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- To assess and examine the needs and requirements of research in Kashmir studies and dynamics of Pakistan.

- To publish articles related to Kashmir conflict, international affairs, political studies, diplomacy and public advocacy, security paradigm, defense and strategic studies, law-based approaches, peace and conflict studies, governance and economy, self-determination and other solidarity rights.

- To coordinate research programs of various universities and other research bodies in and outside Pakistan and cooperate in the academic activities and scholarly pursuits of all official and nonofficial institutions engaged in this field;

- To seek, acquire and preserve source material (private papers, newspapers, rare books, documents and pamphlets, etc.) relevant to the above fields;

- To arrange interviews with important persons who can recall significant incidents relating to the fields mentioned above and to preserve a record of such conversations for current and further use by Historians, Social Scientists and scholars of various fields;

- To publish biannual Journals of high academic quality

- To sponsor and commission scholarly works by independent academic researchers;

- To devise and adopt ways and means to further the objectives of the forum as a body responsible for research in above-mentioned areas;

- To cooperate with international research organizations, and study Kashmir Issue in wider context of its neighbouring countries.

The question of the accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir to India or Pakistan will be decided through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite.

Document No. 5/1196 para. 15, dated the January 10, 1949

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The *International Journal of Kashmir Studies* has devised a clear policy for the publication of different articles. Articles submitted should contain elements relating to the Kashmir studies and dynamics of Pakistan. In addition, the journal is publishing articles related to Kashmir conflict, international affairs, political studies, diplomacy and public advocacy, security paradigm, defense and strategic studies, law-based approaches, peace and conflict studies, governance and economy, self-determination, and other solidarity rights.

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Dr. Sania Muneer
Editor in Chief

Endangered Kashmiri Language: Threat to Kashmiri Identity

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Endangered Kashmiri Language: Threat to Kashmiri Identity

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Abstract

This paper examines the endangerment of the Kashmiri language in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The primary objective of the study was to identify the key factors contributing to the endangerment of the Kashmiri language in Muzaffarabad, AJK. A quantitative research design was employed within the positivist tradition, using a cross-sectional research method. The study was conducted in Khawaja Mohalla, Muzaffarabad, a predominantly native Kashmiri-speaking

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community. A sample of 400 respondents was selected using the Taro Yamane formula, with participants chosen through purposive sampling. We collected data via a questionnaire and analysed it through SPSS. The overall conclusion we have drawn from the study is that the Kashmiri language is endangered due to several factors. To prevent further endangerment, several measures need to be taken immediately. One significant issue identified is the failure of elders to fulfill their role in preserving and passing down the language to younger generations, leading to reduced motivation among youth to learn their mother tongue. We substantiate the social identity theory that the Kashmiri language becomes marginalized, leading to identity endangerment. This is best understood as a process that threatens both individual and collective identity. To safeguard the language, authorities must include Kashmiri literature in school curricula.

Keywords: Language, Endangerment, Kashmir, Generations, Social Identity.

Introduction

Research on language identity, diversity, extinction, and endangerment has been conducted worldwide, highlighting the great tragedy of language loss for human culture across societies[1,2,3]. These

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[1] K. U. Luwum Street, *A Right to Protect Indigenous Languages: A Threat Against Extinction* (2023).

[2] S. O'Neill, "Extinctions: Language Death, Intangible Cultural Heritage, and Early 21st-Century Renewal Efforts," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication* (2025).

[3] Suzanne Romaine, "The Global Extinction of Languages and Its Consequences for Cultural Diversity," in *Cultural and Linguistic Minorities in the Russian*

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studies revealed that globalization has negatively impacted language diversity, leading to the endangerment of many languages. Besides, they emphasized the preservation of language identity through intergenerational transmission. Failure to pass down a language to younger generations often results in its endangerment and, hence, extinction[4]. A similar trend has been observed in developing countries[5,6], including Pakistan[7], where languages under the influence of modernity are increasingly endangered due to multiple factors. One of the major issues that contribute to the language endangerment is negligence of elderly people in transcending their native language to next generations[8]. Likewise, native communities are merely engaging with government/authorities to protect and preserve this language heritage through literature as well as educational initiatives at all the level of school, college, and university[9,10]. Moreover, researchers,

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Federation and the European Union: Comparative Studies on Equality and Diversity (2015), 31–46.

[4] M. Khawaja, "Consequences and Remedies of Indigenous Language Loss in Canada," *Societies* 11, no. 3 (2021): 89.

[5] H. Atifnigar, M. Safari, and A. Rafat, "Exploring the Causes of Language Death: A Review Paper," *International Journal of Arts and Social Science* 4, no. 4 (2021): 180–186.

