



# The Legacy of the Pakistani Taliban on Girls' Access to Education

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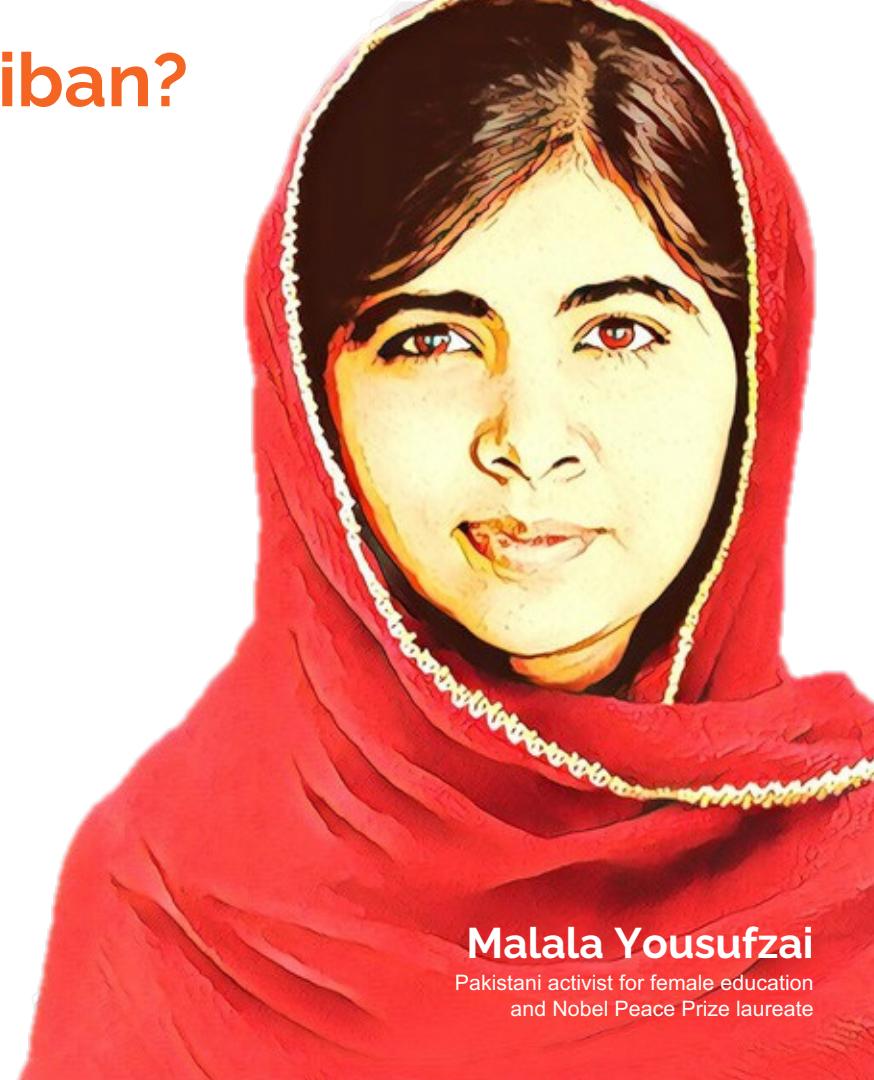
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# Who are the Pakistani Taliban?

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), more commonly known as the Pakistani Taliban, is Pakistan's most deadly militant organization.

Part of their orthodox agenda is preventing girls from attending educational institutions, particularly schools that follow Western models of education.

