



Breakdown of Social Order: A Study of Social Fabric and supporting institutions in J&K.

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ABSTRACT:

The state of Jammu and Kashmir experienced the most difficult phase in modern history of India due to the more than one decade long armed conflict between the insurgents and the Indian security forces. Insurgency has brought catastrophic impact on the entire Jammu and Kashmir region. Due to insurgency there is large scale economic destruction, educational backwardness, mental and physical health related problems and diseases, human rights violations, breakdown of the social order etc. The insurgency has effected every section of the society especially women and children. They became the ultimate victims of this armed conflict.

KEYWORDS:

Insurgents, Human rights Violations, Half widows, Half orphans, Social disorder, Armed conflict

INTRODUCTION

Conflicts is generally defined as a fight, battle or struggle that is, a physical confrontation between the parties which may include a sharp disagreement or opposition, as of interests, ideas etc. conflicts are the long lasting aspects of human behavior and social relationships. It can occur between individuals, within families, among communities and different ethnic groups. A protracted conflict weakens civil society, delegitimizes governmental institutions, destroys the economy and frustrates developmental goals. Unequal and iniquitous social structures and institutions also play a significant role in creating and perpetuating social conflicts. Social structures and institutions often favor some groups and communities, and by doing this, disfavors others. This emerges as a source of violent or armed conflict.¹

The Conflict over Kashmir has been a feature of international landscape for sixty years. It is deeply entrenched dispute involving a divided province and two estranged neighbors. The conflict encompasses the full panoply of issues that generate stubborn problems: national identity, ethnicity, religion, tension between central and local governments, and territory.²The insurgency in Kashmir valley led killing and displacement of people, destruction of infrastructure, and crumbling of support systems, etc. The general consequences of armed conflict in Kashmir (which started in 1947) are harassment, deaths, human rights violation, and loss of security, disrupted schooling, displacements and the like. Every section in the society was affected badly. The impact has put into challenge the major consequences for survival, development, health and overall well being. Since 1989 when armed conflict started in the valley, property worth hundreds of thousands was raised to the ground or else destroyed. It led to social disorder, disorganization, educational backwardness, physical and mental health

¹ Bahadur, Bali. 2017. Human Rights in India; Dalits, Women and Minorities. New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers & Distributors.

² Habibullah, Wajahat. 2008. *My Kashmir; the Dying of Light*: Penguin Books Ltd.



deterioration, mass psychological depression, mass humiliation and extreme helplessness and the degenerated cultural aggression. The conflict had resulted in loss of a significant number of people.³

Cumulative Human and Material loss

The armed conflict and insurgency in the Kashmir valley has resulted in the impoverishment of the Kashmiri society through the channels of reduction of the capital, income and employment, physical destruction of agricultural resources, reduced investment and mass displacement of human resources. In addition to falling within “grey zone”, death, conscription, injury, disappearance, curfew and other mobility restrictions have added fuel to the fire. In the last two decades of conflict, Kashmir has witnessed transformation of families and communities for survival, like children were employed, very often on exploitative basis and at hazardous occupations, potential of youth was not properly cultivated for a kind of psychological fear was set permanently in their minds, and the net result was therefore the wastage of human resources. Since 1989 Kashmiris have lost in both men as well as material, and needed to turn to their children as an economic resource instead of letting them on recreation and play and education.⁴All these years of turmoil have witnessed a phase of separatism, militancy, violence and repression but the ugliest side of the sustained violence in the state is its penetration in the lives of its civilian population. Though the horrifying hues of violence have overshadowed almost all the dimensions of life, yet the women remain the worst victims of violence in Jammu and Kashmir. Women have suffered on every front- social, psychological, economic and educational. The rough estimates suggest that there are over 25000 widows and 40000 orphans in the state as a result of the protracted conflict in the mountainous state.⁵

