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Education of Girls in Conflict Zone-A Survey Study in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India

Abstract

It is a survey study of conflict zone and tries to study the effect of the conflict on education of women. This study has been carried out in two schools in Jammu and Kashmir Region in India. The researchers have found that there are inadequate measures for counseling of students. The researchers found that education is most affected due to strikes, protests, conflicts and other such incidents. The survey revealed that insurgency, corruption and poor governance are considered to be the most important reasons for conflicts and problems. The most important impact of these conflicts is on education. Girls are most affected by these conflicts. Education of girls is affected the most. The researchers have tried to present their suggestions for improvement of education of girls on the basis of this study. This study brings to light the factors relating to women education for education and development of conflict affected regions.

Keywords: Sustainable development, SDG, MDG, Peace, Education, Prosperity, Conflict, War, Children, Democracy

Introduction

Conflict refers to war, insurgency, disturbance or other such occasions which disturbs the normal life. Education of girls and boys is affected due to conflicts due to situations under difficulties (for example the recent situation in Jammu and Kashmir). The impact is generally more on education of girls. Boys are sent to schools, but due to insecurity and due to traditional taboos, girls are kept in the home and not allowed to go out during conflicts. Whenever conflicts are there, there are atrocities on girls and women, who are also most affected due to the resulting stress and strain out of the situation. Jammu and Kashmir is the northern-most state of Indian union bounded by China in the north and east, Afghanistan in the northwest and Pakistan in the west. In the south the state touches the boundaries of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. Geographically the state of Jammu and Kashmir is divided into three distinct regions; Jammu, Kashmir Valley (summer capital) and Ladakh. Jammu being the winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir State, nestling in the foothills of Himalayas, is important not only because of its administrative status, but also because of it being the city of temples and the base camp to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Cave Shrine which is located in Trikutta Hills (Outer Himalayas). Throughout the year there is huge inflow of pilgrims and tourists in the city of temples.



Figure 1.Jammu and Kashmir Map

Jammu and Kashmir State Education Profile:
 “As per census report of 2011, though state of Jammu and Kashmir stands at 23rd place among Indian states with over all literacy rate 68.7%. The percentage of literacy rate of the

state as per the census report of 2001 was 55.52%. It clearly shows that the state of Jammu and Kashmir has increased the literacy rate by 13.18%”.

Table 1.State Profile [3]

Population	12,548,926
Percentage of male population	53.94%
Percentage of female population	46.89%
Literacy Rate	68.74%
Male Literacy Rate	78.26%
Female Literacy Rate	58.01%
Female Population	47.16%
Urban Literacy Rate	68.75%
Rural Literacy Rate	53.61 %
All India Average Literacy Rate	74.04%
Number of Primary Schools	14171
Number of Upper Primary School	6665
Number of High Schools	1194
Number of Higher Secondary Schools	597
Number of Sainik Schools	02
District Institute of Education (DIETs)	22
State Institute of Education (SIEs)	02
Number of KGBVs	79

Rationale of the Study

Conflict has been a feature of human society since the time immemorial which affects overall development of society as well as of the human being (Murshed, 2002). During the armed conflict women and children are worst affected and victimized. It is one of the reasons that transform the lives of millions of children and women. Girls suffer from malnutrition, psychological problems and lack of education which is seriously affecting the child development and well-being.

Education is considered to be an essential tool for human development; empowerment and poverty eradication. It is instrument for upward mobility and ultimately succeeds fully in life. After home, school is best place to impart education and it also represents miniature of social world. Besides the formal educative values that a school imparts, this agency of knowledge instills upon a child the value of socialization, provides a safe environment and grooms one to be a better citizen. Thus, schools are vital in protecting children and supporting their emotional and social development by giving them comfort, security, and opportunity. The routine of school develop a sense of normality and the environment is one in which children are allowed to be children. In situations of armed conflict, women's education becomes a serious casualty. Hence, even in situation of conflict, it is important to carry out on educating women and young people, irrespective of the circumstances. Education protects women from the most damaging aspects of conflict and plays a significant role in building peace, restoring countries to a positive development path and breaking the cycle of violence.

