



Conflict, Student Unrest and Challenges: A Study of Students of Jammu and Kashmir

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ABSTRACT: The people of Jammu and Kashmir continue to struggle with their right to self-determination and mental freedom since three decades. The conflict in Kashmir is also a flash point between the two nuclear powers of south Asia and the fight between the two countries has led to the miserable condition of the people of the State in general and the students in the particular. This research is based on analyzing the psychological effect on the students due to conflict in Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir has remained as a dispute between India and Pakistan since their period of independence and three inter-state wars so far are fought between the two countries. The socio economic development of the State has terribly suffered due to this problem of conflict and so are the students of state seriously suffering due to the unrealistic and inappropriate strategy of state to overcome the problem. This research is based on analyzing the psychological effect on students due to conflict in Kashmir. Although the issue is active subject in the daily UN log and is deemed to have the credentials of being the highest militarized zone in the world, but still nothing concrete is seen to overcome the misery of people and the unrest of the students created due to the ongoing the conflict. The study reveals that the prevailing conditions especially in the Kashmir valley have a negative impact on the student life and so their future prospects creating a lot of mental strain and stress. Therefore, the significance of psychological trauma that crosses all thresholds of torture continues to remain obscure.

Key words: Kashmir conflict, unrest, students, psychological effect.

I. INTRODUCTION

Jammu and Kashmir is a state in Northern India and denoted by the acronym J&K most of the times and located mostly in the Himalayan Mountains. The major region of study and survey in J&K is the Kashmir. The Kashmir valley is surrounded by the snow-clad mountain range, has been disputed territory between India and Pakistan, since the birth of both nations in 1947. Kashmir at present is the highest militarized zone in the world. It continues to remain the main bone of contention between India and Pakistan. The view of the conflict has further exacerbated the tensions between the two countries and over the years added to the intractability of the conflict, with both sides appearing unwilling to compromise and come to the negotiating table. The political instability has a negative impact material fabric of society and gives rise to stress affecting the everyday life and livelihood of Kashmiri people and so the students if the state as well. The violence and cruelty of conflict are also associated with range of psychological and behavioral problems including depression, anxiety, post traumatic stress, nightmares etc. Further more psychological trauma may become evident in disturbed and antisocial behavior, such as family conflict and aggression towards others. The violence in the trouble torn valley of Kashmir has taken a heavy toll by influencing each and every individual of the society and has ruined everything, including psychological health of the students too. Apart from resulting in the death of thousands, Conflict has resulted in emotional distortion of people and students, mental imbalance, feelings of insecurity, uncertainty, and economic instability among Kashmiri people. Daily exposure to a variety of severe traumatic stresses has lead to an escalation in mental ailments of every person. The present situation of Kashmir is getting worse with dozens of causalities and injuries everyday. The long resisted frustration has turned Kashmiris to violent means of resistance. The people of Jammu and Kashmir continue to struggle with their right to self-determination since three decades and the conflict in and around Kashmir is a flash point between the two nuclear powers of south Asia. The fight between the two countries has led to miserable condition of people of the state in general and the students in particular. This research is based on analyzing the psychological effect on the students due to conflict in Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir has remained a bone of contention between India and Pakistan since their period of independence and three inter-state wars so far are fought between the two countries. The socio economic development of the state has terribly suffered due to this problem of conflict and so are the students of state seriously suffering due to the unrealistic and inappropriate strategy of state to overcome the problem. This research is based on analyzing the psychological effect on students due to conflict in

Kashmir. Although the issue is a very active subject in the daily UN log and is deemed to have the credentials of being the highest militarized zone in the world but still nothing concrete is seen to overcome the misery of people and the unrest of the students created due to the ongoing the conflict. The study reveals that the prevailing conditions especially in the Kashmir valley have a negative impact on the student life and Ghose (1989) says that future prospects too suffer due to the conflict which creates a lot of mental strain and stress. Therefore, the significance of psychological trauma crosses all thresholds of torture continue to remain obscure [4].

