

# Expository Essay

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## Religious Extremism as a challenge to economic development

### Outline

#### 1. Introduction

Religious extremism refers to extreme beliefs that promote violence and other disturbance within a country to achieve their goals. Consequently, it hampers economic development due to its malevolent activities. However, addressing this issue through some precautionary measures is the need of the time.

#### 2. Role of religious extremism in economic development

#### 3. Inclusive Challenge of Religious Extremism in a country

a) Religious extremism contributes to social division

b) Extremist ideologies lead to violence and terrorism

c) It creates economic disruptions

#### 4. Religious extremism as a challenge to economic development



a) Religious extremism creates investment deterrence

b) It declines tourism activities in a country

c) Infrastructures also damage due to religious extremism

d) Skilled professionals and entrepreneurs leave affected by religious extremism

e) It disturbs trade among the nations

f) It is also the cause of educational setbacks

g) Regions affected by religious extremism suffer from a negative global image

h) It can result in human rights violation

i) It also leads to migration and displacement of the people from a country

### 5- How to encounter this issue

a) Promote Inclusive economic policies

b) Invest in education

c) Enhance security measure



d) Community engagement and dialogue

### 6- Conclusion

On September 11, 2001, a group of 19 terrorists associated with religious extremist group - al-Qaeda hijacked four commercial airplanes in the United States. The attacks targeted prominent symbols of American; ~~the~~ World Trade Center towers in New York City and Pentagon in Washington Dc. This attacks had profound and far-reaching implications for global economic development. A country which is a snag in economic development where religious extremism prevails there. As the inclusive challenge of religious extremism contributes to social division and extremist ideologies lead to violence and terrorism. This result into the



economic disruption. Furthermore, solely religious extremism as a challenge to economic development as it creates investment deterrence.

It declines tourism activities in a country. Infrastructures also damaged due to religious extremism. Skilled professional and entrepreneurs leave the area affected by religious extremism.

In addition to it, it disturbs trade among the nations and builds the negative global ~~glare~~ image of a country. However,

some steps can be taken to combat with this battle, such as, promotion of inclusive economic policies, investment in education and through community engagement and dialogue<sup>etc</sup>.

**Religious extremism** refers to extreme beliefs that promote violence and other disturbance within a country to achieve their goals. Consequently, it hampers economic development due to its malevolent activities.

However, addressing this issue through <sup>some</sup> precautionary measures is <sup>the</sup> need of the time.

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The Nexus between religious extremism and economic development should not be overlooked. Religious extremism has a severe impact on economic expansion in a country. Its rise and continuous threat impedes economic activities, which ultimately, leads to a fragile economy in a country. Globally, many countries are confronting with this menace like, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Nigeria etc. Terrorist attacks in these countries cost their billions of dollars and with it also erodes their social structures and weakens their economic potentials to pace with other countries of the world.

Above all, an Inclusive Challenge of religious Extremism contributes to social division. Social cohesion and stability are the essential elements for economic development. Absence of tolerance, respect and affection in a



country lead to instability and mistrust. Extremist views ~~views~~ marginalize minority groups. Leading to discrimination and exclusions which in turn weakens the overall fabric of society. So, this chaos environment is <sup>not</sup> the letting the economy to flourish. For Instance, the extremist group like Taliban in Afghanistan creates mayhem in a society. People are polarized there and their economic condition is <sup>the</sup> worst than ancient dark time. Hence, social cohesion is crucial for economic prosperity.

likewise, extremists ideologies lead to violence and terrorism. Their extreme interpretation of religion surges hostility among the people and they start violence and attacks <sup>infrastructures</sup> inside a country. Their extreme agenda and purpose of an extremist groups prevail ~~is~~ destruction and casualties. Therefore, government prioritize to combat with these groups instead of working for the economic —



advancement. Their attacks take the lives of civilians and security persons as well as. According to BBC News, 23 soldiers killed in attack on army base by TTP in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2023.

Consequently, extreme ideologies of religious extremists constructs violence and terrorism in a country, which is unfavorable for ~~economic~~ economic prosperity.

Similarly, religious extremism fosters economic disruptions. Economy is the backbone of any country. However, the extremist activities act as deadweight in <sup>the</sup> process of economic improvement.

Attacks on state's important infrastructures killing human capital of a country and targeting the law enforcement agencies are creating a serious danger for a government to stop them and at the same time <sup>to</sup> enhance its economy.

These all activities of extremism groups pause all economic activities.



which would lead economic growth.  
As a <sup>result</sup> ~~to~~ influx of wealth can't be seen  
in the country. Fareed Zakaria -

the author and journalist, in his  
book "The Future of Freedom" discusses  
that the religious extremism can  
impede economic development by  
limiting individual freedoms and fostering  
instability. Thus, religious extremism  
distract the economic development.

Coupled with, religious extremism  
creates investment deterrence. Better economic  
activities can be utilized in those environments  
where stability is sustained, otherwise no  
one ready to work in a toxic environment

Extremist activities often involves violence and  
unrest, which pose significant security risks.