[6] John Orman, "Linguistic Diversity and Language Loss: A View from Integrational Linguistics," *Language Sciences* 40 (2013): 1–11.

[7] A. Hameed, "Mother, Mother Tongue, and Language Endangerment Process: An Exploratory Study," *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 12, no. 4 (2022): 726–735.

[8] Barbra A. Meek, "Language Endangerment in Childhood," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 48, no. 1 (2019): 95–115.

[9] Sarah G. Thomason, *Endangered Languages: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

[10] Stephen R. Anderson, *Languages: A Very Short Introduction*, vol. 320 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

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scholars, and academicians have ignored this important issue of language preservation through curriculum[11]. Similarly, the exclusion of the Kashmiri language from curriculum is another alarming threat contributing to endangerment[12]. Additionally, the lack of interest in research from native speakers on the language preservation further adds to the language loss[13].

In subcontinent, the Kashmiri language is one of the oldest languages that has a great rich literary tradition spanned over centuries[14]. However, following the partition of the subcontinent in 1947, the State of Jammu and Kashmir was divided into two parts, with the smaller part administered by Pakistan, known as Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). This smaller part is rich in language diversity, while Kashmiri is predominantly spoken in a few districts, including Neelum, Haveli, Hatian, and Muzaffarabad. Kashmiri-speaking people speak several local languages in addition to their mother tongue[15]. This is due to their small population living within a

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[11] Friederike Lüpke, "Language Endangerment and Language Documentation in Africa," in *The Cambridge Handbook of African Linguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 468–490.

[12] Jenny L. Davis, "Resisting Rhetorics of Language Endangerment: Reclamation through Indigenous Language Survivance," *Language Documentation and Description* 14 (2017).

[13] Bernard C. Perley, *Defying Maliseet Language Death: Emergent Vitalities of Language, Culture, and Identity in Eastern Canada* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011).

[14] Braj B. Kachru, "The Dying Linguistic Heritage of the Kashmiris: Kashmiri Literary Culture and Language," in A. Rao, *The Valley of Kashmir* (2008), 303–338.

[15] S. Amir, "Language Shift from the Kashmiri Language to the Urdu Language: Investigation of Factors in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan," *Psocialsciences* 4, no. 1 (2024): 1–16.

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dominant culture, influencing language usage[16]. Kashmiri is primarily spoken by the native communities, while minimal efforts have been made to preserve the language and pass it on to the younger generations[17]. Snedden, in his recent study on the significance of Kashmir and Kashmiri Identity, found several factors that vividly contribute to the endangerment of the Kashmiri language and identity[18]. He argued, although the community speaks their native language at home to maintain their identity, their interactions are increasingly influenced by other local languages. He further stated that families in general and youth in particular often switch between languages such as Urdu, English, Hindko, and Pahari, rather than communicating in their mother tongue. Thus, youth have less interest in learning or speaking their mother tongue. Despite having a rich body of literature, unfortunately, Kashmiri is not taught at any educational level within the state[16,17]. They further uncovered that neither the Kashmiri community nor the government has taken substantial measures to prevent the language loss so far.

Owing to the scarcity of literature coupled with our experiences, it is evident that the Kashmiri language is endangered in Muzaffarabad.

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[16] U. Nisar, "Language an Identity Viz-a-Viz Kashmiri Language: Challenges in the Changing Scenario," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Linguistics* 14 (2021): 171–178.

[17] A. Murad, "Exploring Language Attitudes through Matched Guise Technique: A Case of Young Kashmiris of Azad Jammu & Kashmir," *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research* 6, no. 1 (2023): 1–18.

[18] Christopher Snedden, "*The Significance of Kashmir and Kashmiri Identity in J&K,*" *in Independent Kashmir* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2021), 93–136.

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Furthermore, there is a lack of significant academic research on this issue, with only a few research articles and seminar minutes published in newspaper articles. Thus, we examined endangerment of the Kashmiri language in AJK.

Literature Review

A substantial body of literature has been conducted on the relationship between identity, culture, and language across the globe[19,20,21]. These studies highlighted that language is a primary source of transmitting cultural values and norms. It is also argued that language plays a crucial role in integrating individuals into social communities, fostering harmony, and promoting a sense of belonging. They further stated that language and culture are intrinsically linked, and the death of a language is often a sign of the disappearance of the associated culture. Language also plays a vital role in shaping identities, fostering a diverse environment, and preserving cultural heritage[22,23].

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[19] J. Carjuzaa, "Revitalizing Indigenous Languages, Cultures, and Histories in Montana, across the United States and around the Globe," *Cogent Education* 4, no. 1 (2017): 1371822.

[20] A. Dega, "Language Endangerment: Globalisation and the Fate of Minority Languages in Nigeria," *Language Endangerment: Globalization & the Fate of Minority Languages in Nigeria* 12 (2015): 17–28.

