

Role of Identity Crisis and Relative Deprivation as Catalysts of Political Violence and Terrorism: Case Study of Kurd Fighters in Turkey

Marium Akhtar

National Defense University, Islamabad, Pakistan
marium.akhtar@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: The role of identity and collective conscious is crucial for the understanding of social mobilization and orientation in any nation confronted with terrorism and political violence. Identity plays a crucial role in the lives of citizens may it be ethnic, cultural, religious or social aspects of a group or community as it can be an effective instrument for mass manipulation and propagation of ideology and conduct of a society. A challenged, deprived or marginalized group identity can be a precursor for politicization and violent manifestation in form of aggression and political violence by the challenged group or community. The paper intended to discuss the interplay and manifestation of identity and sense of deprivation at societal levels in modern nation states. It analyzed identity crisis as a catalyst for turning a deprived and vulnerable and insecure segment of the society, into a violent group, performing terror activities inflicted upon state as evident in case study of Kurds vs. Turkish state in the contemporary scenario.

KEYWORDS: Turkey, Kurds, identity, deprivation, nationalism, terrorism

Introduction

The incidents of 9/11 lead all the global powers to come on the same page regarding the stance about the phenomenon of terrorism as an absolute threat to the whole world. Where it was very clear to all the powers that in order to deal with the curse of

the terrorism appropriate coercive and non-coercive strategies has to use, but the most important challenge was to dig out the main causes of the terrorism. As with every disease to be cured the root cause has to dig out so that it could be prevented in the future. Terrorism has to be fought in the same manner but unfortunately, the fight against terrorism is often remained in the countering posture rather than understanding and addressing the root causes that caters to the success in dissemination, propagation and intensity over the period of time (Bjorgo 2004,1-5). Uncovering and exploring the factors that lead to terrorism are equally important as are the counter measures taken to tackle its ill effects and atrocities. The leading factors explain that how to curb the terrorism and its geographical and ideological growth. Without studying the reasons, circumstances and causes that lead to the emergence of feelings of discontent and negative sentiments that could be used by the terrorist factions to define the “just cause” for the terrorist activities, it would be impossible to envision the end of this menace.

Understanding the phenomenon as an umbrella term has been for long a debate that has occupied academia and practice in anti and counter terrorism spheres. In the past, the basic notions of terror were often associated with revolutionary, rebellious or backstabber approach which was considered as the resultant of some ‘ultra-natural or ritualistic’ beliefs of supremacy, indispensability or ‘moral duty’ by a group of motivated individuals. The new wave of global terrorism that swept the classical one encompassed the ‘nation-state’ aspect of politics and identity as evident in its nature that evolved with time. The political motivations resulting from unaddressed and justified concerns (subjective or objective) gave rise to the new face of the phenomenon having following elements as explained immediately in the 1980’s by Schmidt & Jongman in their book ‘Political Terrorism’(Alex-P et al. 1988, 4-5).

The primary elements identified that were persistently observed in terror incidents that gave the researchers a new understanding in the field were violence and power projection that started showing up in almost 83.5 % of the definitions at that time. Moreover, the aspect of political interests/ gains for a particular agenda was seen to be persistent in 65% of the total terror incidents of that time. Other features that were observed by the researchers included elements of fear, dread and threats of execution by the terrorists. The psychological impacts were observed with each incident that was in form of an intentional, arranged, efficient and composed activity. However the methods of combat, the strategy and tactics showed efficiency in 30.5% if considered out of 100 % of the incidents by terrorist organizations and groups like the FARC and Popular Liberation Army (EPL) in Columbian conflict, PLO in Palestine, UDA in Northern Ireland, and also by the lone wolf, lone-wolf terrorist like the Barend

Hendrik Strydom, known as 'White Wolf', who was a part of terrorism in Africa in those years (Simon, Lone & Wolf 2016, 58).

