TRANSFORMATION OF LEADERSHIP PARADIGM IN BALOCHISTAN: 
A CASE STUDY OF BALOCH LED MILITANT GROUPS IN POST 2004 PERIOD

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ABSTRACT
Balochistan is resources rich and an important province of Pakistan in the context of geostrategic location. Its location occupies key role in China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which is known to be a game changer. Unfortunately, Balochistan has remained center stage for militancy and conflicts since the inception of Pakistan primarily because of its porous international boundaries with Iran and Afghanistan, deprivation and flawed government policies. There are roughly five insurgencies since 1948 till to date. The first four were initiated by ruling family of Kalat and Baloch chieftains, asking their tribesmen to pick up arms against government of Pakistan. The latest row of armed conflict started in 2004 and is still present in shape of terrorist attacks, making it the longest and most broadly extended insurgency. Primary data in the form of 20 semi structured interviews and secondary sources are used to address the research question using qualitative methodology. Relative Deprivation Theory is used to study the transition in leadership of militant groups. The findings of the study indicate that Concept of Leadership as a person can still be seen in political elite of Balochistan. But, as far as the militant groups are concerned, transition in leadership occurred from Baloch tribal heads to the middleclass Baloch educated youth due to genuine grievances and foreign interference. Government has managed to bring considerable level of peace but still it is a negative peace until the root causes are addressed.

Keywords: Balochistan, Deprivation, Insurgency, Baloch, tribal leadership.

INTRODUCTION
Pakistan since independence has witnessed various intrastate and interstate conflicts. intra faith extremist violence, sectarian strife, and ethnic turf war (Saira & Malik, 2014). Scale and scope of ethnic conflict in Balochistan attracted much attention and has remained topic of interest for scholars of ethno-nationalism.

There have been four previous armed insurgencies in 1948, 1958, 1962 and 1973 (Hassan, 2019) which were initiated by ruling family of Kalat and tribal sardars/elders asking their tribesmen to pick up arms against govt of Pakistan. Even though all the previous insurgencies were dealt successfully but use of kinetic measures had its own repercussions which are still evident (Kakar, personal communication, 2021). The fifth and ongoing insurgency that started in 2002 has its own dynamics. It was started by Marri and Bugti Sardars in their areas but now it is taken over by educated youth who doesn’t believe in Sardari system in areas of Quetta, Kharan and Makran. It is the first time that most of the sardars are with government and are unable to control the young generation.

This apparent transformation in leadership paradigm of militant groups is of vital importance and needs protean strategy from state in political, economic and socio-cultural domains. State’s willingness to address deep held values of the Baloch people will certainly be an opportunity for a positive peace in Balochistan and first step in the right direction. Only through the profound and correct understanding of the
nature of Balochistan conflict, its specificity in terms of challenges and dynamics and the recognition of its underlying causes, it is possible to provide adequate and impactful response to this transformation in leadership paradigm (Oliva & Charbonnier, 2016).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
This study is analytical, exploratory and descriptive in nature. Qualitative methodology is adopted to conduct the research. Primary and secondary sources are utilized to collect data. 20 Semi structured interviews are used in order to get primary data. While, secondary resources include Journal articles, books, newspaper, unpublished thesis and Scholarly publications.

Locale of the research is Balochistan, province of Pakistan. Target population includes but not limited to tribal chiefs, law enforcement agencies, educationists, politicians, journalists and Baloch youth. The research is based on non-probability sampling technique using purposive sampling type.

It is always a challenge for a researcher to conduct research and get primary data in any conflict area. However, researcher being a native of Balochistan, faced no such problem. Researcher had ample knowledge of the conflict area and enjoyed the confidence of targeted population to get primary data.

The research work asks the question that why leadership of militant groups has changed from Baloch tribal chiefs to educated middle class Baloch youth in Balochistan? It attempts to explore the transformation in leadership paradigm of Baloch militant groups from Baloch tribal chiefs to educated middle class Baloch youth in Balochistan and to examine the role of external factors in transition in leadership paradigm.

