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## **IMPACTS OF FATA MERGER WITH KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA: A PERCEPTION OF COLLEGE COMMUNITY OF DISTRICT BANNU**

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### **ABSTRACT**

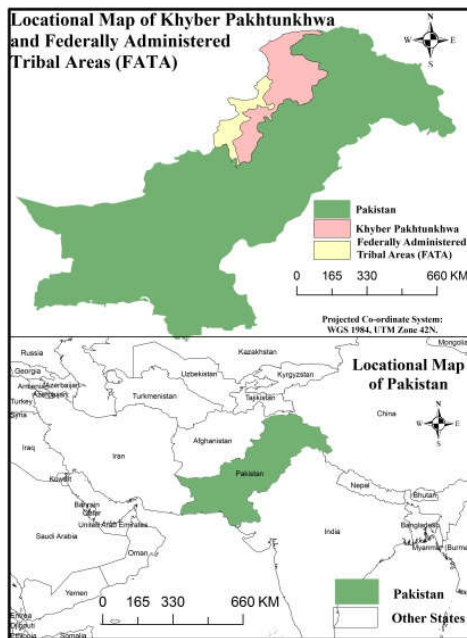
*This study is an attempt to know the impacts of federally administered tribal areas merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These areas of Pakistan are adjacent with Afghanistan. Federally administered tribal areas have been remained under developed economically and educationally due to the mode of governance, which is the root cause of insurgency in the area. The study was based on two types of data, first one primary data that were collected through questionnaire from the most educated college community and the second was secondary data, collected from official records. The analysis of the primary data reveals the fact that these areas need to be integrated. More than triple fold of the respondents' favours this merger; consider the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's government to manage it and as these people shares analogous culture and language. Majority of the respondents' thoughts that this merger will improve infrastructure of the area, flourish the economic condition of the people and the area will be secure. The analysis of the secondary data suggests that this merger will increase the number of people representatives of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the national assembly. It can be concluding from highlighting these factors that merger will have positive impact on people of both FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.*

## KEYWORDS

*Merger, FATA, FCR, Political Reforms, Administration*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) consists of six FRs (frontier regions) and seven agencies, which are directly under the control of Federal government, having its own members of national assembly (MNA). The federal government use Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) as a set of laws to govern FATA. This semi-autonomous tribal region is situated in north-western part of Pakistan. These areas are surrounded from east and south by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan, while the neighbours of the FATA in west and north are Kunar, Nangarhar, Paktia, Khost and Paktika provinces of Afghanistan across Durand line. Total area of FATA is 27,220 Sq.km and total population according to 2016 estimate is 4,800,883 persons with density of 163 persons per square kilometer. Almost all the inhabitants of FATA are Pashtuns, while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was inhabited by multi-linguistics groups. The people of FATA have strong ties with the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, specially the Pashtuns tribes amongst the others.



Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is one of the four provinces of Pakistan, Situated in the north-western part of the state. Formerly it was named as North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is having its own provincial assembly with 124 seats. Capital of KP is Peshawar which is largest city of the province. Relative location of KP is: in the west, Federally Administered Area, Gilgit-Baltistan to northeast and to east and southeast lays Azad Kashmir, Islamabad and province of Punjab. KP also shares its border with Afghanistan. Total area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is 74,521 sq.km, and population 26,896,829 persons. Density of KP is 360 persons per sq.km (electronic data sources).

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## **2. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

FATA has been remaining the main area of concern for Pakistan especially due to security reasons in the present era. This area is governed by a set of regulations that needs replacement with the advance and worldwide accepted parliamentary acts. Pakistani government is seeking way out of it. Hence, it's an attempt to know, how the educated community reacts to towards this provoking problem. Government of Pakistan is thinking over various options, so this study is an attempt to bring the best option forward in the light of the well-versed scholars of politics, geography and history.

### **2.1. Objectives**

- To highlight the impacts of FATA merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- To know how the well aware community reacting to this burning issue.
- To find out alternative of the FCR.

### **2.2. Materials and Methods**

The study was based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected with help of questionnaire containing questions about FATA, FCR, and various aspects of FATA and its merge with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Total 24 professors from eight colleges of district Bannu were surveyed through questionnaire. Most of them were masters of Geography, Political Science and History.

While the secondary data needed about the allocated seats of National Assembly of Pakistan to various administrative units were collected from official website of the National assembly of Pakistan. The data about unit wise population were collected population census report.