Understanding at the phenomenon with 'Root cause' Lenses

Terrorism is a much-debated phenomenon in all spheres be it socio-political, religious or economic spheres, it is regarded as a tool to achieve ends with coercion and fear projection for a specific motive in the contemporary era. Group of individuals having converging insecurities and grievances often build up aggression that reaches heights and is articulated by terrorist activities in society or states (Copeland 2001, 5). This aggression sometimes embeds in an individual till they find like-minded individuals who have similar discontent or motives shaped by different situations that they experienced. Terrorism is a phenomenon in which all the responses to the internal and external structural inequalities by the state and societies that lead to the insecurities, discontent and aggression are accumulated. These factors make an individual or a group vulnerable and susceptible to terrorist recruitment and manipulation and provide the fertile ground for the perpetrators to generate violence and extremism. Hence, it is crucial to investigate and highlight how the socio-psychological processes like identity crisis, relative deprivation and empathy are associated with the reconstruction of challenged socio cultural identity that impact group behavior (whether directly or indirectly). On the other hand, it is also important to find out that how these factors contribute and catalyze mass group mobilization and make these groups susceptible to be used by political actors to be politicized and violent and ultimately turning them into terrorist organizations.

The interesting fact about this phenomenon is that it prevails in all societies historically as well as in contemporary settings. Whether countries are rich or are developing, having authoritarian or democratic regimes; this phenomenon is affecting the countries equally in different manners. This implies that the root causes that shape the minds and social attitudes of the vulnerable individuals or groups can exist in all sorts of environments, provided that there must be certain 'trigger factors'. These factors cause extremist behaviors which are later exploited by politically, ideologically or economically motivated terrorist factions. In this context, the study is intended to explore the three different root causes that contribute to the mindset that facilitates the recruitment, financing, execution and dissemination of terrorist activities globally. Following are three root causes that proved to be foremost sociological factors to drive terrorist motivations for vulnerable individuals. These are:

- a) Relative Deprivation,
- b) Identity Crisis
- c) Empathy

Relative Deprivation, identity crisis, and empathy prove to be sociological catalysts that influence and boost the radical and extremist motivations in susceptible individuals. These individuals are then become the easy targets for the terrorist organizations to use them for the accomplishment of their own political, ideological and economic objectives. These factors include socio-economic exclusion, structural violence, marginalization and discrimination (real or perceived) or historical baggage of identity clashes. Identity crisis is the by-product of all the above mentioned factors leading to susceptibility of the affected group or individuals of a state that enables reinforcing solidarity with radical, extremist groups pursuing terror acts in the long run. A close analysis is needed to curb the issue in a general sense which has always played an important role as a root cause for terrorism in different conflict zones of the world.

Manifestation of identity in state institutions and society

Identity has come to refer to several things to population in a state or any communal setting. It can be argued that identity serves many purposes; it may involve the attainment of maximum happiness for collective good and performing as an active member of the setting. Despite these aspects, identity is considered to be the source of contest and conflict in many multi-cultural societies. More importantly, the fact that the exploitation of identity for acquiring an edge over others or resources has been the major challenges confronting the concept of peaceful society. Alubo explores the identity crisis in Nigeria and explains identity as a concept having multifaceted aspects relating to both objective and subjective nature. According to him, identity is a distinguishing label that objectively exists, is subjectively felt, and enables its bearers to experience individually and collectively a sense of solidarity (Alubo 2009, 88).

Building on this context, and according to Kelman, human identities are taken and debated as intentionally and socially constructed, liquid and variable. A group of people may identify themselves with ethnic, religious, occupational, national traits of the respective groups. Generally, when we see the social fabric of any nation/state, the social structure of an identity draws influence from some authentic elements namely; a common history, ideology, language, traditions, experiences, values and collective goals. Consequently if mistreated or challenged, these clans, groups, communities

result in having common grievances and discontent that makes them bond stronger than before. This association of joy and challenge is shared and the course of union becomes a continuous process within any group having a common shared identity (Kelman 2001, 38-40).