[21] S. Drude, J. Birchall, A. V. Galucio, D. Moore, and H. van der Voort, "Endangered Languages in Brazil in 2021," in *Endangered Languages in the 21st Century* (London: Routledge, 2023), 21–40.

[22] S. O'Neill, "Language Endangerment and Renewal," in *A New Companion to Linguistic Anthropology* (2023), 49–65.

[23] R. Elliott, "Language Revitalization as a Plurilingual Endeavour," in *The Routledge Handbook of Plurilingual Language Education* (London: Routledge, 2021), 435–448.

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Thus, to maintain cultural identity, it is essential to keep languages alive. Unfortunately, many languages are either endangered or facing extinction[24].

Over the past few decades, extensive research has focused on the preservation of endangered languages[25,26]. Among various contributing factors, they identified globalization as one of the significant threats to language use across societies. Currently, there are approximately 7,000 languages spoken worldwide, with one language disappearing every ten days[27]. This means that languages are constantly dying out across the globe. [28] People use about 6,000 languages worldwide, and half of these languages are at risk of becoming endangered or extinct in many regions of the world[29]. Both man-made and natural phenomena contribute to the endangerment and extinction of languages[30]. Similarly, societal and cultural trends,

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[24] Leanne Hinton, *Bringing Our Languages Home: Language Revitalization for Families* (Berkeley, CA: Heyday, 2013).

[25] Lyle Campbell and Anna Belew, "Introduction: Why Catalogue Endangered Languages?" in *Cataloguing the World's Endangered Languages* (London: Routledge, 2018), 1–14.

[26] Luna Filipović and Martin Pütz, "Introduction: Endangered Languages and Languages in Danger," in *Endangered Languages and Languages in Danger: Issues of Documentation, Policy, and Language Rights* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2016), 1–22.

[27] K. David Harrison, *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[28] William R. Leben, "Languages of the World," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Linguistics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[29] Stephen A. Wurm, *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing* (Paris: UNESCO, 2001).

[30] Christopher Moseley, *Encyclopedia of the World's Endangered Languages* (London: Routledge, 2008).

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migration, intermarriage, and attitudes toward a language are also identified as significant factors in language endangerment[31]. However, the primary cause is the neglect of the older generation in passing the language down to the younger generation[32]. Additionally, the lack of interest by the younger generation in learning and preserving their mother tongue further accelerates the endangerment process[33]. Research indicates that 50% (approximately 3,000) of the currently spoken languages are at risk of extinction[34].

The situation in Pakistan also reflects this global trend. As mentioned earlier, nearly 70 languages spoken in Pakistan are listed on the Ethnologue list, and most of these languages are at risk of extinction[35]. In the coming decades, a significant number of these endangered languages will become extinct[3]. The intergenerational transmission of languages, with the younger generation showing less interest in learning and speaking their native tongues[27]. Language identity, however, may be maintained through various means, with

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[31] Peter Mühlhäusler, "Causes of Language Death," in *Questioning Causality: Scientific Explorations of Cause and Consequence across Social Contexts* (2016), 139–152.

[32] M. Hendrix, *Language and the Resilience of Knowledge* (2025).

[33] C. E. C. Ogwudile, "An Exploratory Study of Mother Tongue and Language Endangerment Process," *Journal of Modern European Languages and Literatures* 18, no. 2 (2024): 26–36.

[34] Tatsuya Amano et al., "Global Distribution and Drivers of Language Extinction Risk," *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 281, no. 1793 (2014): 20141574.

[35] M. T. Khan, A. A. Humayun, M. Sajjad, and N. A. Khan, "Languages in Danger of Death and Their Relation with Globalization, Business and Economy," *International Journal of Information, Business and Management* 7, no. 2 (2015): 239.

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the role of parents being particularly significant in the process of socialization[26,7]. Furthermore, the home environment plays a crucial role in encouraging the use of the mother tongue[14].

Theoretical Framework

This study employed the social identity theory[36] to analyses the relationship between the endangered Kashmiri language and the perceived threat to Kashmiri identity. Social Identity Theory posits that individuals derive a significant part of their self-concept from their membership in social groups, with language serving as a primary marker of group belonging. The Kashmiri language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a symbol of cultural distinctiveness, shared history, and collective identity. The youth having less interest in use of language weakened the community cohesion that is important to sustain the cultural pride, stability, and solidarity. Like other dominated languages gained prestige and utility while Kashmiri language is becoming marginalized by ever passing day. This marginalization may lead to the identity as well as cultural loss. Thus, language endangerment in Kashmir is best understood as a process that threatens both individual and collective identity.