## **3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Federally Administered Tribal Area is a permanent part of Pakistan, yet its mode of governance and politics is completely different from the rest of the country. In the nineteenth century, the British colonial government introduced and implemented a special set of regulation called Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). After freedom Pakistan continue to rule this area with the same regulation (Ullah, 2013).

Constitutionally FATA is administered through a set of regulations implemented by British Indian Government in 1901. This system is quite different from the system of governance used for the other territories of Pakistan, that's why the area remained backward. Till the military manoeuvres the area remained under the control of insurgents. For permanent solution of this problem FATA has amalgamate with Pakistan (Khan, 2011).

According to the Human Rights Commission (2005) report the FATA is semi-autonomous administered unit of Pakistan controlled with unique law called FCR. The main aim of introduction of FCR was passively administering this geographical important area in favour of the British government. Regrettably, FATA has been kept governing under the same set of laws since independence of Pakistan. It is fact that FCR has lost its credibility decades ago, but the government has yet to do something sensible for the people of FATA and for betterment of this

country. The application of FCR is desecration of Human Rights and Pakistan's Constitution. The larger courts of Pakistan and Federal Shariat has clear-cut verdicts against and suggested to abolish Frontier Crimes Regulation. The people of FATA also want to make way out this. Some stakeholders in the system want to maintain the present system in the name of traditional values.

Pakistan as federal state fails to develop the spirit federalism. Provincial sovereignty and uneven distribution of resources has been remained major problem between federal government and the federating units, now the redirecting factor of persisting problems of the central government is the latest demand of separate provinces (Zulfqar, 2012).

Shinwari (2010) in his views explain the limits of higher judiciary in the light of article 247(7) of the constitution that FATA is out of influence of the high court of province and Supreme Court of Pakistan. FATA is administered through FCR and political agent acts as a justice along with his other executive tasks. FCR is a set of law under which joint territorial duties and penalties are imposed.

The National assembly was formulated on the basis elections held in 1970. Total strength of the assembly was 146 members Punjab had a share of 85 representatives, Sindh 28, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa former North-West Frontier Province 19, the tribal belt(FATA) 7 and Balochistan represented by 5 representatives (V.Y Belkrenitsky& V.N Moskalonko, 2014).

Since America's attack on Afghanistan the FATA arose as a zone of insurgency. It also became security risk for the region and put Pakistan into many hardships. Rebels used FATA as safe haven to train and recruit fighters (GoP, 2016). According to FATA reform committee presentation (2016) the tribal opted to get integrated with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, because these areas are closely related to each other in terms of culture and economy. In their opinion if FATA is declared as separate province it would not be able to manage resources for own requirements.

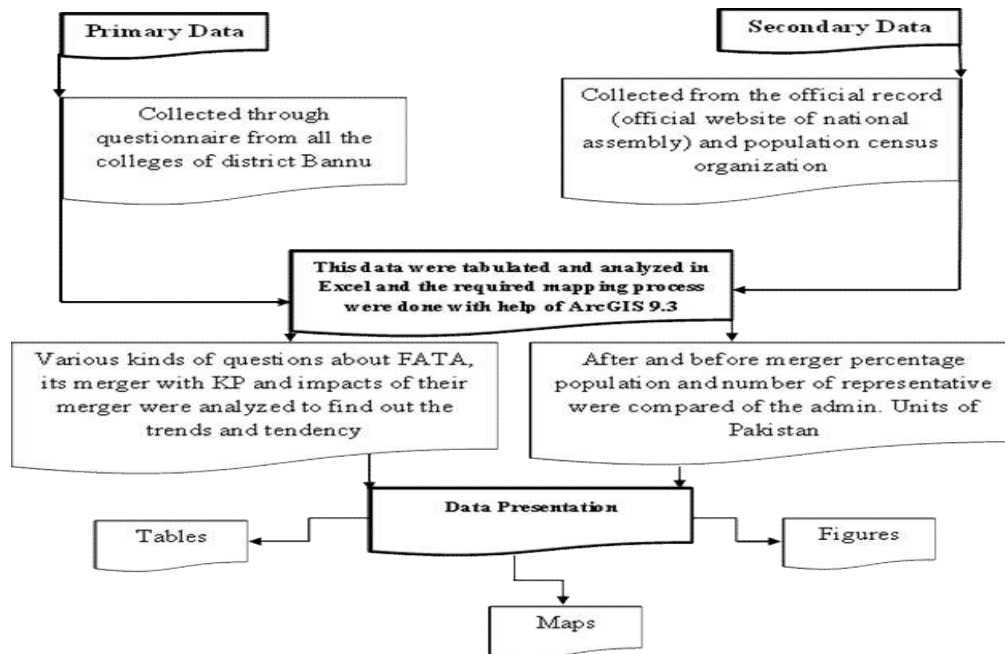
Parveen et al (2016) said that Pakistani government had left this tribal area under its own political administration and does not interfere. FATA stretched along the border of Afghanistan and people from either side has relation with each other. British government left this area under FCR and unfortunately remained backward till date. Basic need of life is not available, literacy rate is very low and women are restricted to homes only. All these factors and Afghanistan war are the root causes of militancy in the area. The only solution to bring peace and prosperity in this region is to integrate the area with Pakistanon urgent bases otherwise it would end with some serious consequences.

