generation warfare

Respondents believe that Pakistan is not the only target of s" gen warfare (countries like Syria, Iraq and Yemen are its classical examples). During FGDs, participants mentioned clearly that not only Pakistan but all anti-capitalistic states like Russia and China are also indirect target of this war.

7. State's response

The participants were of the opinion that state has taken this problem seriously and took concrete steps in countering it. Respondents also discussed that Pakistani state has strong agencies, military and security forces that are working day and night for the defense of country.

i. Steps taken by the state

Respondents believe that state has started to take serious steps to tackle this problem (for example, merger of FATA with KPK, Job creation for Baloch youth, NFC Awards). Seminars and conferences conducted in schools and colleges of KPK and Balochistan to remove misconceptions and propaganda of foreign powers regarding mistreatment and exploitation of respective areas.

ii. Role of security agencies

In respondents' view security agencies have understood the gravity of threat and serious steps are taken to control it (for example National Action Plan, NACTA function ability.) During FGDs, majority of participants showed enthusiastic feelings and reposed their confidence on the performance of security forces in tackling the threat.

iii. Ability of the state to tackle 5th generation warfare

Respondents believe that state has the will and ability to tackle 5th generation warfare but might face serious problems due to political instability and poor economic conditions. Majority of participants respond that our state is working to eradicate all the root causes of this warfare. Numbers of fake accounts were hacked and check down against social media is continued (Janjua 2018).

Discussion

The findings of this paper indicate that 5th generation warfare which is recent phenomenon seen as more deadly than fourth generation warfare. The major difference between 4th and 5th generation warfare is the nature of employment. Fourth generation warfare is mainly concerned with the use of brutal force, espionage, terrorist attacks and targeting the political ideology of target state. Whereas 5th generation warfare is focused on narrative building and targeting the youth of the intended state (Hamid, 2012). The most important concern about 5th generation warfare is that it is promoting ethnic rift in Pakistani society which is causing social disharmony. The effect of these rifts are very severe in our society and during our FGDs, we clearly observed strong resentment feelings among youth belonging from affected areas from war on terror (Bajwa, 2018). During our research we found that social media is the main tool of fighting the 5th generation war in Pakistan.

Role of social media has been very detrimental as it was negatively influencing the minds of innocent young Pakistanis. We also found out that majority of our youth had access to internet facilities and social media apps. Youth is becoming increasingly addicted to internet and feel powerless in controlling their urges (Nazeer, 2018). Social media is being used to spread propaganda and misinformation against Pakistan state apparatus. Fake accounts with Baloch and Pashtun surnames were created on face book and twitter with the aim of spreading false information about atrocities committed by security forces (Malik, 2018).

Our research found out that 5th generation warfare is posing a serious threat for Pakistani federation. It could become as a catalyst for disintegration of the state through the fault lines, inherent in Pakistan and are being exploited and targeted systematically. However we found out

that considerable amount of respondents were of the view that Pakistan could not be disintegrated from 5th generation warfare (Janjua, 2018). According to previous researches and our research we found out that youth of small provinces and remote areas are the main and easy targets of both 4th and now 5th generation warfare with social media being used as the prime tool in exploiting the genuine grievances and issues to further cause, hatred and division among Pakistani society.

Emergence of PTM (Pashtun Tahaffuz movement) and Baloch student council is the direct outcome of this social media propaganda where innocent youth are involving in anti-state activities which are becoming a serious concern for our security agencies. In order to tackle this propaganda state has restricted access of internet in remote areas especially FATA and Baluchistan. (Janjua, 2018). During our research we found that there is a strong consensus among respondents regarding the influence of external powers in instigating 5th gen warfare inside Pakistan. During our FGDs, most of the participants mentioned that many of the foreign powers like (America, Israel and India) are directly involved in promoting 5th generation warfare inside Pakistan. (Hamid, 2012) These powers are also funding many NGOs, groups like PTM and Baloch nationalists inside the country as well as in exile and political parties are also used to pressurize state institutions and weaken Pakistani federation for achieving their targets. The ultimate objective of these powers is inciting ethnic tensions creating civil war like situation to break up Pakistan.

Our research found that Pakistan is not the only target of 5th gen warfare: countries like Syria, Iraq and Yemen have already become its prey. However one of the participants also mentioned that all anti-capitalist states are main target of 5th generation warfare (Malik, 2018). Finally our research found out that Pakistani state is aware of this emerging war and have started to tackle this war. Our security agencies have taken strong steps to curb the nefarious propaganda of hostile powers and took various steps like improving the function ability of NACTA, implementation of National Action Plan, conducting seminars and media briefings through the security forces (Public Relations department of ISPR) as well as conferences to be conducted by Federal government to engage youth in constructive activities (Janjua, 2018).

Conclusion

This paper concludes that 5th generation warfare is the most serious threat faced by Pakistan because of its fluid, hybrid and nonlinear nature. Social media is the main tool for waging this warfare because in this war no kinetic operations or direct use of force is employed by the non-state actors. Fifth generation warfare is war of narratives that is fought on media axis and its prime target is to pollute the minds of youth of target state. Youth both educated and uneducated can become a very easy prey of this war because most of them are not even aware that they are being systematically influenced and manipulated by the nefarious propaganda of social media. The main focus of our research was to assess the influence of social media on youth which is negatively influenced by anti-state propaganda and had very serious implications on our social fabric by creating social disharmony and ethnic rift in Pakistani society. Youth as the prime target had become an easy prey to the propaganda and had been involved in anti-state activities as highlighted above in our findings portion. Youth primarily belonging to remote and most affected areas from war on terror were the easy targets and are becoming a serious problem for state apparatus to handle. This paper concludes the response of the state agencies in tackling the issue and subsequent consciousness of the issue by the youth of Pakistan. Role of foreign powers is found to be a main reason for triggering this war which is exploiting the fault lines of Pakistan and in turn is creating a threatening situation for states' survival. Therefore, civil-military

decision makers had to put in extra effort for eliminating this menace for smooth functioning of the state. Lastly role of mainstream media is found to be below standard in most of the cases in tackling the propaganda of hostile powers regarding Pakistan.

Recommendations

1. Further researches needs to be conducted in this area because this area is new and very little research is conducted regarding s generation warfare in Pakistan.
2. Main stream media has to play a positive role in countering the nefarious propaganda against Pakistan.
3. Civil-Military leadership has to take serious steps in resolving the issues of its citizens primarily belonging to most affected areas from war on terror so that they might not be influenced by foreign propaganda.
4. Threat of PTM and like-minded political and religious parties needs to be checked and neutralized effectively using print, electronic and social media sites.
5. Social media campaigns should be launched and pro-Pakistani narrative should be promoted on these sites.
6. Youth of Pakistan should be educated regarding this new phenomenon of 5" generation warfare in their academic institutions, conferences, seminars, documentaries etc.
7. Civil society needs to be mobilized to spread information in every nook and corner of the country to make ordinary citizens aware of this threat and avoid listening and spreading false information without clarification.
8. The Political leadership must take steps in uniting the nation and not dividing them on the basis of caste, creed, culture, ethnicity, region and petty political interests.
9. National Action Plan (20 points) must be implemented in letter and spirit immediately.
10. Government must provide job opportunities to the youth of most affected areas (FATA and Baluchistan) so that they could not become easy prey of anti-state propaganda.

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