Demography
As per official website of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Balochistan is the least developed and very thinly populated. The province constitutes 44% area of Pakistan with only 5% population with population density of only 18.9 persons /sq km. The province comprises of different ethnic groups mainly Baloch, Brahvi, Pashtun, Hazara, Punjabi, Saraiki, Sindhi and others.

Geography
Government of Balochistan on its official website describes Balochistan as South Western Province of Pakistan has 1268 km long border with Afghanistan and 909 km border with Iran. In the South, it has 800 kms long coastline. Area wise Balochistan is the largest province of the country with a total landmass of 347190 sq km, 43% (approximately) of the entire land mass of Pakistan.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
There is a considerable literature available covering the issue of conflict in Balochistan. International scholars such as Alok Bansal (2005) promote Indian point of view on Balochistan. An elaborate study is carried out by Tiffany Tanner, University of Maine (2009). In her thesis, she has slightly covered the question of shift in leadership, but with the angle of increase in support base for the ongoing insurgency.

Some of the scholars for instance Muhammad Ismail (2014) in his article "Geostrategic Importance of Balochistan: Baloch Insurgency and the Global Politics of Energy Resources." linked the insurgency with natural resources and geo-strategic location of Balochistan. Adeel Khan (2009) linked the insurgency with economic deprivation of the common Baloch masses in "Renewed ethnonationalist insurgency in Balochistan, Pakistan: the militarized state and continuing economic deprivation” There are writers who covered the topic from political angle and few concluded on socio-economic reason.

A very pertinent and exclusive study has been conducted by Muhammad Hassan (2019) discussed in detail the historical background of Ethno-nationalism and causes of insurgencies. He did trace the roots of nationalism in the educated class of Baloch youth at the start of 20th century but shift in leadership back to educated Baloch youth was not discussed in detail.

One notable contribution for Conflict transformation and Peace Process in Balochistan is by Nazir Ahmed and Dr. Musarrat Jabeen (2018). They have discussed and used Lederach’s Pyramid Approach in their paper “Balochistan Turmoil Conflict Transformation Approach” for resolution and transformation of the conflict. They discussed the Sardari System and its negative impact on the social condition of the ordinary Baloch in detail. But the genesis of Sardari system was not elaborated to the fullest.
However, the dynamic of constant unrest in Balochistan got more complicated with the shift of leadership of militants from tribal heads to educated middle class Baloch youth. In this study, endeavor is made to cover the critical questions and dynamic of shift in leadership from tribal chiefs to educated middle class youth in latest insurgency which is the longest. This aspect will cover the gap in the current literature for future research works by other scholars.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework taken for this study is relative deprivation theory as it explains best, both the conflict and transformation in leadership paradigm of the militant groups.

Relative Deprivation Theory

Theorists defined relative deprivation theory as, those who have sense of deprivation regarding anything (rights, Freedom of expression, social status and money) will become part of social movements with the aim to have maximum equal gain. Relative deprivation theory is proposed by a sociologist Samuel Stouffer. Relative deprivation is applicable to various areas includes justice problems, revolution or equity. The concept of Relative deprivation is used when an individual is comparing his or her prospects with another. The objective living condition is improving gradually than the tendency of higher expectations. This generates a wider gap in what a person gets and what he wants, translates into deprivation. People wonder the revolution for prosperity and success (Iain & Thomas, 1984).

There is considerable no of students, government officials and businessmen working in different cities of the country and they feel deprived to see that huge difference between the cities and their areas. They feel that in spite of the fact that Balochistan is rich with so many natural resources and Gawadar being the future of Pakistan, government have not paid the due attention to their area. They felt a sense of deprivation that why same country has two standards. One, they are living in, resembles the century old way of life and the one they are watching (Urban areas of Pakistan) is equipped with all the latest development and social services that they lacked throughout their life.