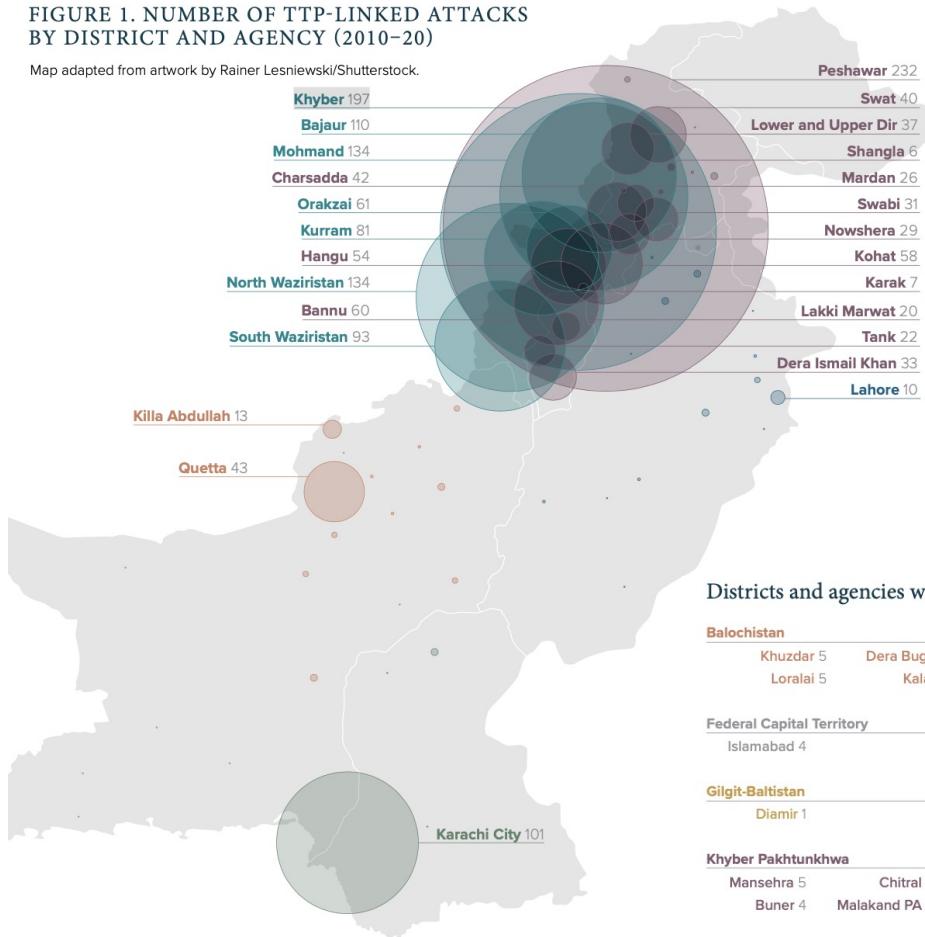
**In 2007, the organization started a violent terrorist campaign against the Pakistan armed forces, launching attacks on civilians and army bases.**



**Malala Yousufzai**  
Pakistani activist for female education  
and Nobel Peace Prize laureate

FIGURE 1. NUMBER OF TTP-LINKED ATTACKS BY DISTRICT AND AGENCY (2010-20)

Map adapted from artwork by Rainer Lesniewski/Shutterstock.



# TTP Attacks have increased by 42% in 2021 from the previous year

We are interested in finding  
the causal effect of TTP  
terrorist incursions that  
started in 2007 on girls' access  
to education in rural areas of  
Pakistan.



# 1. Our Approach

We propose a **Difference in Difference** model to contrast girls' enrollment rate in districts of Pakistan where TTP had a presence after the 2007 incursion with all other rural districts.

- **Simple**

Easy to implement and communicate results

- **Rural districts behave similarly**

We can assume the education trends would be parallel in rural districts of Pakistan

- **Baseline differences exist**

We are comparing groups of rural districts that have different baseline enrollment rates

# What is our Difference-in-Difference Comparison?



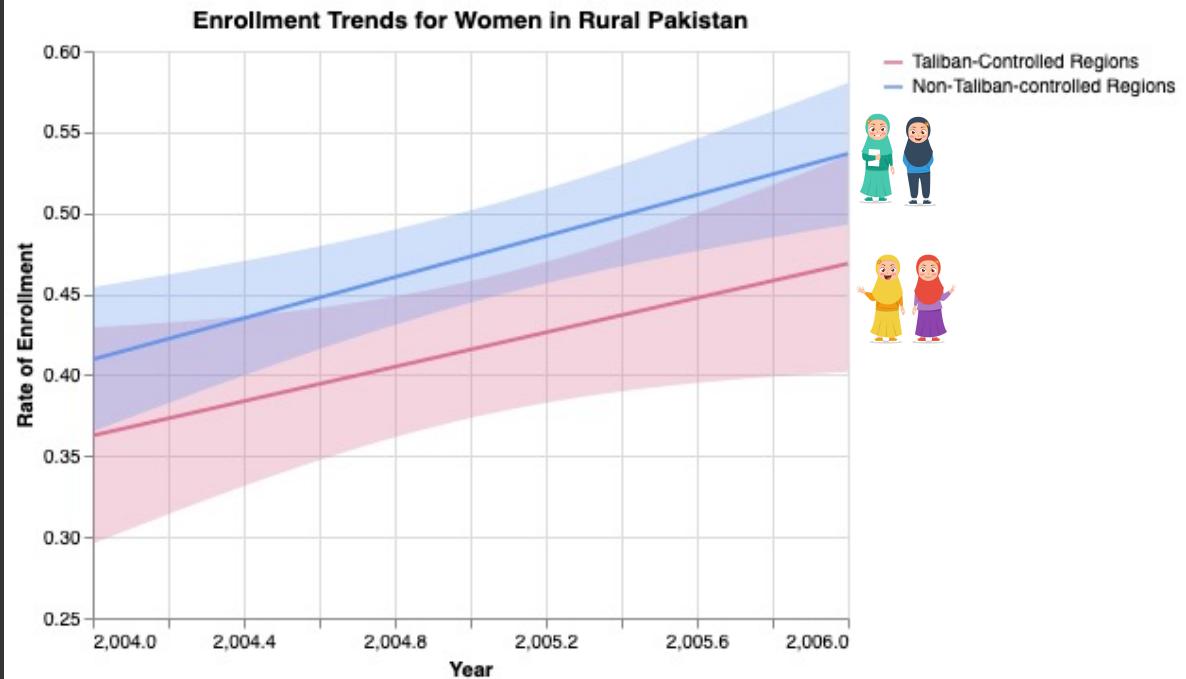
Fatima and Amina live South Waziristan, a rural district occupied by Taliban (TTP) after 2007



