

**STUDENTS' SATISFACTION FROM THE SECURITY MEASURES TAKEN IN
BACHA KHAN UNIVERSITY, CHARSADDA AFTER THE TERRORIST ATTACK**

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Abstract

The present study was carried out in Bacha Khan University, Charsadda which came under the attack of terrorist group. Following the attack the university administration improved the security system via adopting new measures. A scholarly attempt was made with a prime objective to understand the satisfaction of the students from the existing security measures. Qualitative method of study was applied which successfully derived comprehensive information regarding the issue in hand. The sample size of thirty two (32) participants was purposefully selected upon reaching the saturation point. The primary data was collected with the help of interview guide. The primary data was transcribed, organized and coded for recurring patterns. The data was descriptively analyzed and discussed with the help of literature support. The results of the study highlighted that majority of the students were found dissatisfied from the security services at the campus due to several limitations in the security system. It is recommended that university administration should provide latest security equipment and devices to the security officials and must regulate the duties and services in strict manners with zero tolerance policy in order to protect the stakeholders and ensure safe and conducive environment of learning for the students.

Keywords: Security Measures, Student Satisfaction, Higher Educational Institution

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is a global social problem which has experienced by almost all societies in one way or another. None of the social institutions in any society is free from the effects of this hazard which resulting turmoil in the social structure of society. It was noted that terrorist activities in educational institutions in particular, and society in general, are mainly carried out for the purpose to spread fear, uncertainty and insecurity among the public (Ain, 2015). The term terrorism has defined by scholars differently. However, there is no universally accepted definition of terrorism (Schmid, 2011). Schmid (2011) in another place called the word terrorism as one of the “*disputed*” terms. Nevertheless, terrorism is generally defined as the deliberate act of spreading fear among the masses or to triumph some political goals (Momanyi, 2015). Terrorism is violence against civilians which is indeed a premeditated and politically motivated phenomenon (Thuranira, 2017).

Between the years of 1970 and 2014, nearly four thousands attacks were carried out by the terrorists in educational institutions in more than one hundred countries (Pate et al., 2015). It is estimated that the number of deaths caused by terrorist attacks surged annually from the years 2003 to 2009 i.e. from 164 to 3318 (Hamid, 2011; and Agencies, 2012). Between 11 September, 2001 and May 2011, total 35,000 people have been killed in Pakistan in terrorism (Own, 2011). Moreover, the average attacks on educational institutions caused more than 25 deaths per attack (Miller, 2014). However, Pakistan was the leading country in terrorist attacks on educational institutions between the years 1970 and 2013 (ibid). He further identified that in Pakistan terrorist attacks on educational institutions occurred in roughly two and half decades accounted at much higher rate (88%) as compare to global attacks (69%). With regard to economic cost of terrorism, the Government of Pakistan affirmed \$68 Billion were cost directly or indirectly in combating terrorism in one decade i.e. from 2000 to 2010 (Hamid, 2011). A sequence of intensively brutal terrorists’ attacks on educational institutions has been reported from just over the last 1 year (Burke, 2016) which taken thousands of innocent lives (Malik, 2015). The first ever fatal terrorist attack on Higher Educational Institution, since 9/11 incident, was carried out in the International Islamic University (Yaseen, 2009) Islamabad on 20 October, 2009, that killed at least six people (including three women) and left approximately 29 people injured, twenty five of them were females i.e. students and faculty members (Anjum, 2009).

Following the aforementioned incident, an unprecedented blood-spattered terrorist attack in the history of Pakistan, happened on December 16th, 2014 at around 10:00 am at Army Public School (APS) Peshawar (Ain, 2015) that took nearly 146 innocent lives. It is considered the bloodiest ever attack in the history of Pakistan. It was then recently followed by the attack on Bacha Khan University, Charsadda attack on 20th January, 2016 which taken 25 innocent lives (Saifi, 2016). Amongst these casualties the large numbers were associated with students and teachers. However, the actual number of deaths in this attack was eighteen as reported by the Additional Registrar of the University (Add. Registrar BKUC, Personal Communication, August 21, 2017). The attacks on higher education institution are executed when “states, opposition groups and other non-state actors view higher education institutions, professors and students as threats to their authority or as a means of gaining influence” (GCPEA, 2018). It is generally believed that the terrorist targeting educational institutions because of poor security arrangements at physical and functional level. For example, after the Beslan incident, Russian Government acknowledged their failings in security structure (McDaniel & Ellis, 2009). Universities are facing many challenges in providing a secure and safe campus. The recent tragic events have generated a sense of reasonability for the administrators of higher education to plan and prepare themselves for the perceived threats on campuses (Carrico, 2016).