Conflict having the context of identity that generates shared grief and deprivation is often followed by a struggle for possession of the state resources as explained by Adeyeye in his study relating to identity conflict leading to terror in Nigeria. His study narrates that the identity based conflicts erupt when groups or its members perceive that their identity is facing a threat and which could only be curbed, protected or boosted by the struggle against the inequalities in different segments of the society or state .without the exercise of identity and recognition, and representation in all fields of a society (Adeyeye & Idowu 2013, 118-120). This realization motivates acts capable of projection and support of awareness for owning and accepting a particular identity. However, identities challenged by factors like territory, right of self-determination, political representation in decision making, or economic purposes generate more conflicts because their social as well as biological survival, is dependent on these aspects as members of that state. For instance, it is argued that discrimination based on aspects such as citizenship against a group or community could lead to the powerful struggle because it is the basic component that will affect the material and non-material resource distribution, especially the political representation. Such inequalities hamper the perceptions and the struggle start with the ideology of the “we” vs. “you” (J.J & D.J 2008, 1136-1137).

In the context of the individuals or groups having psychological as well as sociologically violent approaches leading to the recruitment by the terrorist organization by manipulating their ideology and as a result the collective identity is a result which is crucial for mobilization as a new entity. The radicalization process capitalizes on existing unfavorable conditions, and projects them with augmentation to create false and propagandist narratives, and thus its social acceptance. May it be poverty, unequal resource distribution, ethnic discrimination, territorial disputes, without successful motivations having the potential to mobilize groups; the ideology is unlikely to attract followers to pursue the collective acts of violence and terror. Almost all extremist factions that supply material and manpower to terrorism powerhouses use social and psychological manipulation tactics on vulnerable individuals and groups which feed on social ills and failures in order to justify and strengthen their narratives (Littman 2016, 18).

Many social psychologists have endeavored to examine how challenged identities and relative deprivation contributes toward intractability and violence, which leads to

terrorist activities when socio-political degeneration of a society starts. In her article about identity in Yugoslavia, Franke Wilmer posed certain questions that incite debate and exploration of the sociological factors of group violence and terror. These questions include: How are individuals persuaded to abandon peaceful coexistence and resort to brutality? What factors lead to the buildup of aggression to such an extent in a group of a specific identity that they develop empathy for terrorist factions? These questions further form the basis of this paper as it examines the relationship between identity, and factors that mobilized violence based measures in identity and conflicts involving terrorism (Wilmer 1997, 14).

The net resultant sentiments of deprivation in response of territorial sabotage, political under-representation, economic marginalization or ideological discrimination has the potential to create a fraternal feeling of injustice in comparison to 'others' who are perceived as the receiving end for superiority and advantages. When there is comparison with others, the sociological forces are augmented in a negative way and manifested with either violence or empathy with terror tactics in the long run. The sense of inflicted injustice incites the potential for violent activities by affected individuals as well as groups, as a way to dispose of the aggression, revenge, insecurity or frustration (Agbibo 2013, 150).

Identity and Terrorism- Interplay of identity dynamics

The term 'identity' encompasses the three levels of interaction among individuals in any society setting. These levels of interaction determine the perceived collective goals and the course of actions that a community undertakes as a collectivity. These three complex theoretical constructs are (i) cultural (ii) social and (iii) personal identity domains.

The *cultural identity* refers to the cultural norms and traditions that an individual adopts as guiding principles for his life such as collective knowledge, actions and beliefs about religion, family and tribes. This identity includes aspects such as ethnicity, language, history, and all cultural linkages that a communal group shares promoted and preserved by travelling through generations (Jensen 2003, 190).

The *social identity* refers to the self-proclaimed devotion to the social groups in which individuals interact with each other. The mindset associated with participating in these groups' activities show the bond among members of the group, who perceives the other groups as "not us." (Henri & Turner 2004, 54).