Conceptual Framework

The following conceptual framework was developed to understand the factors contributing to the endangerment of the Kashmiri

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[36] Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner, "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict," in *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, ed. William G. Austin and Stephen Worchel (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1979), 33–47.

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language. A hypothesis was formulated and tested to explore the following factors given in the table.

Hypothesis

There is an association between speaking the Kashmiri language and downfall, curricula, modernization, globalization, children's reaction, public places, the role of elders, community, and youth.

Dependent variable	Independent variables
	Down fall
	Curricula
	Modernization
Speaking Kashmiri Language	Globalization
	Children's reaction
	Native people's role
	Role of youth
	Role of elderly people
	Public places

Methodology

We conducted this study while using epistemological cannons within the positivist tradition. We adopted a quantitative research design and employed a cross-sectional research method. The primary objective of the study was to identify the key factors responsible for the endangerment of the Kashmiri language among native speakers in Muzaffarabad. We conducted this study in Khawaja Mohalla due to the predominance of the Kashmiri-speaking community, who speak the Kashmiri language for generations. This Mohalla is expanded over three wards comprising a total approximate population of N=41000. We determined a sample of n=400 respondents from the

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total population by using the Taro Yamane formula, with purposive sampling employed to collect the data. The respondents were selected at household level, i.e. parents or guardian [mother, father, and uncle]. A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Cronbach Alpha was employed to check the reliability of the questionnaire which ranged from 0.74 to 0.91, and mean reliability coefficient was 0.86. A hypothesis was developed and tested to determine the association of the variables in identifying the contributing factors of language endangerment. We analysed the data by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). We employed Chi-square test and examined the association among variables.

Key Findings

The results from the analysis are presented and discussed in the following sections. In section one, demographic characteristics of the respondents are tabulated and presented, while the main factors of language endangerment are also tabulated. In the second section, results of hypothesis testing are tabulated and interpreted.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents.

Variables	*f* (%)	Variables	*f* (%)
Gender		Qualification	
Male	182 (45.5)	Illiterate	020 (5)
Female	218 (54.5)	Up to Matric	95 (24)
Age		Intermediate	085 (22)
20-30 Years	079 (19.7)	Bachelor and Masters	200 (50)
31-41 Years	140 (35.1)	Profession	

>42 Years	181 (45.2)	Teachers	081 (20.3)
Language Spoken		Doctor	016 (04.0)
Fluently	260 (65.0)	Businessman	124 (31.1)
Partially	140 (35.0)	Govt. Employee	026 (06.5)
		Housewives	153 (38.3)

Table I presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The gender distribution was determined at the household level, with 45.5 percent of the respondents being men and 54.5 percent women. The age distribution varied, with 19.7 percent of respondents aged between 20-30 years, 35 percent between 31-40 years, and a larger proportion, 45.2 percent, aged 41 years and above. Regarding language proficiency, 65 percent of respondents reported speaking Kashmiri fluently, while 35 percent spoke it partially. The educational qualifications of the respondents were as follows: 5 percent were illiterate, 24 percent had completed matriculation, 22 percent had completed intermediate education, and 50 percent had 14 years of education or more. In terms of occupation, 20.3 percent were teachers (including school, college, and university teachers), 4 percent were doctors, 31 percent were businessmen, 6.5 percent were government employees, and 38.3 percent were housewives (among the female respondents).

Table 2

Main Factors of Language Endangerment.

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Speak Kashmiri	259	64.8
Family speaks Kashmiri	201	50.0
Parents speak with children	235	58.8
Children's response	225	56.3

Children speak Kashmiri	175	43.7
Parents encourage children	272	68.0
Speak Kashmiri in public places	226	56.5
Speak Kashmiri at home	361	90.3
Speak Kashmiri with the new generation	286	71.5
Children's response to mother tongue	152	38.0
Attitude of children towards language	135	33.7
Effects of modernization	214	53.5
Effects of globalization	277	69.3
Unavailability of literature	288	72.0
Curricula	176	44.0
Elders are responsible for the downfall	180	45.0

Table 2 presents the responses of the participants regarding the use of their mother tongue. Among the 400 respondents, 64.8 percent reported speaking the Kashmiri language with their children at home, indicating that approximately 50 percent of family members either speak or attempt to speak Kashmiri. Furthermore, 58.8 percent of parents communicate with their children in their mother tongue, although 56.3 percent of children respond partially, and 43.7 percent attempt to speak the language fluently. Additionally, 68 percent of parents actively encourage their children to speak Kashmiri. The study also found that 56.5 percent of parents speak Kashmiri in public places with their family members, while 90 percent do so within the home. About 71 percent of parents frequently engage with the younger generation in their native language. Regarding parental emphasis, 55.8 percent of parents encourage their children to speak

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their mother tongue, though only 38 percent of children respond, and that response is typically partial. This suggests that 33.7 percent of children have a positive response towards learning their mother tongue, while 53.5 percent consider the effect of modernization. In addition, the impact of globalization on the Kashmiri language is 69.3 percent, where parents identified modernization as a key factor contributing to the younger generation's neglect of their mother tongue. The lack of available literature for children was also cited as a contributing factor, with 72 percent of parents agreeing on this issue. In response, 44 percent of parents recommended incorporating Kashmiri literature into the school and college curriculum to help preserve the language. Moreover, 45 percent of parents believe that the elderly play a crucial role in the decline of the language, as it is not sufficiently reinforced at home.

