

The Impact of Insurgency on Education Sector in Kashmir: Issues and Concerns

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Abstract: *It is true that he who opens the school door closes a prison. But in certain situations when school door has no way left to open then one faces no other chance than being in a prison. This study focuses on the impact of insurgency upon education sector in Kashmir. The insurgency and political hegemonic forces had drastically driven the education and interest of students time to time. As a result, the state is facing problems in making its generation educated and good-beings in the society it seems that the ongoing turmoil has violated the universal objective of education which depends particularly upon the peaceful environment as well as working facilities that are essential to be provided for getting knowledge out of education. The effects of stressful situations upon the mind of students have hindered their smooth education. The impact of recent years of insurgency has splited the school and student relations and has created rage among educated youth. So, it draws urgency to analyse the scenario. The steps taken for smooth education during unrest seem faulty when expected outcomes are seen from student's perspective. This study is based on primary as well secondary sources- it includes research papers, newspaper sources, and journals and reports etc.*

Index Terms: Education, Students, Insurgency.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is an important weapon for the human race to establish a balanced life and to maintain their presence on this planet. It is being a path that stimulates all to touch the roots of success in life as well as boosts resilience to get through and deal with hardships and challenges in life. Although education supplies have developed as compared to previous situations in the country by taking many measures for the upliftment of education by the government as on the strong belief that well being of the people depends upon the well being of the individuals living in the community. Education boosts economic cum social prosperity and morality throughout the nation by solving

problems and identifying solutions for these problems. Well, it is rightly said that good education recognizes one's carrier motives, goals and teaches to live as a civilized being in a civilized manner. To develop such civilized beings in a community or nation not only proper platform, infrastructure, and change in education structure is needed but maintenance of social atmosphere and understanding

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social consciousness among masses, as well as the effect of surrounding social world upon knowledge seekers is an important basic task to be done. Sadly, sometimes a country or state remains far to perform such tasks so that to maintain and develop the mental state of its citizens in several areas where need for development of mind through education is a major remedy to balance the life and which could also solve the current issues as well as help in decreasing the trauma of future issues.

Understanding the education sector in Kashmir valley by examining its history and development, if compared with the present scenario education seems disturbed due to ongoing conflict. The effect of disturbed situations and insurgency in the state has a diverse attack upon the citizen building institutions like education sector. Insurgency from past years has now brought the education sector at stake and risk. As we say a collection of little water droplets make a large body of water with time, in the same way, mini-strokes on a particular material or phenomenon develops a capacity to break it one day or it can change its form. Same is the case with education authority and its system in Kashmir which seems broken due to the jerks of insurgency from time to time. Now the condition has got worsened in such a way that instead of developing the valuable products from the institutions, it lacks the capacity to develop innovative thinking among the students which results in the development of anti-social thoughts and zeal for students towards other issues rather than education. On the other side due to the drastic situations in the valley, the education system makes changes every day as situations are being dominant over the sector and its system works as per the demand of situation in the valley which is surely not worth to give positive results instead it will distract the system more and more. Present study analyzes the scenario of education sector in Kashmir during unrest.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Education has been a strong string for the development of economy and prosperity of every country as it also helps in refurbishing good products in any society for its well being and same for the country. But there are some basic problems which become a hindrance in developing the quality of education. Researchers on the other side focused and examined different problems and reached towards many conclusions. The situation in Indian state of Jammu &



Kashmir from time to time is discussed in various works

from different perspectives while analyzing and comparing these literature works which reflect the different parameters of socio-economic and political scenario in the valley it can be said that the effects drawn from insurgency and tense situations has diverse impact upon education sector in the valley from time to time.

The inconveniences in Kashmir have created a little library of books in the previous year's which elaborate the information about the valley. The Lost Rebellion regarded as first elaborated account on the militant uprisings and operations as well as the response of India in contrast and structure of strong challenge faced by it since 1947[1]. To be fair with Joshi the book Lost Rebellion focuses on the uncivil war in Kashmir and claims the unfair and careless approach of agencies being cause to many problems in the valley. The literature also recalls the involvement of youth in gun culture and its adverse yield.

