

## **ABSTRACT**

Since the end of the Cold War, security threats emanating from the failed states have been the center of scholarly debate, especially when it comes to domestic, regional, and international security. Nevertheless, after the 9/11 attack by Al-Qaeda, the emphasis on security has been significantly shifted to ungoverned areas or territories. This dissertation entitled, “Ungoverned Spaces, their Exploitation and Militancy. A Case Study of the Un-governance of Pakistan’s Former Federally Administered Tribal Areas, and its Exploitation by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan” addresses the intricate relationship between the ungoverned status of former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan and its implications on the emergence and sustenance of terrorist groups, with a specific focus on the rise and establishment of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in the region. Former FATA of Pakistan, which now merged into the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province in 2018 resembled the characteristics of ungoverned spaces like those of Africa’s Sahel region. The study endeavors to shed light on the historical factors that have contributed to former FATA's persistent ungovernable status since Pakistan's independence and how this vacuum has paved the way for terrorist groups to create fertile ground and a strong foothold in the region. The study will specifically focus on TTP as a prominent example of a terrorist group that has exploited the governance vacuum in the region post-Afghan jihad and the US war on terror. By examining the historical context, poor governance structures, and exploitation of the territory by terrorist elements, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the nexus between the ungovernability of former FATA, the spillover effect of Afghan Jihad, US invasion post 9/11, the rise of the terrorist group i.e., TTP in former FATA and its exploitation by this terrorist network.