Relative Deprivation Theory has found that the sense of relative deprivation serves as a factor of driving incidents or disturbs the social order for instance civil wars, rebellions and terrorism (Clare, 2011). Unprecedent involvement of educated Baloch youth in the current insurgency can very well be described under the umbrella of Relative Deprivation theory. Where people, especially youth, have associated themselves with a movement who talks about dignity of life, glorious past and prosperous future, human rights, Freedom of expression, traditions and customs.

Leadership is a concept that can be described as a systematic process, as a personal trait or their mutual blend. If the concept is taken as a process, then there are number of factors to be taken into account. Factors such as circumstances that give rise to a leadership, features of the supporters, proceedings at that time and history in which leadership is embedded. Similarly, if the concept of leadership is to be taken as a person, then factors such as personal traits, charisma, make-up of the leader, attributes, morals, expertise and intellect come into consideration (Bruce, 1999).

Leadership in previous insurgencies was with the “Political Elite” of the province. Concept of Leadership as a person can still be seen in political elite of Balochistan. But, as far as the militant groups are concerned, the concept has evolved into a system. The middle class educated Baloch youth see the lifestyle of their tribal chiefs and compare them to the plights of a common Baloch masses. On one hand Baloch masses live in poverty and find it difficult to enjoy modern civic facilities, education and employment. Whereas, on the other hand, political elite of Balochistan enjoy all the opportunities for them and their children. The tribal heads are able to get quality education for their children not only in Balochistan but in other parts of the country too. There financial status is ever improving. Whereas, financial condition of ordinary Baloch is on the deteriorating side. There is a huge gap between the living conditions of tribal chiefs and ordinary Baloch. This gap has raised a perception among the Baloch youth that Tribal chiefs only look after their personal interests and have always compromised on the interests of Baloch masses. This has brought Baloch youth on a conclusion that they have to take a leadership role now. The same feeling is seen in the leadership of militant groups.
Under the above-mentioned theoretical framework, the study explains how the leadership has change from tribal heads to the Baloch educated youth who, coupled with the genuine grievances and nostalgic nationalism (Gabriella & Jens, 2019) are convinced that their identity and very existence is challenged by the ongoing mega projects and influx of ethnic communities from other parts of Pakistan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Leadership Institution in Various Insurgencies in Balochistan: First Insurgency (1948)
The first armed struggle against Pakistan on the name of Baloch nationalism was led by Prince Abdul Kareem Khan (Ex-Governor of Makran and younger brother of Khan of Kalat). Prince Karim Abdul Karim was unhappy with decision of government of Pakistan. According to Foreign Policy Center (2006), Pakistan acknowledged State of Makran as an autonomous state and accepted instrument of accession signed by Nawab of Makran on 17th March 1948.
Second Insurgency (1958-60)
The 2nd insurgency is considered to be the first true armed campaign against government of Pakistan It was initiated by Nawab Nauroz Khan Zehri in reaction to One-Unit Policy of government of Pakistan in 1955 and the arrest of Khan of Kalat Mir Ahmed Khan in 1958. These disturbances had loyalty with sardar as motivating factor. These cannot be described as nationalist upsurge in the province. Area of Kuhlu, Khuzdar and Kalat witnessed disturbances in this particular period. Spanned area was less than one sixth of Balochistan. Large chunk of Baloch areas like Mekran, Kharan and Lasbela never joined this movement (Hassan, 2019).
Third Insurgency (1963-69)
As stated by the Foreign Policy Center (2006), third insurgency was led by Sher Muhammad Mari famously known as General Sherof (due to his Russian connections). Nawab Akber Khan Bugti, Mir Ghos Bukhsh Bezenjo, Sardar Ata ullah Mangal and Kher Bukhsh Marri in prison for supporting Nawab Nauroz Khan. In 1962 they engaged themselves again in organizing and supporting guerilla activities against Government of Pakistan. Sher Muhammad Marri famously known as “General Sherof” for his Russian connections started to organize a powerful guerrilla force and established “Ferraris Camps”.
Fourth Insurgency (1973-77)
Tribal chieftains Sardar Ata ullah Mangal and Kher Bukhsh Marri were the main leadership behind the fourth insurgency. This insurgency was highly active in Marri, Bugti, Sarawan and Jhalawan areas (Breseeg, 2004).
Transformation of Leadership Institution in Baloch Militant Organizations from Tribal Chiefs to Middle Class Baloch Youth in the 21st Century
After independence of Pakistan, Balochistan has seen major insurgencies always lead by Baloch Tribal Sardars. As these insurgencies were not politically motivated therefore, they could not achieve their objectives. However, mainly due to continuous presence of governance issues in the province, the internal security situation has remained tense. The law-and-order situation in the Balochistan province has worsened in the 21st century. Deteriorating security situation has international dimensions as well with competing interests of global and regional actors. Circumstances and environments lead to acceptance of fact that Balochistan province has become the proxy battle ground for the global and regional powers due to resources and its strategic geographic location.
Fifth Wave of Militancy Since 2004
Development of Gawadar port caused resentment among nationalist forces. Conflict between Nawab Akbar Bugti and federal government kept on deteriorating in Sui. This conflict resulted in the death of Nawab Akber Bugti in an army operation. This fueled the Baloch masses with rage and situation aggrivated to its present form (Muzafar et al., 2018).
Post Bugti Era (2006 Onwards)- Conflicts and Players
Balochistan is presently facing wrath of multiple actors; separatists, ethnic and religious non state actors who are pursuing their specific agenda in the province through conflicts and insurgencies. Nationalist militant groups pursuing separatist agenda are active in Baloch dominated areas of Kohlu, Dear Bugti, Quetta, Khuzdar, Mastung, Kalat, Naseerabad, Turbat and Gwadar. Religious, jihadists, sectarian, pro-
Taliban are dominant mostly in Pashtun areas like Pishin, Chaman, Qilla Saif Ullah, Qila Abdullah, Zhob and Loralai with some presence in Baloch areas as well. Pro-Taliban and suspected elements of Al-Qaida are present and active in areas bordering Afghanistan and FATA (adjoining districts of Zhob), whereas sectarian elements are active in central Balochistan; Quetta, Khuzdar and Hub. A new religious insurgent movement, Jundullah with separatist Baloch ideology and sectarian background has emerged, as it claims to establish a Sunni Balochistan by carving out Iranian and Pakistani parts of Balochistan (Sial & Basit, 2010).

