CHAPTER – III

Sources and Dimensions of Jammu and Kashmir Conflict

Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir is popularly referred as Kashmir conflict. Like any other ethnic conflict involving two countries, Kashmir conflict is complex and multi-dimensional. It has historical, political, economic, religious and international dimensions. As the conflict is of international importance as well as has the serious repercussions for society, economy and polity of both India and Pakistan. It has attracted attention of scholars, media persons and social activists. Much has written on the causes and consequences of the conflict. Survey of available literature on the conflict shows that the conflict has emerged, persisted and flared-up due to various factors. Scholars have broadly categorized the factors/ sources into two categories – exogenous and endogenous.

Three broad exogenous sources of Kashmir conflict are generally identified by scholars. These factors are related with unfriendly or hostile relationship between India and Pakistan, ineffective role of United Nations organization as it has failed so far in conducting plebiscite in Jammu & Kashmir as well as Islamic linkage of Kashmir with outside world and the emergence of Islamic resurgence in the last three decades. These factors of Kashmir conflict are explained in the following pages under the broad heading of (a) international dimension of Kashmiri conflict. Besides, there are some internal factors, which appear to be responsible for the emergence and persistence of the conflict. These factors are related with politics in Kashmir since 1947, economic conditions of people, and ethnic diversity in the state. These factors are explained under the broad heading of (b) national dimension of the conflict.
3.a. International Dimension or Exogenous Sources:

Origin of Kashmir conflict can be traced in movement for freedom of India from the British rule as well as the way in which the India was partitioned. Freedom struggle was launched by Indian National Congress, which believed in secularism and a country in which people of all religions should live together on equal basis. From the beginning of 20th Century issues of ethnic and religious interests crop up in the movement for freedom. Muslim league was formed in 1906, the party propagated for the protection and promotion of interest of Muslims. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who was active member of Indian national congress relinquished his membership of congress party and joined Muslim league. He became president of Muslim league and advocated two-nation theory. Nation for him is based on religion; therefore, he raised the demand for the creation of a nation for Muslims. The demand got momentum from 1940 onwards. Thus, on the one hand, there was leadership of Indian national congress, which believed in secular and plural India, on the other hand, Jinnah demanded a country for Muslims. Kashmir being a Muslim majority area and adjacent to areas which became part of Pakistan was very dear to Jinnah. Thus, Indian National Congress Leader, Jawaharlal Nehru, wanted to retain Kashmir in India, whereas, Jinnah wanted Kashmir for Pakistan. Such a kind of contra-dictionary interests and ideologies of Nehru and Jinnah is explained by Paul Brass, who argues that source of conflict in Jammu and Kashmir lies in the nature of freedom struggles and the processes of nation building in both countries of India and Pakistan. For instance, the Indian national congress, which headed the Indian nationalist movement, was committed to the notion of creating a secular and democratic state. In contrast, the Pakistan nationalist movement sought to create a religiously based state that would serve as a homeland for south
Asian Muslims\(^1\). For Indian nationalists such as Nehru, the integration of Kashmir into India was critical because it would demonstrate that all faiths could live under the aegis of a secular state. By the same token, Pakistani nationalists such as Jinnah saw the inclusion of Kashmir into Pakistan as equally critical, but for diametrically opposite reasons (as a homeland for south Asian Muslims).\(^2\)

The way in which India was partitioned by colonial administration appears to be more responsible for the creation of Kashmir conflict. In fact, during colonial regime there were about 562 principalities in India. Jammu and Kashmir was one of the principalities. Chief of this principality was a Hindu dogra, Hari Singh. Whereas, majority of people was of Muslims. Every principality was given right either to go with India or with Pakistan and this should be decided by people’s will or referendum. Such kind of referendum could not took place in Jammu & Kashmir. Therefore, Mushtaqur Rahman, argues in his book ‘Divided Kashmir”…. That Jammu & Kashmir conflict is the product of hasty partition of the subcontinent, which left issues, related to assets, army and accession of princely states undecided. As, this hasty process of partition could not give enough time to emergent states to make reasonable decisions for the effective control of their territories. Thus, the problem with accession arose because the British seemed to do three things at one time: to rule, to handover power and to divide and quit in hurry\(^3\).

Well known British historian, Alaister Lamb in his book ‘Kashmir A Disputed Legacy’ also argues in the same line that it had taken the British hundred years to consolidate the Indian empire. In 1947, they dismantled it in seventy days.