Recognizing the importance of education at the time armed conflict the summary note of The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) "Strategy and Activities concerning Refugee Children" has identified five main global priority for the protection of children in emergencies where education is

one of them which states that Education is crucial for refugee girls and boys from the onset of an emergency, since:

- Going to school, brings stability and security back into the lives of children affected by armed conflict and displacement.
- Education, by providing a potential "safe place", may shield children from dangers such as child labor, military recruitment or sexual exploitation, abuse or violence, and may prevent teenage. Pregnancies and HIV infection while registration as a student also allows for follow-up and monitoring.
- Education enables children to gain the social skills development of childhood and provides them with the hope of a better future.

Education as a right in term of access to school should be maintained at all times, even in the most difficult circumstances and not neglected during times of conflict. Girls rarely get a second chance at education. Where the opportunity of education has been lost due to conflict, it is not just a loss to the individual, but also a loss of social-cultural capital and the capacity of a society to recover from the conflict. Even in situations of armed conflict, it is important to carry on educating girls and women, no matter how difficult the circumstances. All possible efforts should be made to maintain education systems during conflicts. Inequalities in educational access can lead to other inequalities-in income, employment, nutrition and health as well as political position, which can be an important source of conflict.

The provision of education is a means of providing protection, a 'normal' life, social support and opportunities for the future. Many developing countries struggle to provide an adequate education system during peacetime; during times of violent conflict, the disruption to the education system makes this even more difficult. This

leads to lack of resources for good quality education, low attendance rates, additional pressure not to ensure that girls go to school and other difficulties (Roger Williamson, 2007:10).

It is also found that the conflict issues, problems or proposed solutions for educating children affected by conflict, are largely absent from educational planning documents, international conferences on education, and debates about education for all. An urgent and effective action need to be taken in order to achieve the target of education for all. Thus the proposed study will provide a picture of conflict issues, problems in accessing the education of women in the Srinagar district of Jammu and Kashmir State.

Education must be regarded as an integral part of the response even during conflict. This study endeavors to create an understanding of the links between conflict and education. The study will look upon the socio-cultural, political and historical factors of the conflict and how it's affecting the status of education for women in the Srinagar sector of Jammu and Kashmir. It is also expected to help in improving and reforming the education system for achieving better quality and equity.

Due to armed conflict the adolescent mental health is being affected which has also bearing on their academic performance. The study will also explore the academic facilities for women staying in the conflict sector of Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir. This study will able to help us in knowing how situation conflict has influenced the education of women who are on the crucial phase in the academic journey.

For the study one district Srinagar is selected. Srinagar district often experiences curfews as it is the also the summer capital of the state and the district experience armed conflict at varying level of intensity. Based on school management government and private school

is taken into consideration as they have girls enrolment.

In the post-cold war, the sense of urgency to address conflict and education extends beyond individual humanitarian efforts, to a broader necessity to develop and understand best practices, to investigate ways in which education systems can contribute in peace building. It's time to address the complex dimensions of women affected by armed conflict in more comprehensive way.

The proposed research study will be focused towards answering the following questions:-

- 1) What is the status of secondary education for girls in Srinagar Sector?
- 2) What the factors of armed conflict are as perceived by Secondary Grade Girls student, teachers, parents, Principal and Education Officers.
- 3) Do the secondary students face access related problems in Education during conflict situation?
- 4) What are the roles of Principals, teachers and education officers in managing the education at the time of conflict situation?
- 5) What are the government initiatives for provisioning of school education during conflict.
- 6) How the mental health, academic stress and academic outcomes of the secondary students is affected during the conflict situation.

Statement of the Problem

Education of Girls in Conflict Zone-A Study of Srinagar Sector of Jammu and Kashmir

Objectives

- 1) To study the factors of conflict as perceived by the girl students, principals, teachers, parents and education officers in the Srinagar District of Jammu and Kashmir.
- 2) To study the access related problems during conflict by girl student, principals,

teachers, parents and education officers in the Srinagar District of Jammu and Kashmir.

