

## A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES IN NEUTRALIZATION OF EXTREMISM: PERCEPTION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

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### ABSTRACT

*Extremism is a burning issue of all over world. Our homeland is also facing this issue. Currently some directions are going to higher education institutions that extremism is spreading from universities and it was also in the mind of people that universities are growing terrorists and spread extremism. This study was conducted in district Shaheed Benazirabad. The all universities of selected District were population of this study. The number of universities in District Shaheed Benazirabad is four from which two universities were selected as sample of this study through convenience sampling technique and two departments from each university were randomly selected and from each department four lecturers were randomly selected as sample of current study. An open ended questionnaire having eight questions was developed for conduction of data. The data was collected from faculty side of universities. The collected data were analyzed through theme descriptive approach. It was found that various nature of extremism were in higher educational institutions and further more it was also found that controlling on extremism was very difficult and universities have no any mechanism for overcoming extremism.*

**Keywords:** Neutralization, Extremism, Perception and University Teachers.

### INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Extremism is a serious problem of world. Pakistan is also facing this problem from last many years especially after incident of 9/11. Pakistan has given many sacrifices in deactivation of terrorism and lost the lives of many citizens in this war. In 1970s to 1980s Pakistan supported the Islamization at internal and external level as well. The approvals were provided to five thousand madrassas (religious schools) and the syllabus of public schools was also rewritten and emphasized on jihad and Islam besides these in 1984 to 1994, 5.1 million dollars were paid by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to the University of Nebraska, Omaha for development and design of curriculum to encourage jihad and 13 million dollars for preparing of text books which based on such syllabus were distributed in schools and madrassas in Pakistan and Afganistan (Ashraf, 2010).

Before the government of Zia-ul-Haq the number of madrassas in Pakistan was 900 only, at the end of Zia-ul-Haq government the number of madrassas has been increased and reached 8000 registered and 25000 unregistered madrassas (Murphy & Malik, 2009).

Mustafa (2010) reviewed that “all the books, pertaining to any subject, contained religious material.” The educational policy of 1978 had also a great impact on religious education. The report of Brooking Institutions (2010) described that the problem of terrorism was beyond the madrassas. Moreover it was emphasized that all public sector education institutions should be

monitored and scrutinized. In 2005 when incidents of suicide and bombing increased in which it was found that graduates of madrassa were not involved but those children whose left their education and dropped out from madrassas having age of 14-18 were involved in these incidents (Azam, 2014). The curriculum of madrassas is not updated still and same curriculum is used in madrassas from start till to date across Pakistan, as it had been in past when no any blame of terrorism was on madrassas that madrassa are creating aggressive (Butt, 2012; Rehman, 2004).

As per report of Dawn (2015) explained that the current activities of extremism which happened in Karachi are related with qualified graduates of university of Karachi. Furthermore it was clarified that some problems are also in our educational system due to that neutralization of extremism in the mind of students is very difficult. The top ranking institutions of Pakistan according to Higher Education Commission (HEC) have also no any proper control to reduce extremism from institution. An incident which happened in Government College University that university has denied giving admission to female students who are wearing veil. Mama Qadeer ( a person from remote area of Pakistan) was not welcomed by Lahore university it is also another incident of extremism. So, the main purpose of this study was to know the role of universities in neutralization of extremism and perception of university teachers.

### **OBJECTIVE OF STUDY**

To know the role of universities in neutralization of extremism: perception of university teachers:

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- Q.No .1. What do you mean by extremism?
- Q.No .2. How universities are proceeding to deactivate the extremism through education?
- Q.No .3. Which strategies universities are adopting to overcome the extremism?
- Q.No .4. Which steps are taking by universities for neutralization of extremism?
- Q.No .5. Which strategies are being adopted by universities to remove the concept of extremism from HEIs?
- Q.No .6. How seminars & conferences play role to enhance the awareness regarding the process of neutralization of extremism?
- Q.No .7. Which kind of events / programs can catalyze the process of neutralization of extremism from HEIs?