In results of table talks between tribal Pashtuns and Pakistan Government an agreement was signed. This agreement gives autonomy to FATA and privileges to Maliks and in return they promise to be faithful to the newly formed state (Awan, 2013). On the basis of culture, language, social ties the people of FATA and KP are more integrated (Javaid & Haq, 2016).

#### **4. METHODOLOGY**

Keeping in view the seriousness of the issue and its prevailing impacts in present and future a questioner was developed and distributed among the professors and lectures of colleges in district Bannu. After collection, the data was analysed by suing MS Excel. Three variables were taken in considerations which were population, administration and representatives in the national assembly

of Pakistan. The data was also presented in form of tables, graphs and charts. ArcGIS was used as mapping tool in the study.



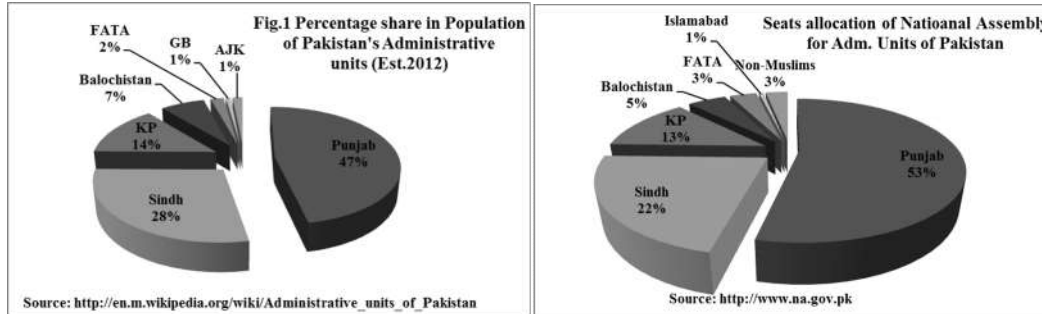
Flow chart: 1 showing research methodology

#### 4.1. Results and Discussions

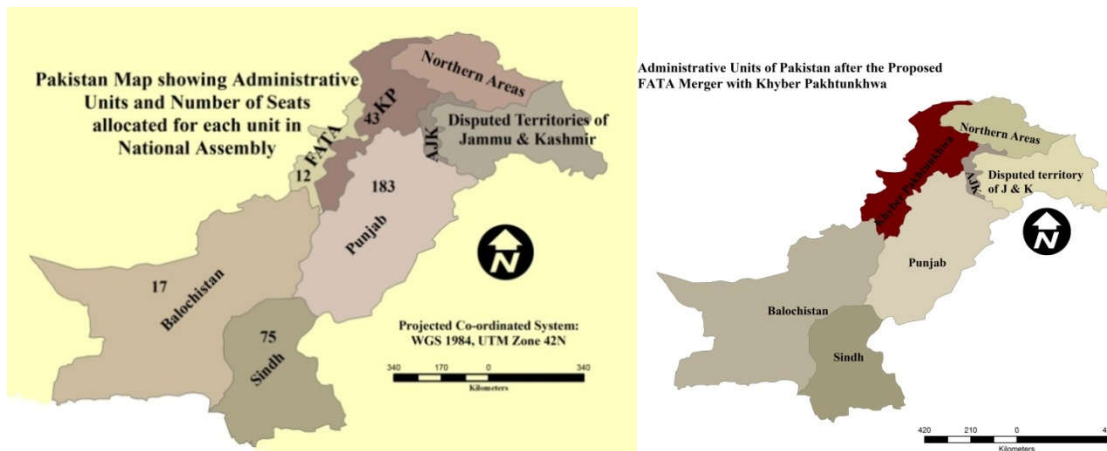
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#### 4.2. Materials and Methods