- 3) Consequences of conflict on school education as reported by the respondents.

Hypothesis

- 1) There will be different factors of conflicts according to the perceptions of Xth Grade students, Principals, Teachers, Parents and Education Officers in Srinagar district of Jammu and Kashmir.
- 2) There will be difference in the status of Secondary education specifically the enrollment of girls and boys ration due to conflict.
- 3) There will be access related problem in secondary education during conflict by girls.
- 4) There will be difference in the role of Principals, Teachers and Education Officers in managing girls' school during conflict situation.
- 5) There will be different government initiative for provisioning of school education time to time.
- 6) There will be differences in the health and academic stress and academic trajectories in girl students in government and private and government schools.

Delimitations of the Study

The study is limited to two schools (One Private schools and one government schools) from Srinagar district. Stratified Random sampling technique was applied. Total of 02 principals, 14 teachers, 87 Students, 10 parents and 02 Education officers were selected.

Review of Literature

This chapter examines some of the published research work, documents, reports and articles in the field of various types of conflict and education of women.

Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir-A Historical Perspective

The residents of Kashmir have often been called 'prisoners in heaven' (Ganai, 2008). They are prisoners of one of the world's longest interstate conflicts, juxtaposed to an exquisite environmental setting. The ongoing strife has cost over 70,000 Kashmiri lives and played a major role in the underdevelopment of Kashmir [21]. In light of this conflict between Pakistan and India, especially as compounded by the 2008 summer riots, it is now more important than ever that the turmoil surrounding Kashmir be addressed. Social services from the State, including education, have been greatly affected by this conflict (Jammu and Kashmir Development Report, 2003). It can be argued that until these issues are resolved, the politically precarious situation of Kashmir will be prolonged even further. History has shown that conflict arises when the majority in Kashmir is ignored and deprived of equal access, opportunities, or a political voice [12]. Therefore, it is in the best interest of policy makers to ensure equal and adequate educational, political, and economic opportunities for Kashmiris. This article provides an overview of educational development in Kashmir, both historically and currently, in the context of the political conflict. The scope of this article has been narrowed down to the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir, and not the Dogra Kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir, due to access to reliable data. A comprehensive examination of the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir, or the Dogra Kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir, disregarding the Line of Control between Indian and Pakistan administered Jammu and Kashmir, would be ideal. However, circumstances did not allow this research to manifest. By highlighting educational development in Indian administered Jammu and Kashmir within a historical framework, the patterns of conflict are contextualized. This article seeks to address the lack of comprehensive and unbiased information

regarding educational development in Kashmir, in hopes to begin a dialogue that centers on the people of Kashmir, rather than the political interests of the two nuclear nations of Pakistan and India. In order to address the issue of educational development in Jammu and Kashmir, it is important to define the vocabulary used in this analysis. Jammu and Kashmir ("JK") is the Indian administered State of Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmir is defined as the Muslim-majority Northern valley of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir (Habibullah, 2008). Educational development is defined as the systematic efforts to improve the education system in Kashmir in order to support broader socio-economic development. The term 'Kashmiri Pandit' is interchangeable for 'Hindu', as most Hindus in Kashmir belong to Hinduism Pandit caste (Mir, 2003). A clarification of all of these terms is necessary, especially to aid those who are not familiar with the region.

Women in Conflict Situation

"In the Kashmir Valley and the hill districts girdling it, 1989-90 saw a popular upsurge for self-determination which brought women, men, and children out on the streets raising the cry for azadi. Within the mass popular protest was the undertow of a fledgling armed militancy. The Indian state retaliated with severe repression and military force. In the ensuing armed conflict, an estimated seventy thousand people have been killed; more than two thousand have 'disappeared' or are in illegal detention. There are fifteen thousand widows and thousands of half widows of the disappeared. A generation has grown up which has known nothing other than armed conflict. The social capital of Kashmir has been destroyed as multiple armed agencies are at large with little or no accountability. More than half a million people have been displaced (Manchanda, Rita. Kashmiri Women and the Conflict: From Icon to Agency. In Aparna Rao (Ed). The Valley of Kashmir. Manohar, 2008).