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Study Design**

The current study was descriptive by purpose and qualitative by method. The purpose of this study was to know the role of universities in neutralization of extremism perception of university teachers. Various studies have already been conducted in national and international level on topic of extremism. This study was conducted in District Shaheed Benazirabad.

#### **Population**

There are four universities in District Shaheed Benazirabad. All universities of selected District were population of this study.

## **Sample and sampling**

The number of universities in District Shaheed Benazirabad is four from which two universities were selected as sample of this study through convenience sampling technique and two departments from each university were randomly selected and from each department four lecturers were randomly selected as sample of current study.

## **Research instrument**

The current study deals with qualitative dimension for this study an open ended questionnaire having eight questions was developed for collection of data. The questionnaire was developed by researchers after review of previous studies. The data was collected from faculty side of universities.

## **Data Collection**

The data was collected by faculty members of universities. The researchers have visited universities himself for collection of data. The developed tool was distributed by researchers among respondents after three days the distributed tools were collected.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

### ***Theme 1: Concept of extremism***

To know about the above theme the participants (p.1 to p.8) replied as “the unreasonable and unacceptable beliefs or views or actions are called extremism.” (p.1). The second participants said “ a person who holds extreme views about his religion or politics and advocate illegal actions is to be called extremist.” (p.2). “any political theory favoring immoderate uncompromising policies.” (p.3). “illegal, restricted activities which harm students in any institute.” (p.4). “Extremism is criminal strategy. It is very dangerous for humanity.” (p.5).

The participant six replied as “the word extremism means an apex point of interest or to become an isolated thinker for a particular school of thought.” (p.6). “it is behavior which exceeds the boundaries and violets ethical values.” (p.7). “having aggressive thought and action against the society.” (p.8).

### ***Theme 2: Deactivation of extremism through education***

When knew about above theme participants said as “ through education one can identify the religion , beliefs, justice and revenge and satire that can help to deactivate the extremism.” (p.1). educational institutions should keep busy students in learning activities, so students won't get involve extra/useless activities.” (p.2). “political involvement should be restricted and standardization rules should be followed.” (p.3). “by awaking them positive and negative aspects of each field. Reawaking them about their compliment/gathering they follow.” (p.4).

“Improve education system of Pakistan, professional and personal educational progress actual knowledge of Islam.” (p.5).

Through diversification of religion education and introducing curriculum as per instruction of HEC.” (p.6). “they are imparting literal peaceful education.” (p.7). “conduction session against extremism seminars on peace and brotherhood.” (p.8).

Furthermore it's need to improve and revise the curriculum of universities; seminars should be arranged time to time for awareness of extremism and terrorism.

It is also essential for universities to monitor all activities of students during learning process in universities.

### ***Theme 3: Strategies adopted by universities to overcome extremism***

The participants said as about above theme “extremism causes terrorism and it creates sympathy for it, so one can change the perception and sympathy decreases and universities can overcome to extremism.” (p.1). the second participant replied that “energy of students must be utilized in positive way besides of education content, series of activities should be assigned to them.” (p.2). the third participant replied “equality.” (p.3). “currently I perceived only one strategy that is by mouth, still missing something in physical strategy.” (p.4).

“Improve knowledge about Islam. Improve better and fruitful policies. Make and apply law.” (p.5). “our university does not allow anyone to target any caste.”(p.6). “by conducting seminars and conferences.” (p.7). “increase the sincerity and safety.” (p.8).

As per basis of above replies of participants it has been observed that universities have no any strategy to overcome extremism, universities should make their rules for overcoming extremism.

### ***Theme 4: Steps taking by universities for neutralization of extremism***

The respondents replied “there should be ban on such activities those can make harm for religion, political background and individually so that can be neutralized.” (p.1). Second participant not replied. Not replied by participant. (P.3). Participant fourth replied only with “no any.” (p.4).