Hypothesis Testing: The following hypothesis was tested by employing the chi-square test.

There is an association between speaking the Kashmiri language and downfall, curricula, modernization, globalization, children's reaction, public places, the role of elders, community, and youth.

Table 3

Chi-Square distribution of factors responsible for endangerment of the Kashmiri language.

Speaking Kashmiri	Pearson Value	df	P-Value
Language downfall	9.241	1	0.002
Curricula	30.143	1	0.000

Modernization	51.501	1	0.000
Children's reaction	75.420	3	0.000
Globalization	1.796	1	0.000
Native people's role	2.251	1	0.000
Role of youth	93.984	1	0.000
Role of Elders	51.056	1	0.000
Public place	1.640	1	0.000

Table 3 shows the Chi-square results examining whether various sociocultural factors are significantly associated with speaking the Kashmiri language. The findings indicate that all factors have p-values below 0.05, demonstrating statistically significant relationships. This means that each factor meaningfully contributes to the endangerment of the Kashmiri language. Factors such as curricula (p = 0.000), modernization (p = 0.000), children's reactions (p = 0.000), role of youth (p = 0.000), and role of elders (p = 0.000) show very strong significance, suggesting that educational policies, generational shifts, and social attitudes play a major role in reduced Kashmiri language use. Even factors with smaller Pearson values such as globalization (p = 0.000), native people's role (p = 0.000), and public place usage (p = 0.000) are still statistically significant, highlighting that broader global and community-level dynamics also influence language decline. Overall, the consistent significance across all factors indicates that the endangerment of Kashmiri is driven by a combination of educational, cultural, generational, and societal

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pressures.

Factors Responsible for Endangerment of Kashmiri Language (Pearson Values)
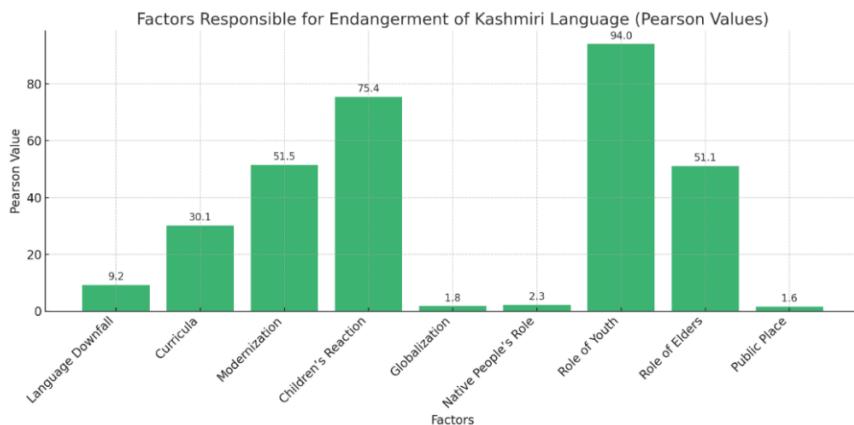
Discussion

Past studies have shed light on the various factors of language endangerment across societies[19,20,21]. These studies included factors of native's failure to speak mother tongue by either both or one of them, that reduced the probability of children's learning and speaking of their mother tingue[8]. We found similar findings identified by the several researchers that parents do not intend to speak their mother tongue with their children. This shows that family members take less interest to speak their language with their young ones-reduce the chances of the learning language by the children. While we also found, although parents and elders try to speak language to their children, but they either partially respond or show no intention towards it. This further worsen the situation where children find no interest towards seeking their mother tongue. Thus, we argue that such negligence of children is one of the major factors that contribute to the endangerment of langauge[22]. Resultantly, this language is

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confined to the few communities int he region where it is also spoken with some other local languages[23]. Here we assert that the Kashmiri language is restricted to certain area due to the negligence of youth who are more interested in speaking other local language which affect the cultural values as well as the identity of the language.