The insurgency in Kashmir has affected all sections and all sectors of human life. Lakhs of innocent and common people were killed, injured, tortured and made disabled – handicapped. Most of the local elders were abused and dishonoured repeatedly, local youth were brutally treated, children were harassed –tortured and most of the women were teased, molested and raped. Thousands of residential houses and business establishments were burnt or destroyed. Other valuable properties worth billions of dollars were lost. In brief, the insurgency brought a devastating and catastrophic effect in totality in the entire J&K region especially in the fields related to large scale economic destruction, widespread social disorder and disorganisation, educational backwardness, mass physiological depression, physiological and mental deterioration, mass humiliation, extreme type of helplessness, degenerated cultural aggression, political deception and domination and extreme chronic social problems such as deviance, crime, suicides, drug addiction and erosion of values and norms, which were experienced by majority members of the Kashmir region.⁶

Impact on economy and education

Insurgency imposes significant economic effects on societies and will not only lead to direct material damage, but also to long term effects on the local economy. The identification and the

³Rather, A. Farooq. 2013. “Armed Conflicts in J&K and its impact on society: A case study of Kashmir valley”. International journal of scientific and research publications, volume 3, issue 2, February 2013. ISSN 2250-3153 www.ijsrp.org.

⁴ibid

⁵Suri, Kavita. 2011. Voices Unheard: Women, Conflict & Kashmir. Gurgaon, Haryana: Shubhi Publications

⁶Dabla.B.A. 2011.Social Impact of Militancy in Kashmir. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.



estimation of these economic effects of insurgency have received broad attention in economic literature and research during the last few decades. There is a direct relationship between the armed conflict and economy of the state. Armed conflict has led to decline in handicraft business, agricultural production and tourism count, especially in the late 1980's. Even basic infrastructure like power supply, roads, communication systems and drinking water remain poor because resources are diverted to counter-insurgency activities. Likewise Silviculture is not possible anymore since Kashmir's forests have become the perfect hiding place for terrorists. Inevitably there is a clear connection between terrorism and increasing unemployment as well. Statistics have shown that the employment rate declined from 44.3 percent in 1981 to 36.6 percent in 2001. Considering that the government is almost the only employer (due to the lack of private investments), that fact is not really surprising.⁷

Since political instability, uncertainty, insurgency and militarization dominated the entire region, there was hardly any serious effort of formulating and implementing planned programmes and schemes in the state. Special development planning for short-term objectives had a serious setback. Even if annual and five years plans were prepared on paper for the formality sake, these could not be implemented properly and realistically. The net economic impact of the developments related to militancy was characterised as "catastrophic" in all sectors. In simple terms, it reduced considerably the number of working hours and days and stopped new economic initiatives and opportunities. In fact, it reduced to rumbles the existing economic infrastructure in the valley and government and private sector together could not revive it fully.⁸ The economic cost of the conflict cannot be confined to a particular sector of industry or investment prospect, but it had affected the important sources of livelihood of local people such as tourism, horticulture and handicraft industries also. Nevertheless, terrorism and violence are not the only cause for Jammu & Kashmir's economic depression but "poor policy management, corruption and lack of infrastructure" as well.⁹

Armed conflict generally has a significant detrimental effect on the formal education system, as students, teachers, and education governance personnel are killed, injured, displaced, and or recruited or forced to join fighting forces. School buildings and materials may be damaged, destroyed, or used as barracks by fighting forces. National education spending is often diverted to the military during an armed conflict, lowering both the availability and the quality of educational provision positive, sustainable peace in societies affected by armed conflict.¹⁰ The insurgency crippled the education of this generation. Most schools were often closed than open. Even when they were open, teachers and students frequently could not get there. For, roads would be closed after a militant attack or for a cordon and search operation, or students and teachers were delayed so long at a checkpoint or by a search that they turned back home. School was missed more often than attended. The hollowing of the education

⁷Rather, A. Farooq. 2013. "Armed Conflicts in J&K and its impact on society: A case study of Kashmir valley". International journal of scientific and research publications, volume 3, issue 2, February 2013. ISSN 2250-3153 www.ijsrp.org.