According to the Population estimate 2012, the population share of Punjab is 48%, followed by Sindh with 29%, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 14% Baluchistan 7%, FATA 2%, Gilgit-Baltistan 1% and Azad Kashmir 1% in the total population of Pakistan (Fig.1). Depending upon the population of these units, seats of National assembly are allocated are: Punjab having 183(52%) seats in National assembly of Pakistan, which is the deciding factor in Pakistan's politics. Followed by Sindh with 75(22%), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 43(13%), Balochistan 17(5%), FATA 12(3%), Capital territory Islamabad 2(1%) and the seats reserved for non-Muslims are 10(3%) (Fig.2). this ratio of seats in the lower house of the parliament states the political importance of the administrative division of Pakistan. This representation of unit is a basic building block of its progress, and development funds allocated on the basis of population to these representatives. In Pakistan, we are having seven administrative units and one disputed territory (Map.1).

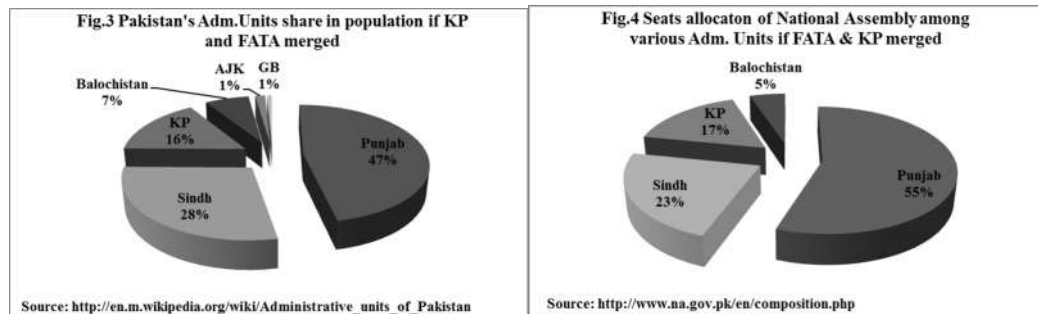


Map: 1 Admin Units of Pakistan and Number of seats in NA



Map: 2 Admin. Units of Pakistan after the proposed merger

On the basis of this secondary data if we consider federally administered tribal areas integrated with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa the net population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will increase, because of the addition of FATA population to the provincial population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The net figure according to the population census estimated report of 2012 will 30,827,248 persons (Fig.3) with population density of 303/Km<sup>2</sup>. Directly the representation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the National Assembly of Pakistan will increase from 43 to 55(Fig.4) with the addition of 12 seats of FATA, which will be 17% of total seats of National Assembly of Pakistan. The population density will record decrease by 57 person/Km<sup>2</sup>. Still it manages higher density than Balochistan, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. The increase due to the proposed merger can help the province and the people of the whole area by proper administration. The administrative units will also reduce from seven to six apart from the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir (Map. 2).



The questionnaire contains various kinds of questions, first portion was consisting of question about FATA and FCR. These questions were included in order to develop a concept of the respondent about FATA and its administration. 100% of the respondents were well aware of FATA according to their response, 92% of the total surveyed college community was not satisfied with present administration and the reasons were quite different from one another of non-satisfaction, 83% of them said that the set of rules (FCR) is not justifiable and the parliamentary acts of Pakistan is far better than FCR, only 17% were happy with the present representation of FATA's people in National Assembly(they says that its according to the population of FATA) and the zonal allocation of FATA (Zone 1) in KP were criticized 58% of them.

The second portion was about the FATA's merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with which 92% of the total respondents were agreed that there should be political reforms; these 92% considered FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa amalgamation as best option and they also were at the opinion that administration (government) is capable of managing it perfectly.