Baloch resistance started in year 2000 with low profile, but it gathered momentum from 2003-4. An organization with the label of Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) started terrorist activities against government facilities and development projects from 2003 onwards (Humayun, personal communication, 2021). They have an agenda to propagate that not Baloch but outsiders will be the beneficiaries of these Mega Projects instead of ordinary Baloch. Similarly, outsiders will take over the lands and job opportunities from a common Baloch. They opposed all development in the province with apprehension that the Balochis due to illiteracy and poverty will not be able to reap the benefits, and ultimately it will attract the settlers from other parts of the country, a cycle which will convert them into the minority. They vent their anger by using violence against outsiders and government installations to discourage international and local investment. Such activities gained momentum in 2006 with increase in number of militant groups having different names but with common agenda of challenging the writ of the government through their activities of sabotage, violence and targeting ideological opponents. These activities gained momentum with each passing year (Muzafar et al., 2018).

Currently there are a total of sixteen anti-nationalist groups identified in Balochistan. The government of Pakistan has banned five outfits with separatist and secessionist agendas (Sial & Basit, 2010). All these organizations claim to be the successor of ‘Balochistan Peoples Liberation Front’ (BPLF) of the 1970s. They are influenced by Baloch Students Organization with pro-Moscow leaning, during the Cold War. These groups have external hands in their reorganization and restructuring with heavy funding, with India, Afghanistan, Iran, Gulf States and some European Countries gaining the prominence in their support to insurgent movements. An anti-Pakistan Indian analyst Mr. B. Raman has been continuously projecting Baloch Nationalist cause in domestic and international media with suggestion that India must intervene in Balochistan (Ahmed, personal communication, 2021).