As the people of Jammu & Kashmir were not given chance to express their will about their future destiny, the issue of Kashmir remained
alive. Last monarch, Hari Singh did not opt for India or Pakistan. Technically the state became an independent*. As the majority of people were of Muslims, Pakistani leaders promoted entry of Pathans who incited rebellion in Jammu & Kashmir. Sumit Ganguly writes that during the first week of October 1947, a tribal rebellion broke out near poonch in the northwestern reaches of Kashmir. In response to it a band of tribal from the northwest frontier province of Pakistan invaded the state on October 22, 1947. They had captured the part of Kashmir now referred as “Azad-Kashmir”\(^5\)

In response to this development, dogra monarch, Hari Singh then requested for military assistance from India. Lord Mount batten – governor general of India, suggested Nehru to get instrument of Accession from Hari Singh before sending troops there. Accordingly, on 26\(^{th}\) of October 1947, the accession document was signed. Sheikh Abdullah also had ratified it subsequently. Mount batten, who was in the chair favoured kashmir’s temporary accession to India on the condition that the people’s wishes would be ascertained after the restoration of law and order in the state. Similarly, on Nov.2, 1947, Nehru also confirmed in a broadcast: “that the fate of Kashmir is ultimately to be decided by people”. And that “we are prepared ... to have a referendum (Plebiscite) held under international auspices like United Nations”\(^6\). To date this promise of Nehru remained unfulfilled and became a seat of Kashmir Conflict.

Why did Mount batten suggest Nehru to get Instrument of accession from Hari Singh? Why did he not send British army to crush the rebellion? Why did he indirectly help the entry of Indian army into the Kashmir? These and others are some questions, which are still not been answered. It is, therefore, many scholars suspect a colonial design in the creation of Kashmir conflict. One of such scholars is British historian Alaister Lamb. He argues that decision to retain
Jammu and Kashmir as part of India was made by the British colonial administration under Mount-batten, as the departing British felt that Jammu and Kashmir was an important buffer to the north of India against the communist Soviet Union. Since it was a political decision made by the colonial administration, there was no question of allowing the future of Kashmir to be decided through the popular will of the people.\(^7\)

In Lamb's opinion the logic behind partition of the subcontinent into a Muslim and non-Muslim portions suggested that Kashmir ought to go to Pakistan. The mechanics of partition as applied to the Panjab in great measure created the background to Kashmir dispute. In theory all Muslim majority districts contiguous with Muslim core of Panjab would go to Pakistan but by awarding three out of four tehsils of Gurdaspur district to India, the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India became a practical possibility. Through these territories like Gurdaspur, Batala and Pathankot, road link between Jammu and Kashmir with India became a practical possibility. While before independence Kashmir was linked to rest of the subcontinent through Srinagar–Rawalpindi and Jammu–Sialkot roads.\(^8\)

Although Maharaja's accession of the state to India legalized the entry of Indian army into the state on 27\(^{th}\) of October 1947. This led to outbreak of war between Indian and Pakistani troops in November 1947. With no resolution in sight, at the suggestion of Mountbatten, the Indian cabinet decided to refer the case to United Nations Security Council. Accordingly, a complaint was lodged to the council on, January 1, 1948.\(^9\) This led to the internationalization of the Kashmir conflict.

Well-known Indian journalist Kuldip Nayar says that the debate in the Security Council did not go the way India thought it would. There
was no immediate acceptance of its basic complaint that Pakistan had created a situation, which might lead to international friction. In the Security Council debate Pakistani representative, Mohammad Zafrullah Khan's arguments proved more convincing. Therefore, convinced of Pakistan's case, the Security Council changed the tilt of the complaint from "Jammu and Kashmir question" to "Indo-Pakistan question". The Council passed its first resolution on 17th January 1948, calling on both sides to help ease tension.

Three days later, however, the council passed another resolution to create a United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) to exercise a mediatory role and to investigate facts. The Council through its resolution on 21st April, 1948, had raised the commissions strength to five and was authorized: to investigate facts, to use its mediatory role in regard to Kashmir, to restore order and hold a plebiscite in Kashmir in co-operation with both governments. India rejected the resolution on the ground that it raised doubts about the legality of accession. Following this, the commission passed another resolution on 13th August 1948. The resolution was split up in three parts. Part-I concerned itself with the cease-fire, part-II with the trace agreement and part-III with plebiscite. It is to be noted that part-III was to be taken on after part-I and part-II had been fully implemented and not before.

In this resolution, Commission asked Pakistan to withdraw its troops from Kashmir. The Indian withdrawal was to follow that of Pakistan. Although India was allowed to retain a certain number of forces necessary for the maintenance of law and order in the state. Pakistan did not accept the resolution, as it demanded balanced and synchronized withdrawal of both armies of India and Pakistan.
After this, on 11 December 1948, another resolution was adopted. Some of the important provisions of the resolution are as follows:

i) The question of accession of Kashmir to India or Pakistan would be decided by the free and impartial plebiscite.

ii) The plebiscite was contingent on a ceasefire in accordance with the provision of part-I and II of the commission's resolution passed on 13 August 1948.

iii) Appointment of plebiscite administrator who would be nominated by the secretary general of United Nations in consultation with the commission.

iv) (a) After the cease-fire, and when the commission was satisfied about the restoration of peaceful conditions, it would in consultation with the government of India and the plebiscite administrator determine the final disposal of Indian and state armed forces.