Online Collins dictionary defined ‘Security Measures’ as “Precautions taken against terrorism, espionage or other danger”. Similarly, The Free Dictionary defines the security measures as “Measures taken as a precaution against theft or espionage or sabotage”¹. In the current study the operational definition of the term “Security Measures” is the same as defined by the aforementioned dictionaries. The present study is intended to reveal the satisfaction of students from the security measures and services availed by Bacha Khan University after the tragic incident. In this study the term satisfaction means the fulfillment of expected and perceived needs of the students at the campus. As Saif (2014) added that satisfaction is the feeling of happiness which is obtained through the fulfillment of a person’s needs and desires.

Escotet (2012) viewed higher education is a place for the knowledge creation and dissemination and it responsible for the global development via creativity and innovation. In terms of the purpose of higher educational institutions, Fortino (2012) expressed his views that the prime purpose of higher education is to prepare the students' minds. In this way, the higher education institution tend to recognize increasingly the expectations and needs of their students and keeping greater focus on fulfillment of these needs and expectations (DeShields et al., 2005).

Phaneuf (2006) highlighted in his study that learning institutions adopt various strategies pertaining to enhancement of physical security, such as; ID badges, visitors' procedure of entry and exit, classrooms based phone and intercoms usage, metal detectors, increase in security guard, bomb-sniffing dogs and surveillance cameras. In recent years i.e. 2015-16 due to the recants terror attacks on education institutions, the adoption of different latest and sophisticated security and safety measures in the educational institutions have been increased as compare to earlier times. For example, it was noted that in 1999-2000 only 19 percent of educational institutions were reported to have used security cameras as compare to 81 percent in 2015-2016. In addition, safety and security measures like wearing badge or picture ID by faculty, staff and students, and wearing uniforms, got momentum from the years 1999-2000 to 2015-2016.

Brown (2006) conducted a study in which he finds out that majority of the students declared the importance of the presence of the school police and security officers. They are of the view that the above officers are central to best keep the educational institutions safe and secure than local and untrained security guards. Moreover, the participants reported that to address security issues, most schools have established Safety Councils (SC) which comprised of parents, teachers, students and a school director who meet periodically and regularly in this regard.

A study was carried out in the public schools of the municipality of Pristina regarding students, teachers and parents' satisfaction from the schools' safety facilities. In this study, it was highlighted that large number of students and their parents were found dissatisfied from the safety measures (Salihu, 2018). In Nigeria's educational institutions, teachers and students reported to have insecure feeling at the campus, classrooms and the

areas just outside the institution buildings due to perceived risk of terrorist attacks (Ugwumba & Odom, 2015; Yusuf, 2012; Yusuf et al., 2013). An Official of the Ministry of Education has been reported to have said that around 15,000 children in Borno State, Nigeria refrained to attend institution (Yusuf & Ahmed, 2016).

Satisfaction can also be defined as the fulfillment of a person's desired or expected result (Arif & Ilyas, 2013). In higher education, Mark (2013) contends that student satisfaction is achieved when the perceived performance exceeds or meets with students' expectation. In this way, Botha et al., (2015) conducted a study, titled, "Determinants of Student Satisfaction with Campus Residence Life" at South African University, in which he claimed that students' satisfaction is associated with the standardized safety measures in the university. The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) is a holistic study approach which covers the analysis of the impacts of terrorism in 163 countries, taking into account over 99 percent of the world's population, predicts the potential threats of terrorist attacks in educational milieus.

Furthermore, satisfaction of students from the security measures is more important than any other facility available in the university. Proctor et al. (2009) contended that physical environment, including living in a safe area, has a significant positive association with the wellbeing of individuals. It is generally accepted that analyzing the level of satisfaction of students from various facilities in the higher educational institutions has never been considered important and was less explored by the universities (Abbasi, et al., 2011). Very less work has been done on the assessment of the strategies helpful in reducing violence and student fear of victimization despite of spending millions of dollars on security improvement and enhancement in educational institutions (Phaneuf, 2006). Universities are facing many challenges in providing a secure and safe campus. The recent tragic events have generated a sense of reasonability for the administrators of higher education to plan and prepare themselves for the perceived threats on campuses (Carrico, 2016). Thus, an attempt was made for the first time after the attack on Bacha Khan University, Charsadda with the core objective to investigate the satisfaction of students from the security measures adopted after the attack. One of the most important factor regarding the satisfaction of the stakeholders in the learning institutions are Security Measures which enable the entire institution to be safe and comfortable at any time (Kenya Forest Service, 2013). Furthermore,

Terrorism is not only detrimental to people and state property but also human life. Provision of security in this regard is the dire need of the day. In order to utilize the student resource, educational places should be safe and secure for all the stakeholders that potential abilities and capabilities of the students could build and their goals could achieve (DeVoe et. al, 2003). Additionally, to satisfy stakeholders of the institution pertaining to safety concerns and establishing a safety culture at the campus, an open and proactive approach is required to identify and mitigate potential risks (Beard, 2010).