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the psychoanalytical effects of conflict on the students of Kashmir.
- To assess the impact of conflict on different age groups of students.
- Identifying ways in which parents and relatives can support their children.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Conflict: *Conflict is a serious disagreement, struggle, and fight arising out of differences of opinions, and interests between individuals or groups.* Conflict, clash of interests are universal in nature. It occurs in all times and places, and is present almost in all societies. In some societies conflict may be acute and vigorous while in some other it may be very mild. The relationship between civil war, education, and the duration of peace is found to exist everywhere (Buckland 2005) [1]. There is the traditional modernization perspective contending for the better educated the population of a country the better the chances for stability and democracy (Lipset 1959) [2]. Although a growing number of works pay attention to coordination of education and civil war but still there remain a considerable uncertainty over the relationship between educational access and civil unrest. The literature too suggests that education plays a *positive role in peace promotion and* heals the wounds of war, solve youth unemployment, deliver decentralization and democracy, build peace and promote economic/social development.” Unfortunately the education sector has been badly hit in Kashmir Valley and causing ‘irreversible loss’ to students due to the continuous closure of schools, educational institutes. Ghose (1989) says that a compromise with the students education is witnessed creating an educational handicap in them. They pass but the lacunae are left behind because of the inappropriate and low quality set of education system and the unrest created in students. An example is here that J&K Board of Secondary Education for 10th and 12th standard students covered only 50% of the total syllabus and an option has been given to the students to appear in March (for 100% syllabus coverage) also.” according to the Economic Survey Report, 2016. Almost 31 school buildings were gutted during the five-month-long unrest following the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani in an encounter. In 2016, schooling was conducted only for a period of four months in Kashmir valley, it said. It is observed that exposure to violence and armed conflict reduces the quantity of education attained by children of conflict areas and the main contributors to the lessening of attainment of quantity of education include destruction of infrastructure, fear of sending children to schools, incorporation of youth into armed groups, negative economic shocks to households and forced displacement. Strikes (Hartals) badly affect even the universities of the valley, the class work at Master level too suffers terribly. Raina, J (2017) mentions about the irreparable loss in studies. *A good capital is utilised on development and infrastructure of different educational institutes which includes the universities of the State like University of Jammu, University of Kashmir, Islamic University, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University but still the prevailing turmoil and strikes in Kashmir Valley have severe implications on the implementation of technical education programmes and the students of these institutions*. Metamba (2012) mentions that contribution of education to society is to generate quality knowledge with democratic values as it promotes and high level personnel and therefore the function of such institutes should not be hampered at all. The impact of strikes is deep and profound on the educational atmosphere in the Valley and leads to a challenging environment for the students, thereby making them to lag behind the students of other states and countries [5].

IV. METHODOLOGY

The target area for the study is district Anantnag, district Pulwama and district Baramulla and the tools used are the Interview and the Questionnaire method. However the sample for the study taken is 150.

V. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- (i) How does living in a conflict zone affect the people and students of Kashmir?
- (ii) Are Kashmiri students facing trouble in concentrating on their studies?
- (iii) What are the opportunities that Kashmiri students miss as compared to their counterparts living peacefully in other states of India?
- (iv) Do the youth feel that their future is secure in Kashmir?