"Education and armed conflict: the Kashmir insurgency in nineties" further reveals the experience of the Kashmir uprising is utilized, to evaluate the effects of this furnished clash on instructive results of students and also the understudies who were of school age amid the 90's going to essential and auxiliary schools in urban areas of Kashmir amid 1990 and 1996 were influenced the most by the conflict in comparison with their results to the students who completed their tutoring before 1990[5]. The early period of conflict negatively affected the education, particularly for students in primary grade schools. Moreover, the literature also speaks about the results drawn from national family health survey and Census rounds of NFHS which provide a detailed report measuring the effect of conflict upon education and minds, particularly on female literacy.

(Jong, 2008) "Conflict and Health, Conflict in the Indian Kashmir Valley: exposure to violence". The psychological survey conducted by "Bio-med Central" to measure the effect of conflict upon the mind and health of people and in order to attain best results a lot of samples have been taken from Kashmir by interviewing a number of people both male and female about how they are been effected by the insurgency. The interview process was conducted by doctors and conclusion drawn reveals that the fear, threat and depression are the major challenges faced by People under conflict. Surely it can be assumed that similar outcomes are to be found among understudies and taught youth in the valley[2].

Moreover the research journal articles of "The Impact of Insurgency on Education in Kashmir. Journal of Education and Practice" reflects the historical overview of the development of education in Kashmir and challenges faced by the students under insurgency, the literature discusses about how the modern standard of education system was implemented by the Britishers in the valley and how the outcomes of conflict, affected the thought of establishing quality education mostly from the 1990s and onwards. This paper investigates the development and improvement of education in Kashmir[3].

"Growth of Higher Education in J&K and its Effects". International Journal of Educational Planning and Administration [6]. This paper investigates the development

and improvement of higher training in J&K. It means to propose certain more strides for moving forward nature of advanced education in J&K. and provides suggestions for developing the quality of higher education[14][15].

III. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In order to understand the current picture of education in Kashmir, it is essential to have a look at the history of the region. Ancient Kashmir was the center for studying Sanskrit. Even students from different parts of the world continued visiting Kashmir for valuable higher education. Primary education during Muslim rule was given through Maktabs and Madrasas moreover there are also remains and traces of higher education during the Buddhist period as the higher institutes like Nalanda, Taxila and Vikramshila existed in that period. In Kashmir, the starting of the system of modern education can be credited to religion and colonialism. Due to the colonial expansion, the education system of Jammu and Kashmir was developed as per the concept of British education system. This eventually excluded and ghettoized the traditional schools and implemented the Western standard of education. The first western modernized boys school was established by Reverend J Hinton Knowles in the year 1880 named as "Church Mission Society Boys School" which is now popular as Tyndale Biscoe School located in Srinagar (Ganie, 2015). Biscoe is mostly credited for building bridges between the citizens and route towards modern education in the state of Kashmir through the western standard.

The 250 students took Admission in the school. Those students were all Brahmin Hindus who used to avoid and reject the school-based activities like playing soccer or cricket because of their belief that leather will impure them on the other side of the same coin Muslims were ignored by the leaders but Biscoe as standard institute shared social equality among those students who believe in collectivism and social caste system and developed urge for modern knowledge among all till decades. The modern thought of education started spreading and in 1890 when ten modern schools got functioning in the valley working on a standard modern line (Ganie, 2015). The examination was held after every 6 months and syllabus was affiliated with Punjab University but the missionary institute educated a particular elite section of Hindu Brahmin's. Onwards in 1899, the head priest Mirwaiz Molvi Rasool Shah constructed an organization named as 'ANI' (Anjuman-I-Nasratul Islam) to regulate and promote both secular and religious education among illiterate classes of Kashmir. ANI developed its reputation when it shared its network of schools all over the valley and offered chance to thousands of Kashmiri people to gain education while as female education faced problems due to orthodox religious dogmas but motive of spreading education and involving young masses into knowledge gaining was so strong that it paralyzed orthodox theology and allowed girls' education and interest of gaining education among female folk which gradually resulted into establishment of a female school in the valley founded by a women from British Church Mission. The idea of establishing