⁸Dabla.B.A. 2011. Social Impact of Militancy in Kashmir. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.

⁹Rather, A. Farooq. 2013. "Armed Conflicts in J&K and its impact on society: A case study of Kashmir valley". International journal of scientific and research publications, volume 3, issue 2, February 2013. ISSN 2250-3153 www.ijsrp.org.

¹⁰Dupuy K. Education for Peace: Building peace and Transforming Armed Conflict through Education System. International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO) for save the children Norway. ISBN 82-7481-165-8



system meant that armies of men and women roamed the state with degrees. Many of them were barely employable but expected that the government owed them a job.¹¹

All stakeholders are concerned about securing the future of children and youth of Kashmir. All acknowledge that education is the key in making that happen. Education has, however, been impacted by unrest in Kashmir. There is a misleading perception in certain section of the society that education has remained immune to the unrest. Syllabus curtailment, mass copying, lenient marking, lack of teacher accountability, and - most of all - the prolonged shutdowns have compromised the competency levels of students significantly below peer level.¹²

Mental and physical trauma

The insurgency in Kashmir has involved mass massacre of the people of the state, destruction of their properties and genocide of Hindus and their exodus from Kashmir. The death and destruction of innocent people, genocide of minorities and conduct of a war of attrition in violation of the laws of war are crimes against humanity and international law, besides being violations of human rights.¹³

The mental damage wrought on the collective psyche of the people of Kashmir is resulting from the decades of instability and violence in Kashmir, gradually appears to be tearing at the social fabric of the community. Violence or threat of physical violence seems to have had a significant effect on the mental health of people in the region. Insurgency certainly led to mental health deterioration in all groups, classes and communities and in all areas. In general, the people of Kashmir lead a non-violent life. But when violence became order of the day; its impact was felt deeply. Accordingly, the violent incidences like killings, tortures, rapes etc. has serious effect on mental and physical health in Kashmir. The people of Kashmir are suffering from ailments that are the results of this insurgency that erupted in valley in 1989. These problems includes stress, drug addiction, strains on mental capacity, depression, anxiety, suicidal tendencies, sexual promiscuity and many more ailments related to mental and physical health.¹⁴

Women continue to face abuses associated with armed conflict and civil unrest.¹⁵ Armed conflict often exacerbates inequalities that exists in different forms to varying degrees in all societies and that makes women particularly vulnerable when armed conflicts breaks out.¹⁶ Women in Jammu and Kashmir have become the direct and indirect victims of the human rights violations that have occurred in the state due to insurgency. They have been raped, molested, abducted, abused, Beaten up. An important aspect of the problem of insurgency in Kashmir valley is the emergence of the half widows. Majority of missing persons are men, which leaves a large number of women awaiting news that would decide their fate, living the lives of Half widows. A state like this results in a severe identity crisis amongst the women with the immense agony of not being sure whether they are still married or

¹¹Devdas, David. 2018. The Generation of Rage and in Kashmir. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

¹²Raina J (2017). Education and Unrest in Kashmir. A Way Forward. Chinar International.

¹³Sharma, Vinod. 2002. Human Rights Violations: A global phenomenon. New Delhi: A.P.M Publishing Corporation.

¹⁴Dabla.B.A. 2011.Social Impact of Militancy in Kashmir. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.

¹⁵Sharma, Vinod. 2002. Human Rights Violations: A global phenomenon. New Delhi: A.P.M Publishing Corporation.