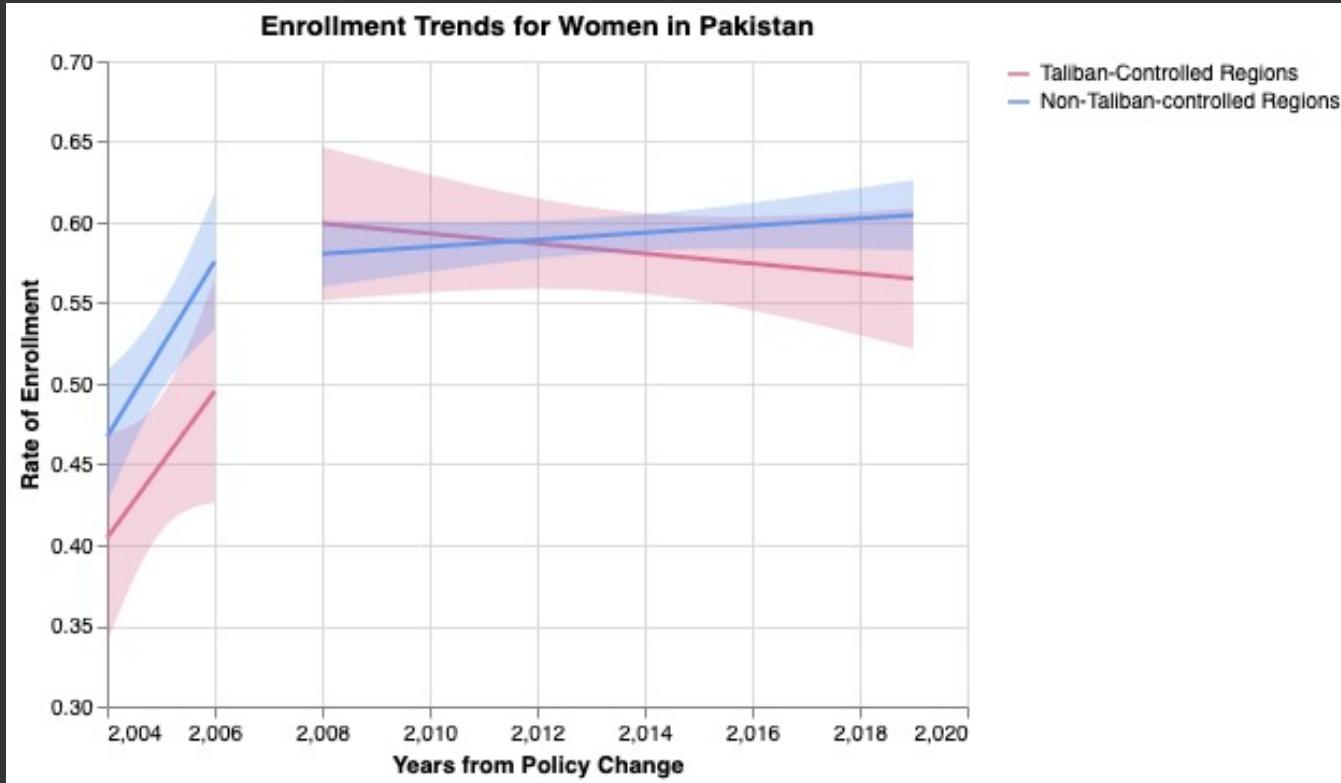
Mariam and Aisha live in Ferozepur, a rural district of Punjab in Pakistan