a school for girls and encourage female education showed its spectrum when Church Mission School got 17 students admitted under academy. Later in 1925, the education system in the valley was seen as a shining star because of tremendous

developments. There was one technical academy, two training institutes for training teachers in their particular field, 42 middle schools and 11 high schools, two colleges along with 583 schools at primary level were developed. (Ganie, 2015) It was a firm belief and expectation that development and recruitment in the education sector will gradually result in the economic upliftment of the state despite the overall Muslim education which was still an issue. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah who was the part of tiny educated yet marginalized Muslim community of Kashmir felt several loopholes on the ground of education but finally, he got recognized as first Kashmiri who attained a degree of Masters in Chemistry but he was rejected to take a Ph.D. degree in Chemistry from the University of England (Ganie, 2015). However, during that time Sheikh Abdullah was influenced by the progressive ideas and liberal thoughts and persuaded that the feudal system was the cause which brings inequality among the people of Kashmir valley. By this, a mass uprising was seen over the valley lead by Sheikh Abdullah and his fellow workers based on the claim that if Kashmiri Muslims citizens were historically given equal educational slot and opportunities as Hindu elite Brahmins then promoting more unity and equality on the educational ground would be beneficial to develop more peaceful Kashmir.

This innovative thought of Sheikh Abdullah turns beneficial for the state and community as in 1947 about 2,158 educational institutions got developed and the education budget was 7 percent of Jammu & Kashmir revenue. A year later during 1948, the University of Kashmir and Advisory Board was established then inaugurated and by 1960, the free education plan from primary up to higher education standards was implemented. Also, the range of institutions increased in which 1354 middle schools, 5133 primary level schools, 599 secondary schools, 19 technical based institutions and 9 more colleges got fully developed (Ganie, 2015). This was the period when at least optimism was still present in the air and expectation towards progress was raised to crescent. Here one thing can be clearly assumed that whatever the steps were taken for the development in education sector including modern thought of education, standard schools or equality of education and mass inspections to make the general masses get attracted towards education and help in developing civilized life by making education as a tool was being the basic and fundamental motive behind the development of education sector. Alas, the loyal thought behind the upliftment of education and developing interest and zeal for attaining knowledge among Kashmiri masses was about to shatter when drastic changes emerged due to the controversial partition of India and Pakistan and then Indo Pak war of 1965 which started affecting the mind and behavior of Kashmiri students and further Indo Pakistan war of 1965 resulted in the creation of present Line of Control between Pakistan administrated Azad Kashmir and

Indian administrated Jammu & Kashmir (Parlow, 2011). The ideology of this war had a social impact which motivated students to flee from their homes that negatively affected their school routine and distracted their minds. Later in 1970s Kashmir got facilitated by the establishment of own educational board named as (Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education). In the 1980s, the education system in Kashmir showed rapid improvement. However, the improvement in the economy as well as in the employment sector was not much widened and expanded which gradually resulted in unemployed educated youth. Frustration and joblessness of educated Kashmiri youth compelled them to adopt the gun culture in later half of the 1980s which in a due course of time lead towards insurgency and militant uprising in 1990s. The officials of Jammu & Kashmir (Board of School Education) revealed that about hundreds of schools were attacked during the course of time. It became difficult for a student to proceed for education in a smooth manner even for some it was difficult to attend classes and sometimes impossible to reach in examination hall as the outer atmosphere of the Valley leads to the risk of life for students. When the chief of Indian army Deepak Kapoor in 2008 inaugurated the first Army School in the valley he revealed in his lecture that education system of Kashmir was totally disturbed and distracted by the insurgency (Ganie, 2015). The education system slowly recovers itself after the continuous violence and conflict as in the past decade, J&K BOSE (Board of School Education) established 3500 primary institutions and restored about 3300 both middle and high schools with the help of funds. But the upcoming time was crucial as the wave of grief was about to cover the Valley onwards because of rising strength in insurgency forced by all types of political dogmas came into scene. Development was from one side and destruction in parallel to it. Due to war-like situations and cut-throat competition in the state, even the educated minds got disturbed and those who were studying got targeted as the first batch affected badly by the ongoing insurgency on the other side armed and political conflict lowered the returns of investment in building Education Sector.