Research question: What is the best solution to Kashmir issue

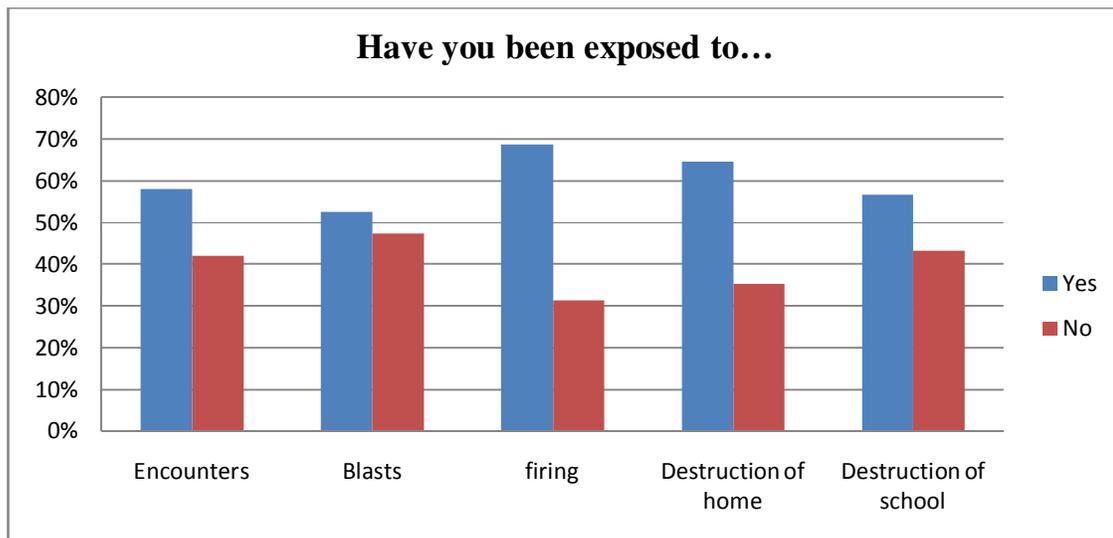
Codes used in Master Chart.

Gender	Male	1
	Female	2
Residence	Anantnag	1
	Pulwama	2
	Baramulla	3
QA1-QA13	Yes	1
	No	2
QBI- QB13	Yes	1
	No	2
QB14	Independent Kashmir	1
	Joins India	2
	Joins Pakistan	3
QC1-QC13	Yes	1
	No	2

Statistical Analysis: The, analysis, organization and interpretation of data is indispensable for the formation of the conclusions and suggestions for further course of the research. It involves the objective material in the possession of researcher and his subjective reactions and desires to derive the inherent meanings from the data in relation to his problem. The data regarding analyze the psychological effect on students due to conflict in Kashmir with the help of self-developed questionnaire and some interviews too. The questionnaire has been administered of sample of 150 from 3 districts with 95 males and 55 females.

Table 1.

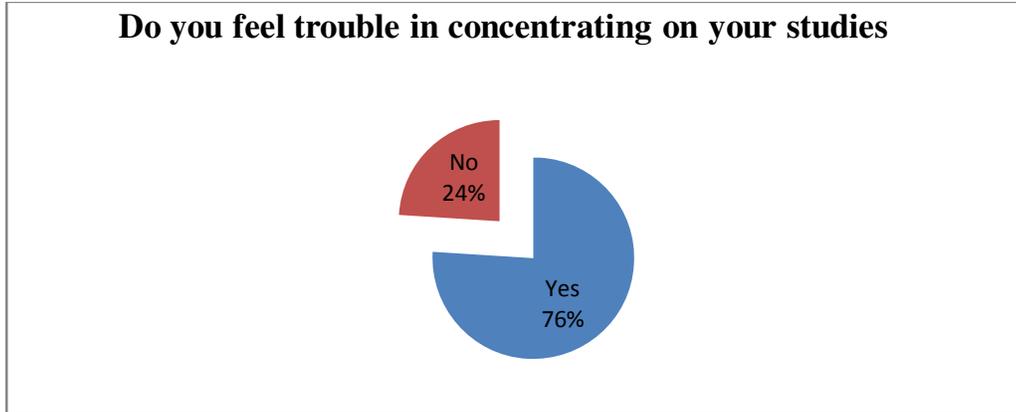
Q. 1. Have you been exposed to following when you were off to your educational institute.				
Encounters	Blasts	Firing	Destruction of home	Destruction of school
Total (Male & Female)	Total (Male & Female)	Total (Male & Female)	Total (Male & Female)	Total (Male & Female)
87	79	103	97	95
58%	52.66%	68.66%	64.66%	56.66%
63	71	47	53	65
42%	47.33%	31.33%	35.33%	43.33%



Interpretation: In a conflict zone it is obvious that the people living there are exposed to armed conflict. From the graph we concluded that 58% of students said that they witnessed encounters and 42% said that they have not witnessed any encounters. 52.66% have witnessed blasts, while as 47.33% have not witnessed blasts. 68.66% have witnessed firing, while as 31.33% have not witnessed firings. 64.66% have witnessed destruction of houses, while as 35.33% have not witnessed destruction of houses 56.66% have witnessed destruction of schools, while as 43.33% have not witnessed destruction of schools.