Research also spotlighted the important role of elderly people in transmission of language to younger generations[25,26]. Although elders significantly contributed to the transformation of cultural values and preservation of language heritage. However, youth has been found inclined towards the other language spoken in the region. This may be due to the influence of globalization. By the same token, we found that elders try to put their efforts to socialize their younger generations in speaking their mother tongue and they also try tp realize them as a responsibility. Nonetheless, we found the youth is under the great influence of globalization that lessens their interest in learning and hence speaking their mother tongue despite efforts of older generation[27]. Moreover, due to modernization, youth is under the heavy influence of external cultures[7].

Cultural diversity is also one of the key factors that affects the attitudes of the youth. Research shows that as due to modernization, youth is under the influence of dominant cultures that further shape their attitudes towards their own culture and language[26,27]. Simialrly, we also found tendency of youth towards the dominant cultures which affect the cultural heritage of their own culture and language. We also identified another important dimension that lack of literature in

Kashmiri language further exacerbates the situation while community member and educational institutions do not take their responsibility to ensure the inclusion of literature at any stage of school, college, and university.

It is asserted that language has a key role in forming, protecting, and expressing cultural and ethnic identities[32]. It is a main source to transmit socio-cultural values and preserve cultural heritage[24]. It is also argued that languages although evolve over centuries, however, endanger or die more rapidly[28]. We observed shift in intergenerational communication where dominant languages replace mother tongues, Likewise, we found similar challenges faced by Kashmiri language. This may be due to several reasons including negligence of speakers and authorities to contribute and keep alive the language.

Social Identity Theory[36] gives insight into understanding the causes of the endangerment of the Kashmiri language and its implications of identity. It emphasized the individuals must sense their belongings towards the language and culture because that is their identity. This also serves their ingroup insignia and marker of their group identity. We also agree that youth must realise their responsibilities towards their ingroup to protect and preserve their cultural heritage. While parents and elders need to play an effective role to develop a sense of responsibility among youth to respond their mother tongue and keep alive their identity. It is argued that disengaging from being part of the cultural and language transmission pose great threat to the identity of group. This will further weaken the bond of youth with their

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culture and language and distance them from symbolic boundaries of cultural identity.

The group cohesion requires the effective role of elders to promote their language and motive the youth to hold their cultural and language heritage strongly. However, youth uder the influence of globalization and modernization are leaned towards the dominant and popular cultures that directly affect their cultural identity and weaken their language bonding. According to Social Identity Theory, we believe in line with the findings of this study that youth is highly influenced by the dominant culture to hold higher standards of prestige and status through the language dominance as a major source. While lack of literature further worsens the use of language diminishing its symbolic capital and weakens its role in shaping identity.

Conclusion

We found that the Kashmiri language faced significant threats of endangerment owing to the several factors. These include weak socialization patterns, where parents and elders failed to pass down the language patterns to youth, is a primary contributor. Similarly, parents although make their efforts to speak with youth at home and in other settings, however influence of modernization led towards lack of seriousness by youth regarding their mother tongue. Additionally, the absence of Kashmiri literature in educational institutions, further contributed to its endangerment. We consider that

the role of parents and elders is also crucial while their engagement is vital for preserving the language heritage. We substantiate the social identity theory that the Kashmiri language becomes marginalized, leading to identity endangerment. This is best understood as a process that threatens both individual and collective identity. To combat these issues, authorities must take necessary steps to integrate Kashmiri language literature into school curricula, starting from an early stage in education. We recommend that a dedicated Kashmiri language subject be introduced in the syllabus from grades 1 to 8 to help preserve this linguistic heritage and ensure the continued survival of the Kashmiri language.

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Youth's expectations from the government of AJK: Initiatives of recent government.

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Abstract

The youth of Azad Jammu and Kashmir doesn't not carry very high expectations from its government. However, they have to be optimistic and consistently putting their itinerary(agenda) in front of the government to ensure their legitimate rights. On the other hand, government keeps on working for the improvement of Kashmir but that is not up to the mark. Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir needs to work on different areas such as: administrative areas, they have to correct their managerial issues and so on. The main objectives of this research is to find out the real situation of health sector, depilates situation of government structure, cultural preservation, employment, technology and innovation, social issues, skill development, safety and security, sports and recreation, clean and healthy environment and so on that full fill the needs of youth's expectation. To achieve this purpose a survey was conducted by using

question air and taking interviews of some government officers and young people to understand the value of their expectations or needs. The major findings of this research includes low employment and low wages as well, low health facilities, social issues, need of latest technology, cultural issues etc. This study also specifies the initiatives that recent government also proceeds for the betterment of youth. These comprises are; public service commission, NTS, social protection, supremacy of merit and transparency and accountability The result of the research shows that youth has high expectations from its government in many possible ways. Furthermore; this study revealed that the recent government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir take initiative for the progress of youth assumptions.

Keywords

Youth, legitimate, depilated, Kashmir, expectations, wages.