(b) As regards the areas under Pakistan, final disposal of the troops in that territory would be determined by the commission and the plebiscite administrator.

It is important to note that both India and Pakistan had accepted the UN mediated proposals as discussed in the preceding paragraph. Accordingly both countries came to accept a UN mediated cease-fire and UN observers group to supervise it from January 1, 1949.11

The present cease-fire line divides the state into two political units:

(a) Azad Kashmir lying under the control of Pakistan and

(b) Indian Part of Kashmir-Jammu, Kashmir valley and Ladakh.
Presently 45 percent of the state's territory is in India, 35 percent in Pakistan and the remaining 20 percent in Chinese control.\(^{12}\)

After cease-fire, UN commission has failed to convince India for withdrawal of troops from the state. However, the Security Council president, Mc Naughton, in order to remove the deadlock, proposed that India and Pakistan forces should be withdrawn and both the Azad Kashmir troops and the state forces were to be reduced. India rejected the proposal but India's rejection did not deter the Security Council from adopting Mc Naughton's proposal in a resolution dated 14 March 1950\(^{13}\).

When the Commission failed to persuade India for plebiscite, it recommended its own dissolution and appointed Sir Owen Dixon as UN mediator on 27\(^{th}\) of March 1950.

He made two proposals: (1) to hold the plebiscite by sections or areas (2) to partition the state according to the known wishes of the inhabitants and holding a plebiscite in the Kashmir valley\(^{14}\).

Following this, in disregard of the United Nations pending discussions of Kashmir, India held elections in Kashmir in 1951 and formed a constituent assembly to further integrate the state. In response to this development, the Security Council at the instance of Pakistan resolved (30 March, 1951) that any decision made by the state constituent assembly about the future of Kashmir would not be binding.\(^{15}\)

Meanwhile, in early 1951 an attempt was made to resolve the conflict at Commonwealth conference. Accordingly, on 8\(^{th}\) January 1951, seven Prime Ministers of Commonwealth nations (UK, Australia, New-Zealand, Canada, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India) met informally and discussed the Kashmir issue for about 80 minutes. It was
proposed that common wealth troops be stationed in Kashmir. India rejected this proposal also.\textsuperscript{16}

After this failure, the United Nations again continued with its "operation Kashmir". Between 1951 and 1955, there were five UN reports – all by a new UN mediator, Frank P. Graham. He first suggested direct talks between India and Pakistan governments. When this proposal made no headway, he got down to fixing the quantum of forces to be retained by the two sides after demilitarization of the state, for holding a plebiscite. Graham's proposal was acceptable to India and Pakistan only in parts. Therefore, he also came to the conclusion that the way out for the resolution of Kashmir conflict was bilateral talks between India and Pakistan\textsuperscript{17}.

In 1953, Pakistan joined the lobby of United States in response to it, Indian leadership went back on its promise of the right of self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir\textsuperscript{18}.

Whereas, India joined the lobby of Soviet Union. In view of this Nehru in 1956 declared that there was no need for a plebiscite because Kashmir was legally a part of India\textsuperscript{19}. In this way from 1957 with soviet veto permanently in place any meaningful initiative on Kashmir offered a bleak prospect.

The continued dispute over the state had crystallized two more bloody wars between India and Pakistan in 1965 and 1971, respectively. In 1965 war after the cease-fire, then Soviet Union took the initiative and brought Indian Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Ayub Khan (Pak military ruler) together at Tashkant where peace declaration was signed. This was the first-time that both India and Pakistan affirmed in writing "not to resort to force" and "to settle Kashmir dispute through peaceful negotiations". 
The same peaceful approach was underlined in the Shimla agreement in 1972. Under this agreement the two countries resolved to settle their difference by “peaceful means” and promised not to “unilaterally alter the situation”. The two also undertook to “prevent organization assistance or encouragement of any act detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful relations between the two”.

Since the Shimla agreement there has been no conflict between India and Pakistan but there has been no settlement either. Now due to the presence of militancy in the state since 1989, Pakistan now argues more vigorously than before that Kashmir is the core of its problems with India. Once it is out of the way, the relationship will normalize with India. Moreover, it (Pakistan) reiterates the demand for a plebiscite. It may do so one day but all the major powers in the world are united in thinking that the solution will have to be found by India and Pakistan.

Since the emergence of militancy in the state, another party, the Kashmiri’s have come prominently into the picture. Their separatism on the one hand, and India’s ruthless suppression on the other, has attracted the world attention. This has introduced a new option “Independence “undoing accession to India and not joining Pakistan”.