¹⁶Bahadur,Bali.2017. Human Rights in India; Dalits, Women and Minorities. New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers & Distributors.



widowed.¹⁷ Since 1989, the valley of Kashmir, due to political instability, has witnessed an exorbitant increase in the number of widows, half widows and orphans owing to increased intensity of turbulence.¹⁸

In the context of J &K, the half widows become the direct targets of disappearances. They have no source to sustain and to nourish their children. They undergo many hardships and come across many social and economic problems.¹⁹ Those children, whereabouts of whose fathers are unknown are called or termed as Half Orphans. Like their mothers, they live the life in a twilight zone. Since there is no information about the status of their father, they cannot be pronounced as orphans. Lack of paternal care has shattered the lives of such children in Kashmir. Their life swings in between two extremes. The effects of insurgency have been widespread on children of half widows.²⁰ Some children have been forced to engage in child labour out of necessity.²¹ The trauma of losing a family member along with the added stress of shouldering family responsibilities played a great havoc with the delicate equilibrium of many adolescents.²²

Conclusion

The insurgency which started in 1989 has touched and affects the lives of all the people living in Jammu and Kashmir in one way or another. A large section of the society has become direct or indirect victims of this insurgency or armed conflict and face hostility or brutality indirectly in the form of death and disappearance of their loved ones or straight by being the victims of torture, harassment, rape etc. There is no denying fact that the whole community have suffered immensely because of the insurgency that has been plaguing their lives for more than two decades, however women are particularly affected because of their peculiar status in the society.²³

The process of education in Kashmir since past as well as in current are facing many challenges and the question here arises how to tackle these challenges in order to bring improvement in the field of education. In fact the insurgency in past as well as in today is a major obstacle which turned the education of valley in to detestable conditions. Insurgency has created many problems like the frustration among unemployed youth; less visible economic development, psychological tension and these incidences are considered as a major factor when studying the educational structure of Kashmir. It is the need of hour to study these issues on historic lines which will help us to understand why these issues begin. Further it helps the policy makers to develop a concrete strategy towards educational sector

¹⁷“Reports of Independent People’s Tribunal on Human rights violations in Kashmir”, 2010, (20-21, Feb, 2010). Independent people’s Tribunal. Human Rights Law Network, Srinagar.

¹⁸ Rashid, Afsana. 2011. Widows and Half widows. New Delhi: Pharos Media and Publishing Pvt Ltd.

¹⁹Parvez, Khuram. 2009. “From victims to healers- Psycho-moral support to the families of victims of Enforced Disappearance”, APDP. Voice August 2009, Kashmir India. (afad-online.org/voice/aug_2009/news_features.html.)

²⁰Mirani, Haroon.2007. “Childs Rights and you “Half orphans of Kashmir waiting for their fuller life” - Comparative study by HaroonMirani”. www.Cry.org / www.cry.org/resources/pdf/ncrrf/haroon_mirani2007 report.

²¹Choudhry, Amreen& Moser-Puangsuman, Yeshua 2007.“ Justice Disappeared: Exploring the links of Arms trade, Impunity and political Disappearance in Asia”. Non Violence International South East Asia, Thailand. ISBN. 978-974-7119-73-2.

²²Amnesty International. 1999. “Disappearances in Jammu and Kashmir”, February 1999. AI Index: ASA 20/02/99.

²³Bahadur, Bali. 2017. Human Rights in India; Dalits, Women and Minorities. New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers & Distributors.



of Kashmir. The ongoing insurgency is a major hindrance in the promotion and development of education in Kashmir.²⁴

In the context of situation explained above what is needed immediately is to adopt a comprehensive social policy which will focus on crucial social problems in crucial sectors/ in other words a comprehensive social policy has to be formulated by experts, professionals and bureaucrats, adopted through various social agencies and organization in short term and long term planning perspectives. But at the same time, the society at large has also formally to initiate its efforts in an organised and systematic way mainly through credible NGOs and other self-help groups. When both types of organizations will start their efforts seriously, a relevant and radical change may be observed in the near future in the state.²⁵

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²⁴Ganie, Rayees Ahmad & Mohiud din, Towseef. 2015. "Impact of Insurgency on Education in Kashmir". Journal of Education and Practice, volume 6, No. 1, 2015. ISSN 2222-1735 (Paper) ISSN 2222-288X (Online).

²⁵Dabla.B.A. 2011.Social Impact of Militancy in Kashmir. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.



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