The *personal identity* is of different nature and dimensions than the previous two discussed, as it indicates one's own chosen goals and values and perceptions about oneself. These personal beliefs are used by an individual to make sense of the world and him (Cote 2000, 150-153).

A wholesome study of approaches and perspectives on terrorism requires a holistic understanding about the 'terrorist' and what constitutes his beliefs and attitude development caused by the manifestations of each level of identity. Feelings like those relating to marginalization from mainstream social spheres are common in youth who face aggression and get involved in violent activities at some point but in very rare cases does this factor leads to becoming a suicide bomber.

However, such feelings carving out deprivation and marginalization coupled with passionate devotion to traditions, the "us vs. them" religious principles and revenge can lead to the formation of justification for violence. The others are then seen as a threat to one's ideological or cultural identity or group (Silberman 2005, 770-772). The belief that one's own group or clan is challenged and the deprived although superior group who is being targeted makes terrorist activities and violence a legitimate means to achieve ends by the perpetrator group. The study of interactions among the various levels is complex and requires a theoretical analysis which can untangle the phenomenon in an integrative approach (Smith 2004, 428-429).

A review of the ever evolving and transforming literature on terrorism and conflict escalation explain that the role of identity is central to the understanding of this phenomenon. Identity is regarded as the 'black box' within and among individuals, communities and groups having little explanation about how it operates and in what manner. The identity dynamics, however, have the inherent potential to act as trigger, perpetrator and a catalyst towards grief, discontent and ultimately violence which may be terrorism in some cases. Different levels of identity provide space and operating forums for group sentiments to be fostered may they be positive or negative due to some factors. These identities can be classified into the following main classes; cultural, social, and personal, identity (Fathali 2005, 160).

Any disruption or challenge posed to these identity dimensions can lead to aggravation of grievances, turning violent manifestations into terrorist aspirations and activities at any stage. Also, it is the interplay between the cultural, social, and even personal identity which determines the role of an individual or a group and the likelihood for engagement in terrorism.

Sense of deprivation: Perceiving oneself as 'the have not's'

The concept of relative deprivation has its roots in the broader spectrum of political violence. Ted Gurr explains that a collective discontent and feeling of resentment is created as a result of the gap between the expected and achieved welfare among certain individuals or groups in a society (Gurr 1970, 76). This deprivation can be self-perceived or even prevalent in the real sense in a society at cultural or socio economic levels. The violence that comes in the wake of this discontent justifies the fact that the vulnerable group perceives themselves to be treated as 'inferiors' by those who get more benefits or opportunities in a setting. Cases of political violence prevalent around the world in form of movements and conflicts show that the collective action in form of violence has often led groups to turn into terror activities in later stages of escalation and aggression (Fathali 2005, 161).

The analysis of the relative deprivation theory as a root cause for terrorism might be effective in understanding the phenomenon if we take in account the role of globalization in the contemporary times. The role of globalization on countries has hugely affected the role it has on terrorism too because of the advancements and the economic development that plays a vital part in propagating and expanding the terrorist activities both geographically and morally by using high technological advancements of information dissemination and financing. Relative deprivation also can be used to explain an inconsistency in what an individual's economic and socio cultural standing is in his country compared to what he believes he is justly entitled to after having a look at other groups or even countries for that matter.

The public awareness of identity, living, territory, and preservation of socio economic conditions prevalent in nations thousands of miles away has the tendency to create a new benchmark for individuals of a country as compared to themselves. Certain citizens of a nation may feel deprived of their identity or territorial power that they once had that might have been decreased or lost due to transforming global or regional scenario. This might trigger a sense of deprivation that might not be relative but in some cases according to activities of that group, can be taken as having relative nature by the host country.

Politicization of identity & deprivation for catalysis of terrorism

The role of any root cause of violent extremism leading to terrorism at some stage cannot come into play without aggravation of that cause to an extent that it serves the purpose of projection and propagation of violent activities by a group. This aggravation

needs a certain level of mobilization of mass and sensitization of the issues or the perceived goals related to a clan, ethnic group or population in order to set in motion a terrorist approach. Politicization is the most effective and the only means by which large masses of the population can be driven for a particular cause or motive.