THEORETICAL SUPPORT

Expectancy disconfirmation theory is a framework adopted for this study. It is evident that this theory is the most generally accepted and acknowledged conceptualization of user satisfaction (Aigbavboa & Wellington, 2013). This theory was introduced and developed by Oliver in 1980 (ibid). Oliver (1980) stated that the level of satisfaction of the customers is a result of the difference between perceived product performance and expected product performance. In other words, if the performance/service meets the expectation of the customers/users, they will be positively satisfied but if vice versa, they will be negatively disconfirmed i.e. dissatisfied. The word “expectation” clearly indicates predictions which can generate greater satisfaction when the expectations are highly satisfied. Satisfaction paradigms have been applied in other fields as well rather than just in marketing (Wilton & Nicosia, 1986). The theory was applied on educational services and facilities by many scholars. For example; Siming et al. (2015) investigated satisfaction from campus support services and facilities in higher educational institutions. Mariani, Rancati & Gordini (2015) studied students’ satisfaction from services and facilities in University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy. Elliot & Shin (2002) investigated 11 dimensions (among them were campus safety and security) contributing to satisfaction in higher educational institutions. More specifically, Akpoiroro & Okon (2015) applied this paradigm on his study pertaining to student’s satisfaction from the facilities and services, including security services, available in federal universities in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research method was applied in the present study primarily to meet the study's objectives. Strauss and Corbin (1998) highlighted that a qualitative research study permits a researcher to "explore a phenomenon, like feelings or thought processes that are difficult to extract or learn about through conventional research methods". In light of these lines, in the present study, the researcher tried to ascertain the information about feelings, views and perception of teachers and students regarding the available security measures in the university. Furthermore, Denzin and Lincoln (2003) reported that while studying a phenomenon in their existing natural setup, the most suitable methodology is qualitative one. The population of the present study was those students of Bacha Khan University, Charsadda who were present at the time of the attack. Moreover, the sample size for this study was 32 participants which was selected through purposive sampling technique in order to meet the required information from the concerned students as Creswell (2009) remarked that in qualitative researches if the researcher intends to understand the problem or issue in hand thoroughly, participants or sites should be 'purposefully selected. Moreover, the primary data was collected through interview guide while conducting in-depth interviews with the students of both sexes (Male and Female). The interviews were recorded through audio recording device upon the consent of the participants while the collected data was transcribed, organized and thoroughly examined for recurring patterns that were descriptively analyzed and discussed with the previous literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is a general fact and common sense understanding that after any terror incident, usually security measures are taken by the concerned department or institution for the future protection of stakeholders and their satisfaction. Somewhat, the same security measures were adopted in Bacha Khan University, Charsadda after the terrorist attack to ensure full pledge safety of the university stakeholders as well as to make them feel secure or satisfied. An efficient and effective security plan is essential which is helpful in access control and monitoring of entrances and exits and in overall protection of students, teachers and other stakeholders (Phersei Investigation & Security Group, 2018). The study results showed that the university has adopted various security measures after the attack which include, but not

limited to, construction of watch towers, erection and fencing of boundary wall, installation of security cameras (CCTV) in various vulnerable and important places, placement of road barriers, installation of metal detectors, increase in the numbers of security guards and officials, new weapons and equipment, communication devices, displaying of emergency contact numbers etc. The National Center for Education Statistics (2016) reported that educational institutions adopt certain security strategies and measures to ensure students, faculty and staff safety at the campus such as the use of metal detectors, security surveillance cameras, locking and monitoring of the entrance gates. However, the trend of security check through metal detectors was decreased between the years 2000 to 2016 (Diliberti, et al., 2017). Security is one of fundamental rights of a person according to International Human Rights principles. The dependency of the quality higher education is laid on safe and secure environment. Similarly, the progress and development of higher education depicts the understanding and recognizing of students satisfaction in a competitive situations (Yousaf et al., 2015). It was raveled during the study that despite of adopting various security and safety measures at the campus after the tragic event on 20th January, 2018, the wave of fear and insecurity was still prevailed among the students. It was highlighted that the safety policy and security measures were adopted by various higher education administrators in recognizing its immense importance in improving security and protection at the campus (Zuckerman, 2010). Various multiple reasons were presented by the students regarding their lack of confidence or dissatisfaction on the security system of the campus. Satisfaction on the part of students and teachers is a multidimensional process which is affected by various factors and for this purpose numerous studies have been carried out in order to identify the influencing factors regarding students' satisfaction in higher education institutions (Weerasinghe & Fernando, 2017). The main reason for the dissatisfaction among students was closely interlinked with the limitations in the existing security system. The limitations or loopholes were more found at the functional level of security system as compare to structural level. The physical security measures adopted at the main entrance of the university included reporting desk, metal detectors, road barriers, security personnel and CCTV Cameras. It was highlighted that soon after the attack the security check at the main gate of the campus was extraordinary tight and strict however, with the passage of time this trend gradually declined. A clear negligence of the security officials was reported and observed during security check as they showed irresponsible behavior. Students with some sort of relationship or only facial