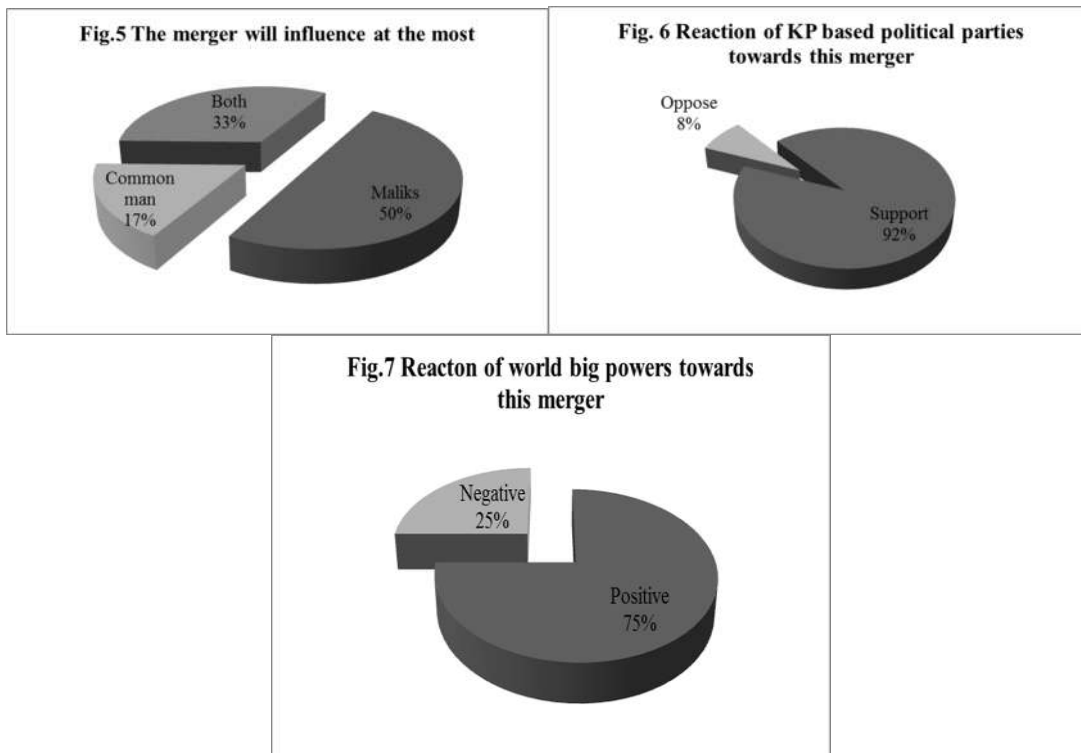
The questions in the third part were designed to highlight the impacts of the merger of FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Major part of the respondents that was 92% of the total has the idea that this merger will somehow balance the provincial imbalance representation in national assembly, will develop the infrastructure of the area, people will economically grow and it will also positively influence the security conditions of the region ( Table.1).

Table: 1 showing percentage response for various questions.

<i>Question asked</i>	<i>%age Response in Yes</i>	<i>%age Response in No</i>
Do you know about FATA?	100	0
Are you satisfied with FATA administration?	8	92
Can the FCR be justified?	17	83
Are the parliamentary acts better than FCR?	83	17
Is the representation of FATA in the parliament enough?	17	83
IS the zonal allocation of FATA satisfactory?	42	58
Whether the political reforms necessary for FATA?	92	8
Is it feasible to merge FATA with KP?	92	8
Is the KP administration capable of managing FATA?	92	8
Can this merger Balance the provincial imbalance in National Assembly?	92	8
Are you seeing this merger beneficial for the people of FATA?	92	8

Can this merger develop infrastructure of FATA?	92	8
Can this merger help in improving the security conditions of the area?	92	8

50% of the total respondents said that, this merger would affect Maliks the most, by losing their reign. 17% were with the opinion that the merger will influence common man and according to 33% both will be affected, but for Maliks it will be negative and for common man it will be positive (Fig.5). In response of the question that what will be the reaction of the political parties that are based in Khyber Pathunkhwa, 92% respondents think that this decision will get support from these political parties, while only 8% thinks that these parties will oppose this decision (Fig.6). According to the 75% of the respondents the world big powers will see this decision as positive move by Pakistan, while the remaining said that this decision will get negative reaction from the big powers of the world (Fig. 7).



## 5. CONCLUSION

It is concluded from the above analysis that the people of FATA have been deprived from the major rights in this advanced world. The rules of FATA governance are out-dated and unjustifiable. All most all the respondents were agreed to the fact that this zone of weakness of Pakistan should be treated with the best possible ways, and according to them the best way is to merge with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The study reveals that this merger will be beneficial for the people of FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa economically, educationally and administratively. Furthermore, common man will be



obliged with basic rights of life, the poor will be no more slaves of the Malikis in the area and there will be the end of collective responsibilities.

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