Elites play a central role in this politicization process by which they can manipulate the dynamics of group identities and associate it to certain event, issue, aspect or instrument of disagreement, may it be a potential or an already existing one. They influence the group formation and cohesion by making use of the symbols, narratives and myths to fabricate the boundaries of identity specifying who 'We' and 'Them' are in order to identify the future targets of aggression. This construction of the out-group ('Them') who is enemy and anti-in-group (Us) is the part of the process of politicizing an issue to the extent that it becomes functional to be a driver of violence, aggression and at any point terror activities.

In the contemporary world, where societies experience changes dependent on global as well as local factors, the politicization of issues results in the breakdown of social cohesion and integration in a country. The politics play an active role in issues relating to breakdown of social bonds, economic regression, deprivation and challenged or vulnerable identities. Power plays are then incorporated along with the external as well as internal factors that drive the flow of conflict and aggression, exhibiting terrorist incidents every now and then (Brown 2007, 111). The elites are the leaders of this process and often tend to represent the whole community by using strong narratives, emerging as a part of the deprived and challenged group's, to show themselves as the main representatives of that group. They assume the predetermined role setting in motion, the shared understanding of history and myth in order to link the social situations to the group identity in order to steer the movement or terror activities (Kohn 2005, 380).

While politicization of the group identity can often be undertaken for the material or non-material interests of the in-group, it is widely debated that among other aspects of a mass movement, the political maneuvering can be sometimes pursued only for securing the interests of elite leaders. The demands of the rebel, or terrorist group may be different at the start of the conflict but the nature of demands are often seen as transforming gaining depth and weight according to different direct or indirect beneficiaries. The next section of the paper discusses Kurdish population and its activities as it is perceived as a population that is facing identity crisis along with deprivation in the Middle East and beyond. The manifestation of violence and aggression leading to terror tactics and insurgents movements is a symbol of the Kurdish frustration shaped by history. The Kurds are among the fighter population in

many conflicts of the world may they be considered as a proxy force, freedom fighters or terrorist in the case of Turkey and AL Qaeda Kurdish battalion. A closer look at the role of Kurdish identity crisis and deprivation is important to understand the possible reasons after group motivations, dynamics and future trajectories

Identity crisis and Relative deprivation: The Case of Kurds in Turkey

Kurds happen to be the indigenous people belonging to Mesopotamian plains and the mountainous region expanded to five countries. They are scattered ethnic population now inhabiting the now south-eastern Turkey, north-eastern Syria, the northern part of Iraq, north-western Iran and the south-western parts of Armenia. They form a unique population that is closely knit and united because of their race, culture and language, and goals. Kurds have a number of religious clans belonging to different creeds but the majority of the population is Sunni Muslim cadre.

Figure 1: Distribution of Kurdish population map



Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-09-10/kurdish-map/6763626>

The Kurds are concentrated in five countries with respect to population. Since the sixteenth-century, Kurds have been surviving between dysfunctional states and bitter enemies from the Ottomans and the Persians to modern manifestations of these empires. Kurdish populations were always challenged identity bearers and were dealt with by forced resettlements, genocide, and the suppression as an ethnic minority group.

The bitter history of Kurd deprivation starts from the 1916 Sykes-Picot agreement between the United Kingdom and France that shaped the future of an entire region, thus creating fragmented and dysfunctional states like Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and others. Sykes-Picot ultimately caused the formation of these new states without considering the human connections and ethnic, historic and cultural linkages just on the basis of geographic dimensions the land was divided. This set the stage for a century of political instability, senseless violence, insurgencies, terrorism and socio cultural as well as ethnic disjoint in the region, all trends that show no signs of reduction till now. Furthermore, notably absent from the agreement was any provision for the third largest ethnic group of the region the Kurds. As they were a large population scattered in different states now, without a nation of their own, without borders left to protect their own identity and safeguard their rights in respective countries.