The preceding facts and analysis show that roots of Kashmir conflict lie in the nature of India’s freedom struggle, hasty partition of the country and the denial of right of plebiscite to people of Jammu and Kashmir. These factors of Kashmir conflict have transformed it into conflict between two sovereign countries or an international conflict. Although it has repeatedly been argued in diplomatic circles and media that Kashmir conflict should be bilaterally resolved, I wonder! how can it be possible without involving some other parties.
3.b. Endogenous Sources or National Dimension:

No conflict can emerge and sustain only with the exogenous factors. For the emergence or sustenance of the conflict internal contradictions, clash or development of discriminatory political system and economic contradictions are more responsible for the emergence and sustenance of conflict. Indeed, external factors may only contribute in the intensification of the conflict. Many internal factors of Kashmir conflict are discussed and debated in academics and media. Foremost among these factors are politics in the state after 1947 war, educational development from 1960’s and unemployment among educated youth, rampant poverty and inequalities in the state. There is also one more important factor of Kashmir conflict; this is ethnic diversity in the state.

3.b.1. Political Dimension:

Politics in Jammu and Kashmir since October 1947 onwards has taken a radical turn. As after war broke out between India and Pakistan in October 1947, the last monarch of the state Hari Singh left Kashmir and shifted himself to Jammu. In view of this development, government of India proclaimed prominent Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdullah as an Interim head of the state in October 1947\(^\text{21}\). Abdullah was convinced that the Kashmiri identity could be best protected in the Indian secular and democratic polity.\(^\text{22}\)

Infact, on 17\(^{th}\) October 1949, Government of Indian respecting the identity urges of people and also recognizing the particular nature of a problem had awarded Kashmir a ‘special status” through article – 370.

It allows the state to have its own constitution, restricts the parliament’s powers to three subjects: defense, communication and
foreign affairs. If other constitutional provisions or union powers are to be extended to Kashmir not only the prior “concurrence” of the state Government is required but also it has to be ratified by the state’s constituent Assembly.\textsuperscript{23}

Following this, in October 1950, as an intern head of the state Abdullah had formally demanded election to create constituent assembly in the state. Therefore, in 1951 elections for the state assembly were held first time in which National conference led by Sheikh Abdullah got sweeping victory. Accordingly in November 1951 Shiekh Abdullah was sworn as the first Prime Minister of the state, Jammu & Kashmir. Because of this political development power and authority which was monopolized by Dogra monarchy shifted to Sheikh Abdullah who belonged to Kashmiri ethnic group.\textsuperscript{24}

In the initial years of his government to improve the socio-economic conditions of the people land reforms were introduced in the state. Under it ownership rights were granted to landless Kashmiri peasantry. It is because of these humanitarian land reforms Abdullah became popular figure among lower and middle class Muslims of Kashmir and got their vote and support till his death. Moreover, the electorate especially, Kashmiri Muslims changed from a politically passive to an increasingly assertive population. In fact, through land reforms the foundation for the emergence of a new generation of Kashmiris was laid\textsuperscript{25}.

In 1952, a group of communal organizations led by Jan Sangh President Shyam Prasad Mukherjee along with Hindu Mahasaba, RSS (Rashtriya Suyam Savak Sangh) Jammu Praja Parishad\textsuperscript{26} and others started demanding that state’s special status (article-370) should be abolished\textsuperscript{27}. Renowned Indian Journalist M.J. Akbar says at Jammu these communal organizations had the backing of the
Hindu landlords, which have lost economic and political monopoly after Sheikh introduced land reforms in the state. He argues in the state Hindu landlords may have lost economic power but they especially elites still retain their influence in the politics of the state. Landlords whose property has been redistributed to the landless Muslim peasantry spread the rumor that the Sheikhs reforms were actually nothing but well disguised anti-Hinduism, since it was the Hindu whose land had gone to the Muslim peasantry.\textsuperscript{28}

It merits mention here that “Mukherjee’s agitation only served to resurrect fears in the national conference about how sharp the edge of Hindu fanaticism could be. The temptation to keep the ultimate control of Kashmir’s destiny in the hands of Kashmiris rather than surrender it to India played its part.”\textsuperscript{29}

During 1952 crisis political elites at centre especially Nehru remained ineffective to stop these communal agitators. In response to this unexpected development, Sheikh Abdullah (On July 10, 1952) at the party’s head quarters in Srinagar is quoted as having said that even Nehru could not control communal elements in India and the time might come when Kashmir would have to say “goodbye” to secular India. This speech was used to prove that he had now become “traitor” to India and was dismissed from power on 8\textsuperscript{th} August, 1952.\textsuperscript{30} After the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah, separatist political space had developed in politics of Jammu & Kashmir. As in 1953, a movement (Plebiscite front) was launched to secure the right of plebiscite for Kashmiris.\textsuperscript{31} Moreover, government of India had allowed only those politicians to come in power who were not opposed to Jammu & Kashmir’s full constitutional integration with India. Among these politicians names of G.M. Bakshi (1953-63), Sadiq (1964-1971) & Mir Qasim (1971-75) deserves mention. As it is during the tenure of these
ministers most of the provisions of article – 370 were diluted and treated Jammu & Kashmir at par like any other Indian state.

Meanwhile at the political level the ruling regional party national conference was dissolved and made a branch of All India congress party. This led to suppression of democratic politics in post 1953-period. In fact, these hasty measures were perceived in Kashmir as a threat to its identity. They caused an unprecedented wave of anger in Kashmir against relations with India.