“Look after about their faculties and students and employees and revised curriculum.” (p.5). “focused teaching and learning policies in light of HEC outlines.” (p.6). “keeping active rights on the activities of students. To strike fear of strictness of laws against extremism.” (p.7). “discourage sects, ethicity. Promote neutral thoughts. Instruct molvi’s to avoid unnecessary discussion.”(p.8).

On basis of above replies of participants it has observed that in universities there is no proper mechanism about extremism.

### ***Theme 5: Strategies adopted by universities to remove concept of extremism***

The respondent one replied “there must be no political parties’ influence and religion difference in the HEIs so that universities may remove the concept of extremism from HEIs.” (p.1). second respondent not replied. Not replied by participant. (P.3).

“Monitoring, motivating students to avoid such extremism.” (p.4)

“For better curriculum, actual and correct knowledge about Islam.” (p.5).

“appropriate language from the platform form where the instructions are given.” (p.6). “they are educating peace, humanity and harmony.”(p.7). “conduction different events and sport activities so the students don’t engage another un necessary activities.”(p.8).

### ***Theme 6: Role of seminars/conferences in neutralization of extremism***

For above theme respondents replied as “because in the seminars and conferences there is new research about the new knowledge that can be fruitful for participants.” (p.1). the second participants said that “to provide platform or opportunity to express their feelings and if any wrong found then make them understand to rebuild their thinking.” (p.2). Not replied by participant. (p.3). “greatly play role in awareness if we arrange time by time and showing the right path towards their dutifulness.” (p.4).

“Seminars and conferences are most beneficial for humanity and Islam” (p.5). “the importance of humanity equality and diversity are mostly discussed in seminars and conferences so that it is important.” (p.6). “they play effective role.”(p.7). “recently our university conducted few seminars against extremism that has good impact on students.” (p.8).

The participants were agreed that seminars and conferences are playing vital role in neutralization of extremism because the researchers share their valuable ideas on basis of their research. So, these are very important for awareness.

### ***Theme 7: Catalyze the process of extremism through events***

To know the perceptions of participants about the above mentioned theme they replied as “there must be conference and seminars, quiz competition in which the different scholars give their ideas that can be catalyze the process of neutralization from HEIs.” (p.1). Not replied by second participant. Not replied by participant. (P.3). “extra curricula activities, youth conference, talent hunt program; practical works can neutralize extremism in HEIs.” (p.4).

The best program is arranging the well and beneficial events about Islamic knowledge of all religion and equal and meet the fruitful conclusion for humanity.” (p.5). “the university/universities should reduce diversity principle so that everyone should have equal opportunity to participate in the university academic and co curricular activities.” (p.6). “to make panels and groups to discuss.” (p.7). “arrange events and discussion for all group of people from different religion and sects so, world will live in peace and unify thought buildup.”(p.8).

## **FINDINGS**

Data analysis leads us to following findings:

1. Universities have no proper control on extremism.
2. They have no any strategy to remove the concept of extremism.
3. Universities are not taking proper steps to deactivate extremism because they have no good mechanism regarding it.
4. Workshops and seminars are not organized by universities about awareness of extremism.

## **CONCLUSION**

The purpose of study was to know about the role of universities in neutralization of extremism perception of university teachers. Keeping in the view the data analysis and findings, it may be concluded as following:

1. The universities have no any control on extremism because they have no proper mechanism to detect the extremists.
2. There is no proper policy of universities regarding extremism.
3. The overall conclusion described there is need of serious work in universities to remove extremism from HEIs. The concept of Islamic Jihad and extremism should be clear in university level as our young generation must know about difference in both. The curriculum of universities has need of revision.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the administration and faculty of universities may monitor the all activities of students.

1. The curriculum of universities may be updated/revised and implemented as per policy of HEC.
2. University may make proper policy for neutralization of extremism.
3. Universities may have proper mechanism to detect the extremist and control the extremism.
4. CCTV cameras and other resources maybe used by universities to overcome extremism.
5. The concept of students may be clear about the difference of Islamic jihad and extremism.

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