Much of Kurdish heritage and culture has been lost or destroyed, valuable records have been withered in secret archives, as a whole, many people are scared to talk about their Kurdish identity in some countries which depicts the worst identity crisis of all times.

The development of a challenged and deprived Kurd identity in Turkey

In early 20th Century, the Kurd nation developed aspirations to have their own homeland which they named as 'Kurdistan', the land of the 'Kurds'. After the World War One, when the Ottoman Empire had faced defeat, the western allies made an endowment for the ethnic Kurd population involving an independent 'Kurdistan'. A territory in which they can exercise their own rules and regulations with cultural and structural freedom along with preserving their distinct identity as an indigenous race evolved into a stable nation. The provision was made under the Treaty of Sevres in 1920 and hopes for an independent Kurd homeland were high, however, three years later these hopes were shattered with the signing of Treaty of Lausanne, in which boundaries of the 'Modern Turkey' had no trace of the Kurd homeland, leaving the Kurd population in deep dismay and a minority status in their own country. Hence, the first wave of 'identity-crushing' structural violence inflicted upon Kurds was evident in the violent war phase when Turkey had rose from the remnants of Ottoman Empire.

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was the leader of a revolutionary process of reconstructing the country in a manner that the process was called 'Turkification'. The nation building process the Kurd discontent population was crushed at all fronts wherever they tried to raise their voice as an ethnic group having challenged identity and deprived

conscious. The 'Kemalist' ideology involved cleansing of all the other ideologies including Kurdish identity and merging it into the Turk nation as a whole. The Kurds were given the status of 'Mountain Turks' which was strongly opposed by the Kurd ethnic masses as they faced deep regression in their own country. During the next 80 years, any move that was taken by the Kurds as a manifestation of aggression and violence resultant of the negation of the right of territorial determination was brutally quashed. It was in 1978 that the Kurds finally took arms against the Turkish state and formed the Kurdistan Workers Party PKK (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê) and the beginning of armed conflict was evident.

Figure 2: Kurdish- Turkish Map 2017



Source: <https://southfront.org/turkish-kurdish-conflict-map-update/>

To this date, Kurds and Turkish state are in animosity with each other, as they are not given their due rights as a separate identity despite constituting 15-20% of the total population. Kurds received very harsh treatment from the state as a response for their uprisings. Kurd language was restricted, with their ethnic identity denied, Kurd costumes and names were also banned (Natali 2001, 257). The PKK and Turkish authorities have seen a long history of armed aggression, conflict and ceasefire violations in a quest to gain and regain territory in South East part of the country. It

has the larger goal to establish an independent Kurd nation state on Marxist Lenin ideology, by combining all Kurdish populated regions of Syria, Iraq, Iran and Turkey. However, PKK has also tried to negotiate with the state and urged for greater cultural and political autonomy along with fighting the state forces (Yavuz 1998, 16). Their goal has now transformed in the form of leaving separatism and advocating integration into a democratized, co federalized Turkey (Akayya & Jongerden 2011) has always interpreted the ceasefire urge and peace agreement proposition by the PKK as their weakness and have labeled them as a terrorist organization.

The PKK sense of betrayal by the Turkish authorities and lack of recognition for their justified demands leaves Kurd population no option than to resort to violence and terror activities. The frustration is evident as their demands are meant to be understood keeping in mind the suffering and sacrifices made by the Kurd population in the conflict, provided this ethnic population is suppressed and negated the basic rights in all the states in which it is scattered as a nation less inhabitants may it be Iraq, Syria or Iran.