Relationship of Conflict and Education

Attacks on education occur most often in conflict-affected areas and involve use or threat of force in ways that disrupt and deter provision of good quality education and are actively harmful to well-being. The opportunities such as learning and development are in jeopardy for many women living in conflict zone.

Risser studied "The impact of conflict on women in southeast Asia". The report has provided an overview of the many ways in which conflict has negatively affected women in Southeast Asia. The most dramatic impact on women during conflict does to the health of women, psycho-social well-being, access to education, and their families' livelihood assets is frequently excessive. One of the most obvious impacts on education was to schools. Schools are often target of attacks and also used to house the displaced in several locations. Though the devastation of structure is one of the most visible signs of impact on the education system, teachers and other education personnel also ended up affected by the conflict.

Ogla S (2006) studied "The effect of conflict on accumulation of schooling : results from Tajikistan" to understand the impact of internal civil war on school enrollment and completion of mandatory schooling by girls. Based on data the researcher compared educational attainment of groups of individual who were exposed to the conflict and group who did not. The result showed that there is strong negative relationship between the exposure to conflict and school enrollment of girls. The finding explained that at the time of conflict, households facing uncertainty were more inclined to invest in the education of the boys as the expected return on investment in education of girls is lower. The exposure to conflict had a large, negative and lasting effect on the education of girls who were of school age during the conflict and lived on the conflict affected areas.

The report of Save the Children-rewrite the Future : Education for the Children in conflict affected countries (2006) stated conflict inevitably affects the quality of education, and poor quality is still one of the main reasons why children do not go to school or why they drop out.

As per the report today 43 million children are out of school in conflict-affected states. For example, more than five million primary-aged children (6-11 years) are out of school in the Democratic republic of Congo (DRC), and more than six million 12-17 year olds have never been to school. In Darfur, in northern Sudan, only 39 per cent of primary-aged children are enrolled in school and in southern Sudan the education enrolment rate is just 20 per cent, and out of those, only 2 per cent complete primary education. In northern Uganda, 70 per cent of children who enrolled in grade one do not complete primary school, and in Angola, poor-quality teaching-and learning-are behind the 27 per cent of children who have to repeat years.

Keeping children in school is perhaps the biggest challenge. As situations deteriorate and there are fewer qualified teachers, teaching methods are likely to become less effective. The longer conflict continues, the more difficult it becomes to sustain funding and administrative support for education. As the conflict continues for a longer period it becomes to sustain funding and administrative support for education. It becomes increasingly difficult to hold national level school-leaving examinations, resulting in incomplete or unaccredited years of education.

Research Methodology

The present chapter deals with the procedure that had been followed in conducting the study, the methods and procedures adopted for the selection of the sample for data collection, organization of the study and the methods used for analysis of the data.

Title of the Study

Education of woman in conflict zone in Srinagar sector of Jammu and Kashmir

Population of the Study

The populations of the study include Principals, Teachers, Students, Parents and Education Officers in Srinagar.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

In order to conduct the study the sample was selected from the population of two schools (One Private schools and one government schools) from Srinagar district. Stratified Random sampling technique was applied. Total of 02 principals, 14 teachers, 87 Students, 10 parents and 02 Education officers were selected.

Research Design

The propose study titled "Education of Girls in conflict zone-A Survey Study in Srinagar sector of Jammu and Kashmir" is a survey research in nature. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used.

Procedure Followed for the Study

The researcher approached the Director of Department of Education, Srinagar seeking permission for data collection from the selected school as well as to have an interview with other Education Officials. The director spoke to the Education officer and informed to assist researcher with the requirement of the study. An appointment with the Education Officer and with other officials was held to conduct the interview.