It is in this situation, the Indian leadership went back on its promise of the right of self-determination as ruling elites at centre felt sure now that the Muslims of Kashmir would not vote to join India if plebiscite is held there.

Even after bringing these radical politico-constitutional changes in Jammu & Kashmir, relationship of the state with the central government has remained weak and full of suspicion. However, in 1975 ruling national party realizing that the state could not be controlled/ run by weak and unpopular leaders had started political bargaining with national conference leader, Sheikh Abdullah. That led to signing of accord referred as “the Kashmir accord 1975”. This accord paved the way for S. Abdullah to re-enter into politics of Jammu and Kashmir on 24th February, 1975.

As a consequence of this, the separatist forces were significantly marginalized. The plebiscite front was dissolved and most of its leaders had now joined the mainstream politics.

M.J. Akbar says that Farooq Abdullah was unanimously chosen as Chief Minister of the state (on 8th September 1982) after his fathers death. At that time the congressmen of Kashmir had an additional problem they had been kept out of power since 1975.After the
Sheikhs death they faced the prospect of another long spell out of power in case Farooq Abdullah succeeded in his political career. In 1983 assembly elections in order to keep congress out of power national conference came in alliance with another regional party, Awami Action committee (AAC). This resulted in NC-AAC alliance in Kashmir. After winning 1983 assembly elections, central government had started conspiracy to dismiss elected government of Farooq by encouraging defection within his party through then governor (Jagmohan) of the state.

That defection led to dismissal of the elected government of Farooq in 1984. Accordingly G.M. Shah, though sponsored by Governor of the state, was allowed to form a government (in 1984). Because of this development moderate Kashmiris faith in Indian democracy has again shaken. Although Farooq was not as popular as his father but his dismissal began a new phase of alienation.

However after a brief period of Governor's rule Farooq was once again brought back in an alliance with congress led by Raju Gandhi at centre in 1987. This alliance totally undermined the party's popularity and capacity of representing the distinctive Kashmiri sentiments and the identity urges of the people.

It was after this alliance (Congress-NC) extremist trends in Kashmir politics started emerging and gaining strength. Parties with proven secular nationalist credentials like national conference started losing ground. This situation helped to strengthen the Muslim united Front (MUF) and made it a major force in Kashmir's politics. So much so that Congress National Conference alliance had to resort to large scale rigging in assembly elections (1987) in order to remain in power there.
By doing so, a golden opportunity of exercising an influence of moderation on the Muslim United front was missed by denying it an opportunity of participating in India’s rich democratic experience. It is in this situation people got completely alienated from the mainstream politics. This situation led many unemployed youth to shift directly from the electoral politics to armed militancy.

In fact, groups of young men who took to violence comprised mostly those who had actually worked during the 1987 assembly elections on the side of MUF (Muslim United Front). These people were subjected to severe torture for their association with the opposition. The objective situation thus created provided a good opportunity to Pakistan to get involved in Kashmir as never before.

Moreover, since the emergence of militancy India resorted to heavy deployment of troops there in order to quite militancy. In fact, this deployment led to indiscriminate violation of human rights of the common men, which further alienated them from the political system.

To give militancy a political face various militant organizations came together and formed the Hurriyat conference in 1993. As an amalgam, the Hurriyat incorporates almost the full spectrum of ideologies prevalent in Kashmir at that time. Despite its internal contradictions, to ensure the right of self-determination for Kashmiris peacefully and politically, it is providing opposition to the agencies of Indian state through its activities of calling strikes, demonstrations against the excesses committed by the security forces.

In fact, after a long gap of Governor’s rule in 1996 Government of India have revived the political processes again there. Since then elected governments working there under a number of constraints has not been able to deliver anything worthwhile. The state authority
is still largely dependent on coercive and repressive agencies. It is a major reflection of its weakness rather than strength. This situation of lawlessness with all its attributes of insecurity and uncertainty is likely to prevail if the problem is not addressed in all its vital dimensions\textsuperscript{46}. It is therefore; conflict in Jammu & Kashmir is a political phenomenon. As the genesis of the conflict gets traced in the political sub-system which failed to fulfill the legitimate political aspirations of people. And, it is in this situation people resorted to militancy/ violence. In fact, when political system fails to articulate the grievances of politically alienated people they challenge it and resort to violence.

3.b.2. Economic Dimension:

More than politics it is economy, which plays an important role in integrating or alienating people to any social system. Karl Marx and many other scholars have given primacy to economic factor in understanding and analyzing social reality. But scholars have not fully explored the role of economic factors in Kashmir conflict. It is generally political factors, which have been given primary in the analysis of Kashmir conflict. This has resulted an incomplete analysis of the conflict.