Table 2.

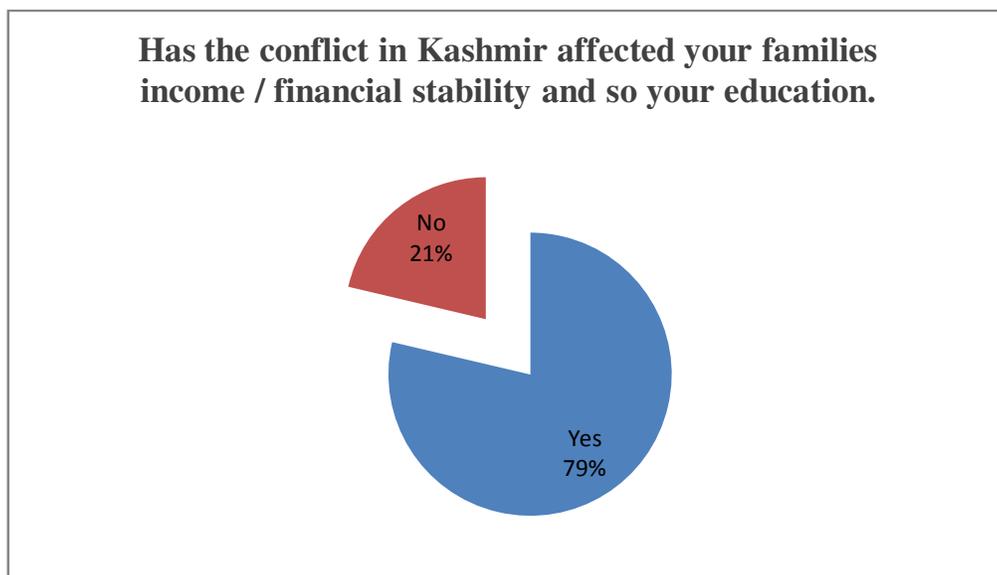
Q. 2. Do you feel trouble in concentrating on your studies.			
	Male	Female	Total
Yes	71	43	114
Yes	74.73%	78.18%	76%
No	24	12	36
No	25.26%	21.81%	24%



Interpretation: It is very difficult for any person to concentrate on any subject when their minds are pre-occupied by certain things which has a deep impact on their lives. As far as students are concerned majority of the students revealed that they have observed the brutality of the security personnel’s in their surroundings (which also includes their schools) which left an undesirable influence on their minds. Among the people (mostly students) who were surveyed, 76% population said that they feel trouble concentrating on their studies and 24% who do not feel any trouble concentrating on their studies. So overall most of the students feel that due the conflict in Kashmir they are not able to concentrate on their studies

Table 3.

Q. 3. Has the conflict in Kashmir affected your family’s income / financial stability and so your education.			
	Male	Female	Total
Yes	77	41	118
Yes	81.05%	74.54%	78.66%
No	18	14	32
No	18.94%	25.45%	21.33%