Researcher visited Srinagar district and collected data from the government and private school. With the permission of Principal of the School, questionnaires were distributed to the teachers and students. The questionnaire for principal, teachers and students were filled up and completed on the same day. For the questionnaire of the

parents, it was given to selected students and collected on the next day.

Research tools

The researcher used the following tools for data collection.

1. Questionnaire
2. Interview

Questionnaire

A different set of an open ended and structured questionnaire was prepared for Principal, Teachers, Students and Parents which includes demographic information and questions related to concerned issues. The demographic information was collected to inquire about the background information and socio- economic status of the respondents. For the Principal total number of items in the demographic information is 8 and teachers have 15. Information related to their age, gender, religion, caste, educational qualification, teaching experience, name of the school, type of the school, year of joining in the present school, area of specialization, pay scale, gross salary were collected in the demographic information.

The questionnaires of the student were divided into two sections. The first section consist of demographic profile which includes information related to age, gender, name of school, type of school, type of family, total member of family, parents education, parents occupation, family annual income, distance of school from home, mode of transport, medium of instruction in school as well as their scored percentage in annual examination from class VII up to class IX. Second section of the questionnaire includes all the questions related to perception about armed conflict.

Interview

Interview was one of the methods for collecting the data needed for understanding

the study. For this purpose researcher chosen one education officer such as zonal education officer. Semi-structured interviews were used both in open ended and close ended questions. The interview was conducted to understand factors responsible for armed conflict and its impact on school functioning and management at local level from the point of education officials.

Analysis of the Data

The data were analyzed based on content analysis and descriptive statistics as mean, standard deviation, and reliability.

Data Findings, Data Analysis and Results

Findings from the data collected through various tools with the respondents such as Students, Principals, Teachers and Education Officer as mentioned in design of Study are as under.

According to all the respondents the main factors of political conflict in the state is due to insurgency. As per the students 50% of them has stated insurgency as the main factor followed by corruption with 10.2%, poor Governance with 6.7%. The other reasons stated by the Students are Law and Order Problem (4.8%), Inefficiency of Political leader (2.8%), AFSPA (2%). Similarly 50% of the teachers also mentioned insurgency as one of the main political factor of the conflict followed by poor governance and law and order problem. But for the Principals the main factor of political conflict is not only the Insurgency but also the Inefficiency of Political Leader followed by Corruption, Poor Governance, Law and Order and AFSPA. Out of 10 Parents, 20% of them stated insurgency as main factor of Political Conflict and 15% as corruption. For the Education Officials of the sate insurgency and poor governance equally with 20% each are the main factors.

Section I

Table 2. Political Factors Leading to Armed Conflict as Perceived by Respondents

Respondent	Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Students (N-87)	Insurgency	35	20.1
	Corruption	20.5	10.2
	Poor Governance	11	6.7
	Law and Order Problem	8.5	4.8
	Inefficiency of Political Leader	5	2.8
	AFSPA	4	2
Teacher (N-14)	Insurgency	7	25
	Corruption	2.5	9
	Poor Governance	5	17.75
	Law and Order Problem	4	12
	Inefficiency and Political Leader	1.5	5
	AFSPA	1	3.5
Principal (N-2)	Insurgency	2	25
	Corruption	1	12.5
	Poor Governance	1	12.5
	Law and Order Problem	1	37.5
	Inefficiency and Political Leader	2	25
	AFSPA	1	25
Parents (N-10)	Insurgency	4	20
	Corruption	3	15
	Poor Governance	2.5	12.5
	Law and Order Problem	2	10
	Inefficiency and Political Leader	2	10
	AFSPA	1	5
Education Officer (N-2)	Insurgency	2	20
	Poor Governance	2	20