The foremost urge of the Kurd population in all the host countries is to live in autonomous regions inside the respective countries in order to live their lives according to their 'Kurd Identities'. They seek peaceful coexistence rather than causing violence and terror in Turkey or any country. The designation of Kurds PKK as a 'Terrorist organization' has made it appear as a perpetrator rather than victim of identity crisis and structural as well as cultural violence by the state. Thus the collective feeling comes into being that relates to being let down and misunderstood that is being confirmed by their popular proverb 'Kurds have no friends but the mountains'. This saying also depicts their resolute to retain their armed struggle through its armed guerrilla forces and negotiation tactics through force and terror activities across the country. According to them, 'PKK is not the cause of terrorism, it is the consequence...And if the cause will not change, the consequence will not change, we can lay down arms but in the past it was always left unanswered' (Abdullah Demirbas, then DTP Kurdish Party's Mayor)¹.

The Turkish government launched a violent tactic in form of a well "coordinated war on terror" against the PKK as a result; thousands of people including civilians have been the target of this aggression that is due to the ignorance and intentional suppression of the Kurd ethnic population. The clashes in south-eastern Turkey ignited clashes in Syria and Iraq too with Kurd armed militias active and declared as terrorist organizations by Turkey. According to Turkish government the armed Kurd groups active in violence and political terror in other host countries are all terrorist organizations. YPG and PYD in Syria and the KDP in Iraq are parts and factions

of the PKK, have its goal of terrorism through armed struggle, and are all terrorist organizations. (Somer 2005, 620). The designation of terrorist organization by Turkey is a form of mistreatment and has repercussions in form of violence and terrorist activities by the PKK causing collateral damage to human and material resources.

The PKK seeks national as well as global recognition as the central representative of Turkey's Kurd population. A continued negation of this status leads to increase in the extent and force of demands leaving them no choice than adopting terror tactics to put pressure on the host government. The present day persistent refusal to enter into peace or negotiation with the 'terrorists' (PKK) agreements by the Turkish government provides no advantage in case of leaving armed struggle as a reserve. Therefore it continues as a low intensity conflict with Turkish forces killing PKK militants all over the region including Iraq and Syria, but the terror attack attempts are also pursuing as the recent bombing of the OIC Summit in Istanbul was made unsuccessful by the Turkish police². Similar incidents of terror attacks as well as killing of PKK militants is undertaken often in cities of Turkey which shows that the violence is continued on both sides. This brings new grievances on both conflict parties as it revives the Kurdish and Turkish nationalist sentiments and then translates into further violence and societal friction in form of civil unrest in Turkish cities.

Conclusions

The identity crisis and relative deprivation in case of Kurd population in Turkey and other countries is an evident example of how the sociological root causes contribute to mobilize and organize the group aggression leading to the possibility of declaring the group as a terrorist organization. The ethnic Kurds perceive that their homeland is the solution to their identity crisis and in case they do not succeed, their identity will remain challenged and diminish in future. They face structural as well as cultural suppression in host countries due to the movement that is steered by strong identity collectiveness and ethnic in-group association. The labeling of PKK as a terrorist organization has transformed the Kurdish nationalist movement into an aggression based violent group exhibiting terror activities across the host states via splinter groups and associated Kurd armed factions. The Kurdish Diaspora all around the world has a strong affiliation with the Kurd ethnic identity and supports the cause of a separate 'Kurdistan' that underlies within the entire Kurdish parties in action in the region. The problem of identity crisis and deprivation lies at the heart of the Kurdish question and needs to be understood as mistreatment and mishandling continues at large scale in Turkey and other countries.

Any anti-terrorism or counter terrorism undertaken by the Turkish forces are prone to achieve temporary results for the future also, if the deep rooted Kurd identity and provision of all the rights is not being considered as an option.

Notes

- ¹ From a speech that was given at the EU-Turkey accession process related conference held in partnership with the Kurdish Institute in Brussels at the House of Parliamentarians, Brussels, and Oct, 2008.
- ² Police foil planned PKK attack on Organization of Islamic Cooperation summit in Istanbul, News Hurried, and December 15 2017. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/police-foil-planned-pkk-attack-on-organization-of-islamic-cooperation-summit-in-istanbul-124197>, (accessed on 16 December 2017)

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