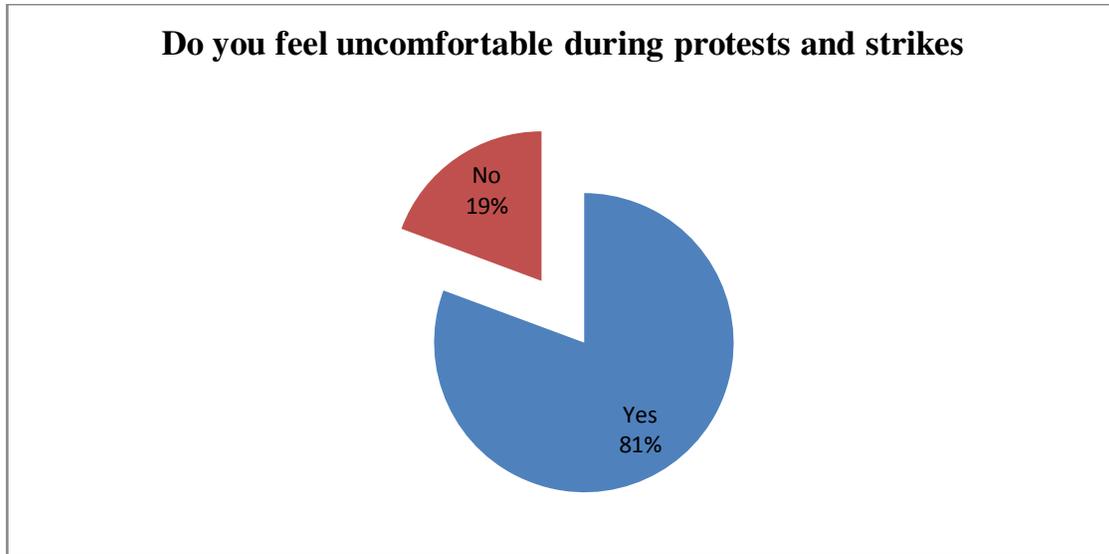


Interpretation: While interacting with our respondents they confessed that their financial stability is affected due to the conflict in Kashmir. As livelihood of most of the Kashmiris depends on tourism, agriculture and business which are worst hit by the curfews and strikes, the usual routine of Kashmir.

Among the people who were surveyed, there were 78.66% who feel that conflict in Kashmir has affected their family's income and 21.33% feel that conflict has no effect on their financial stability.

Table 4.

Qno.4 :Do protests and strikes hamper your studies			
	Male	Female	Total
Yes	69	52	121
Yes	72.63%	94.54%	80.66%
No	26	3	29
No	27.36%	3.63%	19.33%

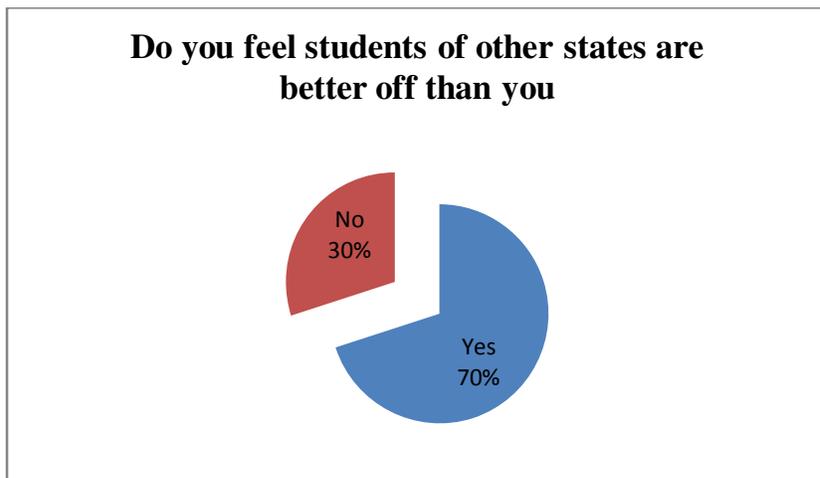


Interpretation: The security of a person gets threatened when he gets exposed to any sort of conflict. As, far as Kashmir conflict is concerned which has led to loss of many lives in protests and strikes people are now frightened to participate in these types of demonstrations. Many of the respondents revealed that their close ones never came back after their participations in these demonstration, while others said that they were unable to get the basic commodities (milk, vegetables, LPG medicines etc). They also said Kashmir is mostly cutoff from the global world, by internet and mobile bans and from friends and relatives through strikes and curfews which makes them depressed and uncomfortable.

Among the people who were surveyed, there were 80.66% who feel uncomfortable during protests and strikes and 19.33% reveal that they do not feel uncomfortable during protests and strikes

Table 5.