Table 3. Socio Factor Leading to Armed Conflict as Perceived by Respondents

Respondent	Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Students (N-87)	Lack of education	10	5.7
	Lack of Unity	6.5	3.7
	Social Discrimination	2	2
	Increase in social crime	12	6.5
Teacher (N-14)	Lack of education	1	7
	Lack of Unity	1	1.5
	Social Discrimination	4	1
	Increase in social crime	2	1
Principal (N-2)	Lack of education	1	12.5
	Lack of Unity	1	12.5
	Social Discrimination	1	12
	Increase in social crime	1	10
Parents (N-10)	Lack of education	1	2.5
	Lack of Unity	1	2.5
	Social Discrimination	1	2.5
	Increase in social crime	1	2.5
Education Officer (N-2)	Increase in social crime	1	10

From Table 3, it can be stated that as per students the main factor of social conflict is due to the increase in social crime (6.5%) within the state of Jammu and Kashmir followed by lack of proper education. Other factors that lead to social conflict are lack of unity and social discrimination. According to the teachers the main factor is lack of education with highest 7% followed by lack of unity among the people and ignorance. Similarly all two principals stated that ignorance, disharmony and killing of innocent civilian do lead to social conflict in the state and Majority of the education officials also stated increase of social crime as one of the main factor of social conflict in the state.

Implications, Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

Some of the Factors Which Impact Women and Girl's Education during Conflict

- 1) When schools are destroyed, and children have to travel long distances, girls are more likely to stay at home, as they may be at increased risk of abduction, sexual violence and exploitation. Furthermore, boys are able to go out and engage in income-generating activities to give their family financial assistance.
- 2) Girls who are separated from their families and live with relatives may lack the support and encouragement to continue their education and are expected to do household tasks.

Findings

- 1) A major drop in the attendance of girl students during conflict situation.
- 2) In the villages, family sizes are large while very few earning members.
- 3) Girls provide the much needed helping hand to their mothers in their household work.
- 4) Preference for higher education is given to boys as they can go out to peruse higher studies.

- 5) Preference is also given to boys due to financial factors.

There is Access Related Problems during Conflict

- 1) Activities related to education are largely affected by the frequent bandhs, general strike. Majority of the students of both government/ private schools are unable to attend their schools due to frequent school closure.
- 2) Teachers are unable to cover syllabus and rush through the chapters. Access to school is also a problem of teachers and Principal.
- 3) A decline in the attendance of students and teachers is seen and postponing the examination dates hampers the school management.

There will be differences in the role of Principals, Teachers, Parents and Education Officers in Managing the School Education during Conflict Situation

- 1) Principals are motivators for the teachers and teachers should be motivated to be regularly taking classes. They should be encouraged to take special extra class.
- 2) To tackle the problem of teacher absenteeism principals should always have substitute teachers to take the class.
- 3) As for education officers the main role is to put an effort to deliver quality and continuous education as well as to increase access to education.

There are Different Government Initiatives for Provisioning of School Education from Time to Time

- 1) The finding revealed that state government is not taking up initiatives to resolve the conflict and to protect education during the conflict.
- 2) Almost all the respondents are not happy with the current conflict situation.
- 3) No counselor is appointed by the school who can counsel parents and girl students.

Recommendations

- 1) To achieve quality education, frequent bandhs and general strikes must be stopped and education institution should be made free zone where children can freely access and complete school.
- 2) Steps must be taken to ensure immediate restoration of peaceful academic atmosphere in the state. An appeal should be made to make education a free zone in order to allow the educational sector of the state to flourish.
- 3) When the forces occupy schools, children's lives are put in risks. Seeing the uniform military forces with guns will also affect the women, children and their mental health as it might create fear and anxiety among the students.
- 4) The Supreme Court has ordered to remove all the military from schools. Schools must be protected.
- 5) Efforts should be made to hold dialogue with the agitating organizations. Initiatives of dialogues and reconciliation between the government and these groups should be initiated.
- 6) Capacity building should be taken up for government officials, teachers and principals.
- 7) Measures should be taken to encourage regular attendance. It can be achieved by building more and more boarding schools for girls.

Conclusion

In situations of armed conflict, it is important to carry on educating children and young people, irrespective of the circumstances. Education protects women and children from the most damaging aspects of conflict and plays a significant role in building peace, restoring countries to a positive development path and breaking the cycle of violence.

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