We have mentioned in the preceding chapter that Kashmir is a land scarce and labour abundant state, with less than 30 percent of its total area under cultivation\textsuperscript{47}. Agriculture is the main source of state's income as about 80 percent of the population depends on it. The state does not produce enough food and relies on imports from India\textsuperscript{48}. It is because of this reason; Kashmir's imports are about four times its exports. The excess of imports over exports has to be made up through payments from other incomes – from tourism, which accounts for one – third of the state's income (1983), from earnings in Handicrafts, agriculture and others\textsuperscript{49}. 
However, exports from Kashmir are those of fruit, mainly apples, and handicrafts, mainly carpets and shawls. Knowledgeable observers estimate that fruit growers in the valley-Kashmir get only about 20.00 percent of the auction price at Dehi. As the trade, in the apples is controlled (at Azadpur, Delhi) by Panjabi Khatri traders. The state is famous for its forests and water resources – according to one estimate the state has a 10,000 Mw power generation potential. Besides, the state is industrially very backward. Most of the large and medium scale industries are under the control of the state government and contribute only 0.1% to the state’s income. Moreover, the contribution of the manufacturing sector to the state’s domestic product does not exceed 9.0 percent.

Renowned political scientist, Sumit Ganguly says that before independence the state was ruled by Dogra monarchs who did little to improve the socio-economic condition of the people especially of Muslims. The principle source of income, land was held by two classes of landlords: Jagirdars and muafidars – who were mostly non-Muslims. These landlords used to exploit landless Muslim peasantry that comprised the bulk of population.

Due to its level of economic backwardness, the state has been categorized as one of the backward states of India after independence. The backwardness of the state was largely attributed to landlordism. Therefore, the first measures taken by the newly state Government led by late Sheikh Abdullah were land reforms. Under it excess of land was confiscated from the landlords and were distributed among the landless Muslim peasantry. In fact, these reforms led to the emergence of a new class of Muslims in Kashmir, which are more prosperous than their earlier exploited peasantry. However, due to many shortcomings in land reforms implementation and policies it could not achieve the desired results.
No doubt over the years state’s agricultural production has increased but due to increase in its population the state’s dependence on outside market for consumer goods has consistently increased. It is because of this reason; consumers within the state have to devote two-thirds of their earnings to basic necessities such as food and clothing. The increased dependence on imports caused inflation and raised the cost of living for the majority of poor Kashmiris.

However, to overcome the hardships of Kashmiris, the government of India has heavily subsidized the state with large-scale grants. In case of Jammu & Kashmir alone, this central assistance is 70 percent loan and 30 percent grants, as against 90 percent grants and 10 percent loan for the other states.

This policy of central government proved misguided/ misused because these large-scale central grants encouraged corruption and did not allow the state to mobilize its own resources for self-reliance. In view of this, the state is now facing debt crisis. According to RBI report (1995), the debt servicing liability on one rupee loaned by the centre to Jammu & Kashmir today is Rs. 5.53.

Besides, even more than those of other states Jammu and Kashmir government expenditure is determined by security considerations. Educated estimates suggest 60.00 percent of the annual administrative expenses of the state are now devoted to security related activities.

In Jammu & Kashmir “with a rapidly increasing population, expanding and easily accessible education and growing pressure on land, the creation of non-agricultural employment has become a pressing need. The development of modern industry would be one such alternative to provide opportunities for absorbing technically qualified people.”
Ironically, investment in Kashmir by Delhi and pan-Indian bourgeoisie has been basically in two fields – roads and communications for military and commercial purposes. Capital investment in the field of Industry was virtually non-existent. Therefore, most of the large and medium scale industries were state owned which contribute only 0.1% to state’s income. Several factors are responsible for discouraging investors to invest there; such as: being land-locked, on the boarder with Pakistan and the special status granted to the state by the centre under article 370 which bars non-Kashmiris from owning property within the state. Now for the Indian bourgeoisie it is a captive market for its manufactures.

By the mid 1970’s corruption and nepotism began to escalate to unprecedented levels. The government of Jammu and Kashmir favoured the supporters in making appointments in the administration and the state owned corporation. As a result of such generous distributions of administrative patronage, the bureaucracy proliferated and the wage bill of the state consumed 43 percent of its non-plan expenditures. It is in this situation, the economic planning and development have been relegated to the background by politicians in the state.

In the light of the aforementioned information, it is suffice to say that the backward economy of the state has a relation with politics. Moreover, with economic planning being relegated to the background by politicians and the increase in unemployment and corruption in the state led many unemployed youth of the state to join militant organizations.

3.b.3. Ethnic Dimension:

Jammu and Kashmir, as we have described in the preceding chapter, is a multi-ethnic society. Broadly, it could be divided into three
physiographic regions these. Three regions are called Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, respectively. Each region is again plural in nature as in each region there are people belonging to different religious, linguistic, tribal and racial communities.