IV. DISCUSSION ON PRESENT SCENARIO OF EDUCATION IN KASHMIR

The present condition of the education sector in Kashmir and its structure is badly affected by conflict. The efforts of bringing normalcy in the education sector however are depended upon the effects of insurgency while government's focus is limited towards mobilizing the insurgency through political strategies and cut-throat techniques rather concentrating upon the effects of insurgency towards the young educated minds of Kashmir and education sector. Surely government lacked those capacities and strategies that could split the effects of insurgency mingling with the education sector. With time the one way development resulted in other way destruction and its conclusion can be drawn from 26th may 2008 which was mass unrest and the reason behind such unrest was that



government of India and the Government of Jammu and Kashmir developed an agreement of transferring 99 acres of land towards Amarnath Shrine Board in Kashmir report by Associate Press (New York Times 26th June 2008. P.A8.). this agreement of state and central government created chaos and confusion all over the valley, demonstrations and

protests were held all over the Kashmir valley. These demonstrations were measured highest in Kashmir history as about 500,000 people were seen in a single rally which resulted into a tense situation and most of the civil buildings like schools and government offices remained closed. The shutdown of intuitions, as well as public work, lasted for months. Students remained far from education as there was not a single way to attend the school. At the same time, internet services were also banned in the valley for 3 months. Internet service which is known as the backbone of information and communication technology, as well as the backbone of today's modern education, was totally banned all over the Valley the students and teachers developed inner frustration as even going few steps out of their homes was not safe at all. That means students were not only far from their educational work and co-curricular activities or environment but they remained cut off from the world information and disconnected with their peers due to internet ban and the only work which was left for these students was to visit from one room to another room of the house which seems like one is being in a house arrest for 60 days. As the government disagreed to sign the agreement of land donated to Amarnath Shrine by examining the situations in the Valley, a little relaxation was seen in the Valley which was leading towards normalcy. Schools were used as a tool to bring normalcy in the region. It was very difficult for a student to attend the school even to reach the school because the existing situation in the valley had depressed the students in such a way that before attending school one thinks about the risk of life. In contrast, the government denied the fact of risk the lives of students as the opening of schools got used as a tool to bring normalcy in the valley. The stressful effects and results of the conflicted situation upon the mind and behavior of students were taken for granted. When school doors opened after a long break of 3 months, everything seemed new for the students as well as for teachers and to follow the previous routine in order to bring the normalcy in the particular system of their schools remained a big deal. But the darkness was not too far while the students and teachers were rebuilding their ability to overcome traumatic situations, again in June 2011, clashes broke out. The reason was that Indian army claimed to have killed 3 Pakistani militants in the valley however it was believed and argued as a fake encounter. The three militants were actually the residents of Kashmir in Baramulla area who were guaranteed by the Army camp to provide them jobs as Porters reported Srinagar: The Hindu September 7, 2015.) but shot in cold blood[7]. On June 2010 again the conflicted situation was seen over the valley and due to hartals and protests, the school, colleges, and all institutions remained closed, again the internet and other services were banned. Due to clashes and protests, a 17-year boy studying in class 10th was fired with direct tear gas on his head while being