Apart from Balochistan Liberation army (BLA), other armed nationalist groups also emerged on the landscape of Balochistan including Baloch Republican Army, Lashkar I Balochistan and Baloch Liberation Front. There are an estimated 121 training facilities for Baloch militants in the province and thirty in Afghanistan, most of which are funded and trained by external actors. Important thing to note is that names of most of these organizations depict their desire for liberation. Besides these nationalist groups, a plethora of foreign based Baloch diaspora organizations using web-based social networking tools continue to highlight the Baloch struggle at international forums. Presently trouble is confined to four districts only and rest of the Balochistan is generally at peace (Khatak, 2012).

**Fundamental Grievances**

The study shows that there are genuine grievances among Baloch masses across the board. The previous and current unrest is manifestation of these grievances. There is a sense of consensus among Baloch masses that tribal chiefs had not been able to address the problems of Baloch. Baloch youth has come forward to fill the vacuum. Baloch masses support their leadership to get their basic rights (Baloch, personal communication, 2021). There is a strong feeling that they have not taken the arms happily but circumstances forced them to do so. The main causes of dissatisfaction happen to be unemployment, poverty, lack of social services, extraction of resources without providing even the basic facilities, development of mega projects against local’s interest (Himayat, personal communication, 2021). Governments remain unsuccessful in addressing the concerns and in providing basic facilities to people of Balochistan (Arshad, personal communication, 2021).

People from Punjab and KPK are purchasing lands in lucrative areas of Balochistan, especially in Gawadar, from poor Baloch while exploiting their poverty. There is a fear that Baloch population will be converted into minority as a result of influx of people from other provinces of Pakistan. Decision making
process about Balochistan lacks the participation of Baloch. Establishments of Military Cantonments in the troubled areas, missing persons, registration of cases against nationalists as terrorist are some of the other concerns of Baloch masses (Khan, personal communication, 2021). These grievances need a serious thought from the policy makers and in-depth analysis is needed to counter the narrative already rooted in minds of Baloch youth (Nazia, personal communication, 2021).

**Leadership Paradigm of Ongoing Unrest in Balochistan**

In one of its report Foreign Policy Center (2006) suggests that the situation started deteriorating after year 2000 and gained its momentum in 2004 when Marri Tribesmen started damaging infrastructure. The main sardars like Nawab Akbar Bugti, Sardar Khair Bux Marri and Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal were either too old or are no more alive. The young generation like Balach Marri, Harbyar Marri and Baramdagh Bugti came in fore front. The death of Nawab Akbar Bugti in a military operation 2006, spread the militancy in entire Balochistan (Malik, personal communication, 2021). BSO the Baloch Students Organization (Socialist) and influenced by Russia first time decided to start armed actions. This changed the landscape of leadership paradigm of militant groups in Balochistan. Educated Baloch youth are involved on a scale never witnessed in the previous Insurgencies. This time the insurgency has spread in most of the Baloch and Brahu dominated areas including Quetta. It has encompassed vast spaces and is not confined to the traditional areas of previous insurgencies. It has subverted Baloch masses to a large degree, while the militant’s leadership has also diversified and evolved. it now constitutes a combination of middle-class militant commanders and Nawabs - Sardars. There is no coherent strategy or political will to address the issue on government part (Malik, personal communication, 2021).