Although the state has been multi-ethnic all through ages. Its culture was earlier defined in terms of what is called as Kashmiriyat. Kashmiriyat appears to have declined there. According to Riyaz Panjabi, well-known political scientist, the unprincipled politics pursued by central government for Jammu & Kashmir resulted into the rupture of Kashmiriyat and division of people on the basis of religion. Today Jammu and Kashmir state is thought to be divided into three broad communities: Muslims of Kashmir valley, Hindus of Jammu and Buddhists of Ladakh.

As a result of many political developments, the three different demands are coming out from the ethnic groups who are dominant in respective provinces of the state. For instance, in Jammu, particularly from the dogra dominant belt (like district Jammu, Udhampur and Kuthua) the demand for separate Jammu state is being raised from time to time. In ladakh were Buddhists especially from Leh district are asserting of the “union territory status”. While, Muslims of Kashmir mostly seek “Independence” from India. Moreover, Muslims of valley Kashmir who always feared that the policies of Hindu government at centre would pursue a policy of annihilating the rights and the cultural identity of Muslims in the state. It is, therefore, Gautam Navlakha, renowned human rights activist, rightly says that:

“The roots of the crisis in Kashmir lie in the Kashmir’s fears for the loss of the cultural identity in the face of the Hindu/ Hindu notion of nationalism. A telling instance of this is provided in a circular issued on January 12 (1990) by the Director of the News Services Division of
All India Radio which says “attention is drawn of all concerned and particularly news readers, translators in the respective languages including, Hindi, Urdu and Kashmiri, that ‘rashtrapati” will be used for president, ‘Uprashtrapati” of the vice president and “Pradhanmantri” for the Prime Minister. For India, the language version will be Bharat.

Innocuous (not harmful) as this appears in attempting to bring about linguistic uniformity, there is an insidious attempt to force through assimilation. By singling out Urdu and Kashmiri the attempt to establish the hegemony of Hindu/ Hindi nationalism is evident. This manifests the single most important source of the crisis in Kashmir valley – cultural marginalization of a group of people due to a processes of state sponsored imposition of pan-indianess derived from a Sankritic Brahmanical notion of Bhartiya culture and civilization”

3.4. Religious Dimension:

Kashmir conflict can also be looked from religious angle. The role of religion in fomenting the Kashmir conflict can be analysed in three ways. The first way is to explain that because of Muslim dominance in Kashmir valley, the conflict is generated and promoted by Muslims. Many scholars believe that Muslims are separatists and Islam teaches the ideology of Jihad or not to live with non-Muslims. This is a very parochial view. As the evidence from the different parts of the world do not support this view.

The second way is to explain religion as a force of mobilizing and encouraging them to fight for their rights. We have already seen in preceding pages that Kashmiris have been politically alienated, economically deprived and culturally marginalized. It is this alienation, marginalization and deprivation, which are being expressed through religion.
It is within this context, one must see the call for Jihad (holy war). This is fact that religious militancy in Kashmir had developed after Islamic revolution in Iran, and defeat of Soviet Union in Afghanistan. In both the cases it was Islamic Jihad, which was propagated and understood by people as a winning force. This is possible that many Kashmiri youth might have encouraged with the slogan of jihad in these two cases.

Professor, Iftikhar Malik also says that militants in Jammu & Kashmir are inspired by religious and cultural power that emanated from the Iranian revolution and Soviet expulsion from Afghanistan. In both cases, powerful, modern, well-equipped armies were defeated by a dedicated, purposeful power, motivated by religion and culture.

The third way is to understand role of religion in Kashmir as a reaction against modernization and globalization. All over the world movements struggling in the name of religion have emerged in post-modern and post-cold war era. This is an era were the hegemony of one superpower is established in all fields of life through the mechanism which are now being called globalization. All over the world-marginalized people are mobilizing themselves to fight against the hegemony of superpower and within their country the hegemony of the state. For this fight, they use religion for fighting against the hegemony. Kashmir conflict can also be understood as a fight against the hegemony of Indian state and Kashmiris use religion for this kind of struggle.

Whatever may be the way of analyzing the role of religion in Kashmir-conflict. This is a fact, that Islam is being used for mobilizing people to fight against the Indian state and to internationalize the conflict. We have explained in the preceding pages how much economically backward Kashmiris. And, how did politicians rig political process and
alienate people. Economic backwardness and political corruption and alienation of people are no doubt potential factors of sustaining conflict. But no conflict can be sustained without consciousness of people about the conflict and this has happened in Kashmir. Kashmir has witnessed growth in education and mass media rapidly, which play an important role in making people aware about the conflict. Growth of educated unemployed youth proved as catalysts for conflict in Kashmir.

Muslims, majority of Jammu and Kashmir, who were poor and illiterate during the Dogra reign, were discriminated also. However, after independence with the transformation of power to the people Sheikh Abdullah became the chief. He had initiated many programmes like land reforms, which had speeded up processes of social transformation. Despite economic backwardness and political corruption in the state, education and mass media have rapidly grown. According to Sumit Ganguly “in the ten years from 1971 to 1981, the overall literacy rate in Jammu and Kashmir grew by more than 43 percent, the third fastest growth rate in the nation” 65.