back from tuition classes and got killed in clashes, a report by (New Delhi: Asian Centre for Human Rights, November 16th, 2011, P. 2-3). A rage was seen among youth as they started protesting hundreds of people were brutally killed in protests while many got injured. By all these means it is clear that there is no peaceful atmosphere to get an education as now things were going worse. A lot of students left their studies because their economic conditions due to ongoing wars were degraded and in spite of being educated they prefer to feed their family and those who want to get an education, faced risk of life and trauma of dark future. In 2011 a panel of doctors questioned and interview men and women in Srinagar to examine their psychological and physical health after facing the violent role of insurgency in the valley while as depression and fear of going away from home remained the basic findings and conclusion. Moreover, it took a lot of time to bring normalcy within the citizens and students of the valley as the scars left on their future and mind were impossible to vanish and recover[4]. As it took no time, years later in 2015 the extensive tension got emerged in the valley again. It was marked as a new phase of tension in the valley as 2015 unrest of Kashmir which not only attacked the mind of students but left them paralyzed. The year 2016 marked 130 days of unrest and shutdown [11]. Every communication and education sector remained closed thousands of injuries and hundreds of killings were seen in the valley in which education system lost its way and students lost their own. In spite of splitting the effects of an insurgency on education, in contrast, it resulted in the split between students and education sector due to which both became nonfunctional. The acute frustration among students crossed the limit and pupil mixed with locals started participating in illegal activities to over through their anger and frustration but the casualties resulted in more unrest and every day shutdown. The unrest of 2016 was so destructive that it put schools colleges and other institutions into flames. The year witnessed huge violent demonstrations and mass uprising as per survey it was rated as 78% higher in caparison with 1990 incidents of insurgency outlined by (Parvaiz, New Delhi: Hindustan Times, May 30th 2017) and gradually it also doubled its effect on education sector because all kinds of students got involved and equally affected. All forms of political parties and their hegemonic forces being responsible to drive the conditions and not thinking about the future of students. 24 schools were put into ashes and some of the schools and colleges were destroyed. The education sector took painful hiccups due to months of long strike and agitations. The young children stayed at homes for at least 4 months according to the survey and reports reveal that since July 8th 2016 educational institutions functioned for only 80 days out of 197 working days report by that means they remain blocked by 59.39% of functioning days. We can clearly assume the rate of loss in education, loss of interest among students, loss of good future, and cut off from rest of the world due to banned communications, loss of teachers and other educational faculties as being wage less time to time and loss of state economy[13]. People living under threat thought that it might not be possible to reopen the schools in regular mode as over last 27

years the young students faced acts of violence driven by different political hegemonic powers through political turmoil, and violation of educational rights. Education system facing jerks from last 27 years is now under drastic conditions students from lower standard up to university level faced harsh problems in academic section of their studies[10]. J&K instruction serve Syed Altaf Bukhari cautioned dissenting understudies on May 18, 2017, that those missing the mark concerning participation won't be permitted to take their exams. He said

'We want our youth educated. We can't afford more ill-educated generations,' Although government tried many ways to make education sector work smooth by different policies implemented by education authority of india like SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan), (MDM) Mid-day meals etc. Government also allotted funds to rebuild the burnt schools and framed policies for changing the structure of education like exams and class works as per the situations and not according to the system that could be beneficial for students as well as for teachers and other educational faculties. But logically it was difficult for knowledge seekers of the valley to overcome from the 6 months shut down due to unrest and start working in a smooth routine because psychologically they were still in dark state of mind and ability to perform was low. On the other side the changing educational regulations resulted into day to day protests many students at university level couldn't cope up with new semester system implemented at the same time of unrest which resulted into protests and some students abandoned their education instead looking for jobs to help their parents. These students said that condition in Kashmir had ruined their life and future dreams. The 2016 unrest due to the killing of top Hizbul Commander and the unrest lead 86 persons dead and thousands injured while hundreds of students got booked under Public Safety Act (PSA) and hundreds of students got fully or partially blinded under protests. The future of these students got dark just like their eyes even it became hectic for them to perform common day to day activities. The exams got post phoned and government decided to provide relaxation in examination due to opposition from various quarters including students. Government-issued 50% relaxation in syllabus knowing the fact that in these four months of unrest all the educational institutions whether government or private sector even tuition centers remained closed and students covered only 30% of syllabus in schools before the conflicted situation in the valley and during unrest they even forgot that 30% of syllabus Government was simply making deal with students and nothing more than a formality as some students commented upon the decision of government as Education on Sale[9]. As we know that purpose of education does not depend upon getting marks or shifting to next standard of a school or college but the universal fact behind the motive of education is to gain the knowledge which is scientifically proven that a student or any knowledge seeker develops ability to gain knowledge and can perform smooth studies within peaceful conditions. Whereas in Kashmir, we saw students full of tension revising their books at home and hearing the sound of guns and shots outside shivering under a threat that whether He or She will be back alive after

