This was a study of resilience in adolescents living with political violence in Kashmir and the aim was to understand the role of religious meaning systems and political ideologies in fostering resilience. The study developed an understanding of resilience from the perspective of youth in Kashmir, in order to measure culturally salient aspects. The study was conceptualized through an ecological framework in order to understand resilience as a dynamic process that is a result of interactions between the child’s context, psychological mediating units and responses to adversity. The context was defined by risks present in Kashmir, that included the violence proneness of the area of residence, socio-economic condition of the adolescent’s family, actual exposure to political violence and adolescent’s age and gender. The psychological mediating units were religious and general meaning systems and separatist and moderate ideologies. The role of meaning systems and political ideologies were tested by using the person-based as well as variable based approaches. There were 375 school going boys and girls in the age range of 14 to 17 years (Mean age 15.31 years) from Bandipore and Uri in Baramulla district of Kashmir. Bandipore was a high violence area, while Uri was a low violence area and all the respondents were Muslims. The study was based on a constructivist realism ontology that accepts that reality is both subjective and objective and aims to find correlates of people’s constructions in the lived world of a representative sample of the people who constructed those realities. A cross-sectional survey method was used and data were collected by means of self-report questionnaires. The questionnaires used to collect data were: Exposure to Political violence in Kashmir, Religious beliefs, Political beliefs, Child and youth resilience measure and Self-reporting questionnaire 20 (SRQ20). Data were collected by contacting the adolescents in their schools. A multistage sampling technique was used to ensure randomization of sample.

It was hypothesised that violence proneness of the area would make a difference in psychosocial outcome in terms of resilience and vulnerability. This hypothesis was not accepted as violence proneness of the area only made a significant difference in the level of exposure to political violence. Adolescents from Bandipore had a significantly higher exposure to political violence than adolescents from Uri ($t = 2.81, p < .01$). Living in Uri was
also significantly associated with having a stronger moderate ideology ($r = .334, p < .01$). The second hypothesis was that higher levels of exposure to political violence would be related to greater vulnerability and lower resilience. This was conditionally accepted because higher exposure to political violence predicted greater vulnerability ($\Delta R^2 = .102, p < .000$) but higher levels of total exposure had no relation with resilience. However, direct exposure to political violence (as compared to exposure through others) predicted an improvement in resilience ($\beta = 1.99, p < .05$) and socio-economic impact of exposure predicted a decrease in resilience ($\beta = -2.704, p < .01$), $\Delta R^2 = .03, p < .01$. The next hypothesis stated that lower socio-economic condition would be related to greater vulnerability and lower resilience. This hypothesis was completely accepted as lower socio-economic condition predicted a decrease in resilience ($\beta = -3.651, p < .000$) and an increase in vulnerability ($\beta = 2.77, p < .01$). The fourth hypothesis stated that gender and age will be related to resilience and vulnerability and this was partly accepted. Gender was a clear predictor of vulnerability. Being a boy predicted a significant decrease in vulnerability ($\beta = -7.02, p < .000$), which meant that girls were more vulnerable than boys. Gender was also related to caseness that indicated very high chance of meeting a diagnosis for mental illness ($\chi^2 = 21.98, p < .000$), and 81% ($n = 34$) of the 42 adolescents who met the caseness criterion were girls. However age was not related to resilience or vulnerability.

With respect to meaning systems and political ideologies, it was hypothesised that religious meaning system and political ideologies would moderate the relation between risk, resilience and vulnerability. The results showed that religious meaning system compensated the effect of risks on resilience and predicted an increase in resilience independently ($\beta = .21, p < .000$), $\Delta R^2 = .07, p < .000$ but it did not moderate the effects of risks on resilience or vulnerability. The results showed that general meaning system moderated the relation between risk of exposure to political violence and vulnerability ($\beta = -.142, p < .01$) and also between risk of lower socio-economic condition and vulnerability ($\beta = .190, p < .01$), $\Delta R^2 = .04, p < .01$. Thus at lower exposure level having a weak or strong general meaning system predicted lower vulnerability, but at very high levels of violence a weak general meaning system predicted an increase in vulnerability, that was greater than the increase predicted by strong general meaning system. Adolescents living in better socio-economic condition were
protected by stronger general meaning system, though it had no such ameliorative effects for adolescents living in lower socio-economic conditions.

With respect to political ideologies, the results showed that separatist ideology moderated the relation between risks and vulnerability. Separatist ideology moderated the relation between exposure to political violence and vulnerability ($\beta =-.093, p < .05$) and between lower socio-economic condition and vulnerability ($\beta =-.221, p < .01$). $\Delta R^2 =.032, p < .01$. The results showed that at high level of exposure those with weak separatist ideologies were more vulnerable than those with stronger separatist ideologies, though both groups had a similarly lower vulnerability at lower exposure levels. The findings also indicated that strong separatist ideology among adolescents from lower socio-economic condition predicted an increase in vulnerability, while strong separatist ideology among adolescents from higher socio-economic condition predicted a decrease in vulnerability.

The final hypothesis stated that religious meaning systems and political ideologies would mediate the relation between risks, resilience and vulnerability. The results showed that religious meaning system partially mediated the relation between socio-economic condition and resilience ($c =-.2, c' =-.17$ and indirect effect $= -.039$). Thus, the reason why adolescents living in lower socio-economic condition were less resilient was partially explained by the fact that they had weaker religious meaning system, while a stronger religious meaning system partially explained better resilience among adolescents living in better socio-economic conditions. The results also showed that separatist ideology partially mediated the relation between socio-economic condition and vulnerability ($c =1.36, c' = 1.23$ and indirect effect $= .133$). This indicated that the reason why adolescents living in lower socio-economic condition were more vulnerable was partially explained by their stronger separatist ideologies, while weaker separatist ideologies of adolescents living in better socio-economic conditions partially explained their lower levels of vulnerability. The findings emphasize the need for mental health interventions for children exposed to political violence and living in lower socio-conditions in Kashmir. They also indicate that religious meaning systems and separatist ideologies were key to understand resilience and vulnerability of adolescents in Kashmir.