Along with education, mass media also increased rapidly in the state. Between 1965 and 1984 tremendous growth occurred in the print media, in India in general and in Kashmir in particular. For example, in 1965 only 46 newspapers were published in Kashmir. Ten years later, 135-newspapers were being published. By 1991, the number had grown to 254. Essentially, in the span of approximately twenty-five years, the number of newspapers published grew by 450 percent 66.

Growth of education and mass media has played an important role in flaring up Kashmir conflict. It makes people aware and conscious about the way in which their rights are violated and also promoted
leadership among them. Mass media makes the conflict national and international. In India there is evident gap between education and unemployment. This has also occurred in Kashmir. Almost all Kashmiri educated youth want to get jobs in Kashmir, which are not available in abundance in their state. Educated youths do also not have good opportunities of self-employment as small scale Industries and business prospects have not developed in the Kashmir and whatever development has taken place in this area got devastated since 1989, the year from which militancy started. As a result unemployed educated youth proved like oil in the fire.

An alienated and frustrated many of them turn their attention towards earning livelihood with innovative means i.e., militancy. Humra Quraishi has observed in her book Kashmir The Untold Story that “three lakh educated people are currently unemployed in Kashmir…” “Huge numbers of the young are unemployed, many more are underemployed”. The principal of a school in Srinagar confessed to being frightened by the rising numbers of the jobless ‘just last week one of my nephews told me that bekaari (unemployment) was making him so desperate that he might have to consider becoming a killer... the going rate for hired killers is rupees ten thousand per murder, he told me! What more can I tell you about the deterioration around? P.S. Verma, has also observed a critical relationship between the phenomenon of militancy and unemployment in his study. In case of Kashmir valley, the highest rate of unemployment was found in the border districts of Kupwara and Baramulla from where there has been a maximum contribution to the ranks of Kashmir’s militants.
Above discussion explicitly suggest us to say that conflict in Kashmir is not due to simple factors i.e., Kashmir is a Muslim majority state whereas rest of India is dominated by Hindus so there is a conflict between Muslims and Hindus or the conflict is due to Pakistan’s hostility towards India which encourages terrorism in the area. These factors are commonly perceived by people, contrary to common perception conflict in Kashmir is multidimensional which involves the question of international law, rights of people, mismanaging politics of the state, increasing poverty and alienation among people. All these and other such factors facilitate persistence of conflict in Kashmir. In such a situation we think religion is used for mobilizing public opinion for the purpose of fighting for what Kashmiris think as their right. Furthermore, we think fragile socio-economic condition and growing alienation among people peeved the way for Pakistan to exploit the situation against the interests of India. Therefore, conflict in Kashmir should be tackled at various levels.

In the next two chapters we will present the analysis of the responses of respondents concerning about causes and consequences of the conflict as well as measures for its resolution.
3.b.5. References


26. Praja Parishad came into being in Jammu in the late 40's (1947) mainly as a protest movement against the new regime of S. Abdullah. Apart from opposing the policy of Land reforms it demanded full integration of Jammu & Kashmir (state) with the Indian Union (Ref. P.S. Verma, Jammu And Kashmir At the Political Cross Roads, Vikas Publication House, New Delhi, 1994, --. 72. Ibid, pp. 244

28. Ibid, p. 244.


37. On 24th February 1975, the text of the Six-point Kashmir accord was announced in Parliament: Jammu and Kashmir, a constituent unit of the union of India, would continue to be governed by Article 370, the state would have the residuary powers of legislation, but parliaments would retain the power to legislate on any matter concerning the territorial integrity of the country. The sharing of powers was based on the premise that the centre’s responsibility would be the unity of the country while the state would be in charge of its welfare. (M.J. Akbar Op. cit., pp. 268-271).

39. Awami Action Committee was formed by the late Moulvi Mohammed Farooq in Srinagar on June 18, 1964 (P.S.Verma, 1994, p.71)

In valley, Jammat-e-Islami is another political party. It was established in 1942 at Shopian by Maulvi Ghulam Ahmad Ahrar. It entered Assembly elections for the first time in 1972 and captured five seats with 9.85 percent valid votes (P.S. Verma, 1994, pp. 74)


42. In the year 1986 a new political group called Muslim United Front was formed. The major factors that inspired over a dozen of small political parties (of MUF) to join hands were: imposition of central rule in J&K, Raju – Farooq accord of 1986 and Islamic revivalism in the Muslim world etc. It was launched for protecting the political and religious rights of the Muslim community in the state. (P.S. Verma, Op. cit., 1994, p. 76)


46. Noor Ahmad Baba, Op. cit, p. 57


51. Around 15.00% of the total geographical area of the state is covered with forest (P.S.Verma, Op. cit., pp. 91-92).


54. Ibid, pp. 2055-2058.


Arguments regarding the religious dimension of the conflict were derived from the following sources:


Ibid, pp. 34-35.

Ibid, p. 32.