Investors are deterred to work in that

environment. According to Rasheed and Tahir (2012)

Research <sup>that</sup> terrorism creates insecurity in a country

that ultimately results in the loss of  
foreign investor confidence that leads

to decrease in foreign direct investment (FDI).

All things considered, that religious extremism  
deter. investment climat



Moreover, it declines tourism activities in a country. Most of the countries economy depend upon on tourism and other countries boost their economy through tourism sector. However, religious extremism causes a bottleneck in this sector, while creating security issue. This conveys to the world as an unsafe country to explore the natural beauty. As a result, people do not come to those places, where it is affected by religious extremism. For instance, ongoing security issues including those related to religious extremism, have hindered tourism in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

Furthermore, Infrastructures also damage due to religious extremism. The extremist groups attacks on buildings and many other important infrastructure, schools and colleges of a country. This cost very high for a country to rebuild them again. For this reason the economy is decline.

Like, In Pakistan between 2007 and 2009 TTP has destroyed more than 400 girls school. Hence, religious extremism also cause the damage of infrastructure in a country.



In addition to it, Skilled professionals and entrepreneurs leave the area affected by religious extremism. For smoothly running a business and for fully using one's potential is needed a tranquil and secure environment. In case, of religious extremism the above mentioned things are <sup>not</sup> possible to deal with. Therefore these potential people leave a country for search of favorable milieu.

For instance, Following the fall of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and rise of the Taliban to power, many young skilled and educated Afghan forces left their own country. Hence, religious extremism also causes brain drain.

In the same way, it disturbs trade among the nations. Trade can be promoted through safe environment, when environment is not suitable for exchanging goods and services. So, this impedes economic improvement. In this way, it has impacted import and export among nations.



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Besides, it is also the cause of educational set back. extremist activities lead to the closure of school or universities, disrupting the regular education system. Extremist ideologies influence educational content and include their harsh concepts in textbooks. For example, Taliban in Afghanistan heavily influenced curriculum and ~~include~~ include Taliban's interpretation of Islamic teachings. Hence, it is pushing education backward rather than forward.

Last but not least, regions affected by religious extremism suffer from a negative global image. Global positive image is important for a country to develop economically. In a secure country other developed countries are ready to invest, and open their business across the country. But if the situation is opposite due to religious extremism, so the global image is deteriorating and no one wants to maintain their works



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with ~~the~~ affected area by extremism.  
For instance, The activities of groups  
like Boko Haram have had implications  
for Nigeria's international reputation.  
Like this religious extremism affected  
global image of a country.

Conversely, there are some  
effective steps to counter religious extremism  
in a country. First, <sup>promotion</sup> Inclusive economic  
policies. Promoting inclusive economic  
policies can be a strategic approach  
to addressing the root causes of religious  
extremism. Creating jobs, promotion  
of social cohesion and community  
development can inculcate the sense  
of shared purpose and reduce the appeal  
of extremist ideologies. Implementing  
such policies requires a comprehensive  
and sustained effort involving collaboration  
between government, civil society and  
the private sector. This would  
ultimately lead to the reduction of  
religious extremism and development of economy.



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### Second, Invest in Education.

is one of the solutions to resolve this problem. Improving access to quality education for all can enhance critical thinking, tolerance, and understanding, contributing to more cohesive society. This sort of society promotes peace and development rather than violence and terrorism.

Educating minds are really helpful for the promotion of stability of the country. Therefore, education has a great role to reduce religious extremism from a country.

### Third, Enhancing Security

measures are also important to eliminate religious extremism. Lack of security measures escalates the problem severely, for this purpose there should be some deterrence of terror group, which impede economic progress in a country. Such as, operation Zarb-e-Azb was a joint military offensive conducted by Pakistan Armed forces against



various militant groups. This act reduces terrorism in the country. Hence, security measures are importance to counter with religious extremism.

Lastly, community engagement and dialogue can also mitigate the issue. Engaging directly with communities affected by or susceptible to extremism is vital. This involves understanding their concerns, addressing grievance, and involving them in decision-making processes. Engaging local leaders, religious figures and influencers can be particularly effective. In Pakistan there were many dialogues with TTP to control terrorist attacks; however, it didn't get positive result so far, still it is a great solution, when it is implemented accordingly. Thus, there are some steps together help to eliminate religious extremism in a country.



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In summation, religious extremism imposes serious threat towards economic expansion. It deters investment climate. It also hampers the flourishing of tourism sector. Moreover, religious extremism leads to the setback of education and suffer an affected country from the negative global image. Addressing this issue in time and providing suitable solutions beyond a shadow of doubt can solve the economic impede ment.

This extremism surges on clarity bases to fulfill their objectives. Therefore, countering the issue is need of the hours.

Although, religious extremism is a dark aspect of a country, it can still be overcome through the suggested remedies.

“Don't worry about the darkness of difficult times; face it with the light within you.” (Amit Ray)