performing examination in exam hall[8]. The regular separatist's calendars to perform shutdown in the valley was another distraction for students. What government wants was normalization in unrest so used education as a tool and students as chess players to bring normalization in the valley by not thinking about the psychological effect on their mind due to worst situations in the valley. The central and the state government of Kashmir indirectly failed to split the effects of insurgency suffered by education sector and students from last 27 years. Splitting these two has always been an unfulfilled need and demand that could fill the gap in education sector, as solving the unrest was surely not a two days job but saving education sector could have been structured and saved from time to time. In return they developed infrastructure of schools, framed new policies for free education, denying the fact that if infrastructure is the body of education then students and teachers are soul of that body and without soul the body is useless. Inaugurating ICT section and then the very days of unrest it remains dead by blocking its pillar which is internet. By this the students assume themselves in a lost nomadic atmosphere with no connection with the rest of the world and especially IT students who felt the blocking of such services as a big wall between them and their studies. All these acts clearly reveal that the system is driven by hegemonic forces and not working the way it should be. Education of the valley is dependent upon the situation and not upon working policies and future of the young generation has no path to walk on. After the unrest of 2016 in Kashmir about 545 examination centers for class 10th and 450 centers for class 12th were opened guarded by CRPF army and students arrived to examination halls along with their parents waiting outside as of fear that anything can happen. Moreover it has become a trend now and Kashmir can be renamed as Land Of Hartals and shutdowns, situations decide the structure of education and sadly the sense of quality education is missing also involvement of educated youth in protests and gun culture is rising.

V. CONCLUSION

.Although the insurgency is still going on in the valley and developing the quality of education is like climbing the slippery mountain without any support as per the condition and demand. In fact, Principle contributors to the reducing of the fulfillment of amount of education are the incorporate demolition of the foundation, the dread of sending youngsters to schools, consolidation of youth into outfitted gatherings, negative monetary stuns to family units and constrained dislodging. Specialists say until the point that the Kashmir debate isn't settled, dissents, including by understudies, will proceed in some shape. But logically this isn't ideal and impeccable since education must not get disturbed a bit at all as it would make unsalvageable mischief to our community. Well Nobody knows what is going to be next as the fear of sending children's to schools, incorporation of students into armed forces, negative effect of insurgency upon students mind, developing interest of education among youth and providing them mental security and satisfaction



to study in peaceful environment are the major problems need to be taken under concentration and not to be taken as for granted. Modifying these problems will gradually lead the path towards improvement in the quality education of the valley and for the betterment of its young generation. If taken for granted then the future situations can be predicted as more harsh cum drastic with full of chaos, confused situations, and uncivilized generation will be expected. Alas, then there will be no alternative left for the development or changes. On the other side, voluntary mission mode by teachers engaging youth and mainstreaming them from joining the world of

ignorance and role of NGO's like, borderless world foundation jammu and Kashmir-Ladakh, Pratham, Help Foundation, JKY Trust, Asar, JKSW, Kashmir Humanity Foundation, Save The Child, as well as developing community training centers must be encouraged and taken into consideration. This will minimize the un-logistic mass promotions, postponement of exams and irregularity of classes. Moreover in order to recoup the shambling state of education rebuilding of trust by creating a tranquil atmosphere and peace is imperative. Also let the children be sensitized with great luminaries of the world who by the medium of education have reached the summits of victory and steered the society like beacon lights. The political stakeholders must design a strategy to create a Multi-angled move so that Kashmir can be par-excellence in education and knowledge with the rest of India.

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