recognition to security officials were passed through entrance gate without any body and belongings' search, card entry and ID (student card) check. In consonance to this, Salihu (2018) reported that information desk, card entry system, and visitor badges are some of the security measures which are less practiced by the security officials. Additionally, the metal detectors are not regularly used. Since student satisfaction is interconnected with the expected performance of the services and which is assessed by evaluation of the experiences (Elliott & Healy, 2001), it highly promotes a sense of loyalty in the students towards educational institution (Marzo-Navarro et al., 2005). Hence, the students were found dissatisfied with this sort of behavior from the security officials at the main entrance of the campus.

Furthermore, although the security guards were increased and were given new weapons, but they were lacking requisite training to cope with the uncertain or emergency situations effectively. The reason for this was clearly identified that is majority of them were hired from the local and unqualified segment of population. Additionally, the participants viewed that security guards are still less in numbers as various places at the campus are not secured. Owusu et al. (2016) studied that due to the increase in the enrollment of students and staff recruitment, the numbers of security personnel at the campus are often not commensurate with the number of students and staff members. The study findings further disclosed that different places at the campus are still vulnerable to any terror incident that caused intense feeling of insecurity and fear among the students. Their argumentations with regard to such places were based on their daily observation and interaction, therefore; they considered such places are much vulnerable to external threats as compare to the rest. Campus garden/yards, playgrounds, cafeteria, lower segments of the university especially boundary walls, roof tops, car parking, class rooms, hostel toilets and rooms having fragile doors and windows are some of the insecure places. The previous studies strongly supported these findings where they identified campus yards, playgrounds, toilets, cafeteria and Parking area are some of the insecure and vulnerable spots (Salihu, 2018; Phaneuf, 2006). Proper security arrangements in these places were highly suggested by the participants. It was further revealed from the study findings that many of the watch towers built after the attack were found empty i.e. absence of security guards. Such kinds of loopholes in the security system of the university are contradictory with the expectations and needs of the students. The campus was lacking

Crises Management Cell which further worsens the capabilities of the students and security personnel to cope better with the emergency situations. Due to lack of this very essential facility, the students found themselves more prone to any misfortune. Students and their parents keep keen eyes on the availability of the campus crises management plan which is a strong component of building satisfaction among them (Kelsay, 2007). The establishment of Crises Management Cell is indispensable in the learning institution since the cell devise various strategies and course of actions for the purpose to deal effectively and efficiently with sudden misfortunes or uncertainties and to reduce the damage a crisis can cause to any institution as well as its stakeholders (Coombs, 2007; Mbui, 2016). The university administration has the prime responsibility is to secure their clients (students). Diliberti et al., (2017) noted large numbers of learning institutions situated in the United States' suburbs have formal programs for the prevention or reduction of violence which includes social and emotional learning, training drills on lockdown and evacuations procedures. Shortly, a strong association between students' satisfaction and standardized quality safety/security measures at the university was evidenced (Botha et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study the main emphasis was given on the students' satisfaction from the existing security measures that were particularly adopted after the attack on Bacha Khan University, Charsadda. Though the university administration has taken different security measures, yet certain limitations or deficiencies are still exist. It was concluded from the study results that services provided by the security personnel at the campus were questioned by the students. various reasons and factors were identified which cause dissatisfaction among the students e.g. less numbers of security guards, lack of proper and impartial security check, occasional use of metal detecting devices, insecure places, vacant watch towers and lack of training and skills required for both security officials and students to tackle uncertain situations effectually. Thus, a clear contradiction was observed between the students' needs and expectations and security services offered by the university administration. The dissatisfaction among students in one way creates issues for them in getting quality education at a peaceful, comfort and secure environment and on the other hand, promotes the undesirable feelings among them that the universities disown them which depict a damaging and careless attitude of the university administration. It is recommended that university

administration should provide latest security equipment and devices to the security officials and must regulate the duties and services in strict manners with zero tolerance policy in order to protect the stakeholders and ensure safe and conducive environment of learning for the students.

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