# Why we think this model works?

Rural areas in Pakistan have more similarities in socioeconomic and demographic indicators, for this reason we would **expect education indicators to trend in similar rates across years if none had suffered Taliban occupations.**



# RESULTS



There is a negative trend for enrollment rate in TTP-controlled areas on the graph

# RESULTS

We did not find a statistically significant difference in enrollment rates of girls in TTP controlled districts compared to other rural districts.



Just because we did not find a significant effect, it does not mean that there isn't one.

# RESULTS

What does that mean?

Average difference in enrollment rates before and after 2007 is 0.12 % points



Fatima and Amina live South Waziristan, a rural district occupied by Taliban after 2007

On average, the districts that suffered TTP stronghold show a larger increase in enrollment rate on average compared to the other rural locations

Average difference in enrollment rates before and after 2007 is 0.09 % points



Mariam and Aisha live in Ferozepur, a rural district of Punjab in Pakistan

# How did we arrive at this conclusion?

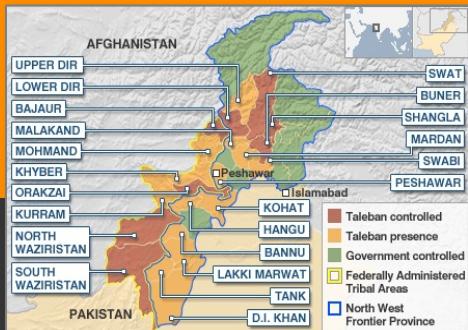
We used education enrollment data from 2 surveys: *PSLM* and *HIES*

*Geographically representative samples of 200-250 households were surveyed in each district*

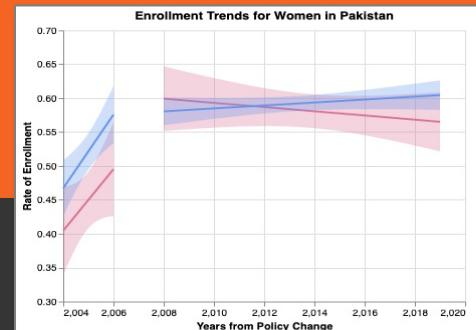


We defined which areas of the country have been under TTP control.

*Because all the TTP controlled areas were rural, we only included rural districts in our control group*



We calculated enrollment rates for girls between 4 and 10 years old for each sampled district and compared TTP-controlled districts to all other rural districts in Pakistan.



# Data limitations

1. We do not have survey results from the surveys of years 2009, 2016, and 2017.
2. Our unit of observation is at the district level, which is not consistently defined in Pakistan in the 13 years of data we are studying.
  - The collection of districts surveyed is not the same each year.
  - Larger districts were subdivided into smaller areas in 2018 and 2019
  - Some regions and districts names were changed in a Constitutional reform in 2018.
3. We found that 2007 was an outlier in Pakistan social and economic indicators.
  - The rates of enrollment for both male and females significantly drop to 0.3, which is inconsistent with previous trends that we observe. 2007-08 was a time of significant political turmoil in Pakistan, with the assassination of former Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, in late 2007, and rampant public protests and strikes, which can explain this steep dip in enrollment rates.
4. There are too many missing districts in the survey collected for 2018



# Other model limitations...

1. **K-12 education in Pakistan is compulsory.** We suspect there may be biases in how people reported enrollment of their children in school.
2. The average difference in difference coefficient does not test for parallelism of the trends because its merely a mean value.
3. We observed lower enrollment rates in the last two years of the PSLM survey, the same years more remote rural areas were included for the first time in the sample surveyed.



## Next steps:

Explore the difference between boys' and girls' enrollment rates as the response variable. This triple-difference analysis would help provide reassurances that we are not capturing differences in schooling availability generally, but rather differences in schooling availability to young girls, in particular.



# Conclusion

No causal negative effect was found, however, that does not mean the Taliban had no influence in girl's access to primary education.

- Data and model limitations may have made it impossible for us to find a significant difference in enrollment rates.
- Even if there was a significant negative effect on girls' enrollment rate caused by TTP presence. There may be potential violations of SUTVA.