Introduction

For any nation youth is the main key factor of its empowerment. The goals of the younger generation have more influence on the social and political environment. Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is a region renowned for its incredible scenery and dynamic culture. It is critical to scrutinize the hopes, desires and requests of the youth of AJK. The government should find out the ways how to tackle the challenges related to the development. AJK youth are dynamic and diverse group that's spans a range of socio-economic backgrounds, ideologies and

aspirations. They are the chain bearers, holding out hope for a better future of their communities as well as for themselves. Gaining an understanding of their expectations from the government can help them to identify some specific areas where policy inter-venation's are most critical and come to know where the society needs the changing.

The core of youth's expectations is their desire from government that puts their welfare first, although need to try to listen their concerns actively. A vast range of areas are covered by this including democratic, social equality, employment, healthcare, environment and various other things.

Definition of Youth

There is various definition of youth according to different perspectives.

We can define youth in the term of age factors and social interference.

Youth definition under the light of UN

Without limiting other definitions by Member States, the United Nations defines "youth" as persons between the ages of 15 to 24 for statistics purposes. In his 1981 report to the General Assembly on International Youth Year (A/36/215, para. 8 of the appendix),[1] the Secretary-General made reference for the current concept of youth

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[1] 1 Secretary-General's Report to the General Assembly, A/36/215, 1981

and it is for the first time. In subsequent reports (A/40/256, para. 19 of the annex), he reaffirmed it. But aside from that statistical definition, the Secretary-General acknowledged in both reports that the definition of "youth" differs throughout nations globally. The World Programmed of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond was endorsed by the General Assembly in 1995 with resolution 50/81, which reaffirmed that the United

Definition of youth under different countries

Cultural, social, and legal considerations frequently influence how "youth" is defined in different countries. Youth is often regarded as a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood, marked by physical, psychological, and emotional changes, as well as a period of exploration, learning, and identity development. Furthermore, the concept of youth may range across policy contexts, such as education, employment, and social services, where different age thresholds may apply for qualifying criteria or specialized interventions aimed at youth development and empowerment. There are certain categories into which different countries fall and explain the situation of youth within them.[2]

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[2] Those classification and titles represent only the author's concept and view created only for the comparison purpose within this Paper and they are not officially accepted or defined in any policy document.

Developed countries

In comparison to other less industrialized countries, a developed country, also known as an advanced country, is a sovereign state with a developed economy, high standard of living, and cutting-edge technological infrastructure.

- **United States**

In the United States, "youth" often refers to people in their teens and early twenties. While there is no universally accepted age range, youngsters are often defined as individuals aged 13 to 25. This time is defined by the transition from infancy to adulthood, which includes physical, emotional, and social growth, as well as educational pursuits and entry into the labor sector.

- **United Kingdom**

In the UK, "youth" typically refers to individuals between the ages of 13 to 19, covering the teenage years. This definition aligns with the period of adolescence, marked by significant physical, cognitive, and emotional development. However, in broader contexts, the term "youth" may extend up to the early twenties, encompassing young adults who are still navigating their transition into full independence and adulthood.

- **Luxembourg**

In Luxembourg, the definition of "youth" generally refers to individuals in their late teenage years up to their mid-twenties. While there isn't a strict definition, youth typically includes those between the ages of 15 to 29. This period is characterized by significant personal, educational, and professional development as individuals transition from adolescence to adulthood. Luxembourgish youth are often involved in educational pursuits, vocational training, employment, and various social and recreational activities.

Developing countries

A sovereign state classified as a developing country has a less developed industrial base and a lower Human Development Index (HDI) than other nations.

- **Nigeria**

The term "youth" in Nigeria usually describes those who are in their late teens, early thirties, or even mid-twenties. Youth often refers to those who are between the ages of 15 and 35, while there isn't a set age range. This definition is in line with Nigeria's National Youth Policy, which defines youth as anyone in the 15–35 age range. As people move from youth to adulthood, this time is marked by considerable personal, educational, and social development. Nigerian adolescents are engaged in a wide range of social, cultural, and

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recreational activities in addition to their academic endeavors, jobs, and vocational training.

- **Pakistan**

People in their late teens to mid-twenties or early thirties are usually considered to be "youth" in Pakistan. Youth is often defined as people who are between the ages of 15 and 29, while there isn't a set age range for this group. This definition is consistent with Pakistan's National Youth Policy, which defines youth as people in the 15–29 age range. As people move from youth to adulthood, this time is marked by considerable personal, educational, and social development. Pakistani youth are engaged in a wide range of social, cultural, and recreational activities in addition to their academic endeavors, jobs, and vocational training.