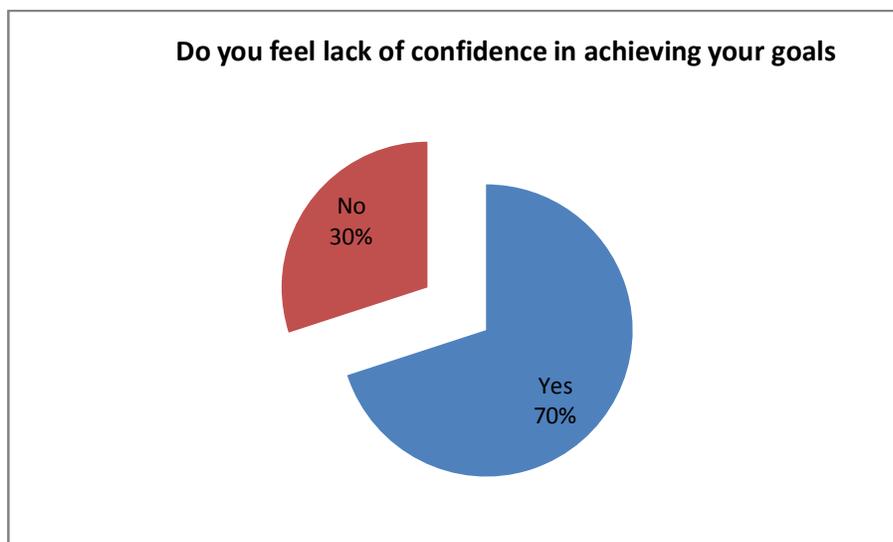
Q. 5. Do you feel students of other states are better off than you.			
	Male	Female	Total
Yes	59	46	105
Yes	62.10%	83.63%	70%
No	36	9	45
No	37.94%	16.36%	30%



Interperatation: Education is the backbone of nations development, but in kashmir we see that the educational institutions suffer the most. In the recent past, we saw schools were burned and many others made as bunkers of security personnals. Students said that their schools are used for conducting of elections as polling booths.whenever there is a strike, banks and other establishments open but schools remain closed, which is a disaster for any developing nation. They also said they merely get few working days and mostly holidays in schools , which is viceversa in other states. The study reveals that 70% of the population feel students of other states are better off than and 30% who do not feel students of other states are not better off than them.

Table 6.

Q. 6. Do you feel lack of confidence in achieving your goals.			
	Male	Female	Total
Yes	70	35	105
Yes	73.68%	63.63%	70%
No	25	20	45
No	26.31%	36.36%	30%



Interperatation: Free mind has the capability to make bold decisions which lead you to achieve your goals. The more confidence you have, the more easy it is to present yourself to others. Respondents stated that our confidence gets shatteredwhen an ordinary security men askwired questions and taunts us. We start to rethink on our goals whether we need to study first or do something else, which puts a question mark on our future. There were 70% of population who feel lack of confidence in achieving their goals and 30% who do not feel lack of confidence in achieving their goals. So overall majority of the respondents feel lack of confidence in achieving their goals due to the prevailing conflict in Kashmir.

VI. CONCLUSION

The above paper suggests that conflict increases the likelihood of student's unrest and disturbances. Further, I find a strong interactive effect between psychological condition of the students and their performance in educational activities. The results suggest that increasing conflict coupled with an increased level of challenges and declining performance rate of the students in their career making. The need is to develop an atmosphere free from such type of distractions and problems for the students. Only a free and congenial atmosphere leads to development of the favourable educational system of society and efficient human resource. The study also reveals that ongoing insurgency has severely affected the psyche of the students which does not allow them to grow and groom as more performed contributors to society in the form of well developed intelligentsia, even though when observed outside the state of Jammu and Kashmir, students of the state have proven their worth and dedication much better when compared to other state students. Therefore a need to change the setup and look into the problem is the demand of time for the efficient development of students and exploring up of their latent talents in a more efficient manner.

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