**Leadership Profile of Different Militant Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader*</th>
<th>Harbyar Marri</th>
<th>Brahamdagh Bugti</th>
<th>Dr. Allah Nazar</th>
<th>Bashir Zeb</th>
<th>Javed Mengal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>B L A</td>
<td>B R A</td>
<td>B L F</td>
<td>B S O (Azad)</td>
<td>Lashkar-e-Balochistan (LeB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda</td>
<td>Independent Balochistan</td>
<td>Independent Balochistan</td>
<td>Independent Balochistan</td>
<td>Independent Balochistan</td>
<td>Independent Balochistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area of Influence</td>
<td>Kohlu, Sibi, Kalat, Mastung, Noshki and Quetta</td>
<td>Dera Bugti and Quetta</td>
<td>Awaran, Medran and Quetta</td>
<td>Complete Balochistan</td>
<td>Khuzdar and Kalat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Linkages</td>
<td>BRA and BSO-A</td>
<td>BLA and BSO-A</td>
<td>BLA and BSO-A</td>
<td>BLA, BLF and BRA</td>
<td>BLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Linkages</td>
<td>Afghanistan and India</td>
<td>Afghanistan, India and UK</td>
<td>Afghanistan, India and UK</td>
<td>Afghanistan, India and UK</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Support</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>RAW and kidnapping for ransom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>support and extortion</td>
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<td>support, smuggling and extortion</td>
<td>support, smuggling and extortion</td>
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Law and order situation in Balochistan had never been ideal due to tribal disputes and system. Owing to geo-strategic importance of Balochistan, number of hostile states and non-state actors are pursuing their vested agendas. They are patronizing as well as providing funds, training and support to dissident in the province (Humayun, personal communication, 2021).

Afghanistan being used as a firm base to provide support to Baloch sub-nationalists (BSN). Indian consulates in Afghanistan are supporting miscreants and BSN. At one stage Radio Balochistan was established in Afghanistan. It was regularly broadcasting subversive programs to instigate Baloch against

Transformation of Leadership Paradigm in Balochistan

State, Army and agencies. Asylum has been granted to BSN leaders such as Brahmadagh Bugti and Harbiyar Marri in Switzerland and UK respectively. Baloch diaspora duly sponsored by their foreign controllers are propagating the demand for independent Balochistan. All anti-Pakistan forces are assisting them. They are using social media, organizing seminars and having their web sites. Top leadership of banned separatist organization are having comfortable stay in London and Switzerland. These can only be possible on the connivance of their foreign collaborators who are calling the shots (Arshad, personal communication, 2021).

The latest unrest is fully foreign funded. Where role of a Sardar or tribal elder is not dominant. It was learnt from previous insurgencies that Sardars made a deal with govt of Pakistan and tribes surrendered instantaneously. Hence Youth has been chosen -by Indians in particular- to lead the insurgency. Youth is a vulnerable part of the society and easy to brainwash. They have been motivated to start violence by different attractions. Monetary benefits on top of the list. Having a broader support base as compared to tribal insurgencies, the Indians in particular and other players in general are trying to indulge Pakistan in a long and exhausting internal war (Arshad, personal communication, 2021).

CONCLUSION
Balochistan has remained prone to insurgencies due to number of factors, but ongoing militancy and wave of terrorist attacks has serious repercussion for the sovereignty of Pakistan. Ongoing insurgency is different from previous insurgencies in the province. Middle class youth is involved on an unprecedented level. The leadership paradigm of militant groups has been transformed from Baloch tribal heads to Middle-Class Baloch youth. No solution is viable without inclusion of this emerging leadership of Middle-Class youth.

It is high time to engage Baloch youth positively and turn this destructive conflict into a constructive one for once and all.

Separatist movement in the province did not receive any attention in domestic politics, but worrying aspect is its international attention and support of regional and global powers to dissident elements. The Nationalist resistance movement in the province has linkages with history and thrives on foreign support. In the aftermath of 9/11, this region has become a chess board for various regional as well as extra regional actors. Considering the geo strategic location, undiscovered wealth of mineral and natural resources and Nationalist resistance movements, global and regional power players are endeavoring to gain control of the province and exploit it for their benefits.

This whole situation creates serious implications on future of Pakistan and must be responded by crafting a well knitted politico-socio-military strategy. It is not very difficult to improve upon, provided we have the right people with strong political will to execute the right strategy with prudence, balanced approach and sincerity. This will pave the way for bringing positive peace and prosperity in the province.

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