- **Philippines**

In the Philippines, the definition of "youth" typically refers to individuals in their late teenage years up to their mid-twenties or early thirties. While there isn't a universally agreed-upon age range, youth generally includes those between the ages of 15 to 30. This period is characterized by significant personal, educational, and social development as individuals transition from adolescence to adulthood. Filipino youth are often involved in educational pursuits, vocational training, employment, and participation in various social, cultural, and recreational activities.

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Under developed countries

The United Nations lists developing nations with the lowest socioeconomic development indices as least developed countries (LDCs).

- **Uganda**

The word "youth" usually describes people in Uganda who are in their late teens to early thirties or mid-twenties. Youth often refers to persons who are between the ages of 15 and 30, while there isn't a set age range for this category. As people move from youth to adulthood, this time is marked by considerable personal, educational, and social development. Youth in Uganda are frequently engaged in a variety of social, cultural, and recreational activities in addition to their academic endeavors, jobs, and vocational training.

- **Haiti**

In Haiti, "youth" usually refers to those who are in their late teens or early thirties, although it can also refer to someone in their mid-20s or early 30s. Youth often refers to people between the ages of 15 and 30, while there isn't a set age range for this category. At this stage, people move from adolescent to adulthood and experience significant changes in their social, intellectual, and personal development. Youth from Haiti frequently further their education, get occupational training, work, and participate in a range of social, cultural, and

recreational activities. But it's important to acknowledge that Haiti suffers many obstacles, like poverty, poor access to healthcare and education, political unrest, and natural catastrophes, all of which may have an impact on the possibilities and experiences that the country's young people have.

- **South Sudan**

When someone is referred to as "youth" in South Sudan, it usually means that they are in their late teens, early thirties, or mid-twenties. Youth often refers to people between the ages of 15 and 30, while there isn't a set age range for this category. A person's journey from adolescent to adulthood is characterized by substantial personal, educational, and social development during this time. Youth in South Sudan are frequently involved in a variety of social, cultural, and recreational activities in addition to their academic endeavors, jobs, and vocational training. But it's crucial to acknowledge that South Sudan faces issues like poverty, poor access to healthcare and education, political unrest, and conflict, all of which may have an impact on the chances and experiences accessible to the country's young people.

Youth expectations from its government of AJK

Youth has expected a lot of facilities, opportunities, self-determining factors to touch the pyramids of success in their practical life. For this reason, a research was conducted through interviews taken by the

different age group between 18 to 26. However, at the end all the data is summarized according to the need. In developing nations, such as those that are members of the IsDB, youth make up an exceptionally sizable portion of the populace. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Economic Outlook Series for 20173 projects that by 2050; one-third of the world's young will reside in OIC nations. With their enormous potential to boost economic progress, young people are viewed as society's most valuable resource. But a large number are unemployed and disengaged. The task is to support young people's inclusion and self-fulfillment while offering the appropriate opportunity to focus their energy and ambition.

Employment

Promoting decent work for young people has long been an ILO priority. The ILO's approach to youth employment has altered as a result of realizing the complexity of the issue, with the majority of its work up until the mid-1970s centered on protecting young workers through normative initiatives.[4] Globally, the young unemployment rate is 13%, according to the 2018 World Employment Social Outlook[5]. The rate of youth unemployment in IsDB member nations is predicted to continue rising over the next three years, from 15% in

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[3] OIC Economic Outlook 2017: Industrial Development for Structural Transformation. Ankara: Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC).
[4] Quote and figures are from ILO, "Global Employment Trends for Youth 201
[5] World Employment Social Outlook: Trends 2018. Geneva: International Labor Organization

2017 to 15.6% in 2019 and 2020, higher than the global average. Global youth unemployment peaked in 2017 at 12.6%, the highest level since 2005. In 2019 and 2020, a minor fall to 12.5% is anticipated.

As we know that employment is the major issue of youth in A.J.K. In a research (interviews) it is highlighted that young generation of A.J.K does not have the proper opportunities of employments as compare to other cities in Pakistan. In these aspects youth expectations are much higher;

- Firstly, government should start different projects in which the youth of A.J.K can work. There should be a proper handling from the government so that no individual can manipulate a worker.
- Secondly, beside government projects there must be private companies that can provide the chance of employment to the youth and government should support and appreciate their efforts rather than criticizing.
- Thirdly, government should make policies that can allow people to generate their home business. such as, for house wife and older people.
- Fourthly, government should try to concentrate on small industries so, that even a person who is not so much literate can easily earn on his own and support his family.

Health facilities

Health is a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity by WHO.[6] As in the case of health facilities, youth expect not much about little bit as they are not so much concerned about their own health;

- Firstly, government should make policies like the youngsters who do not have any source of income their treatment will be free of cost.

- Secondly, there should be some rehabilitation center for those who are drugs addicted, most of the youth is getting destroyed by the use off drugs at a very young age between 12 to 15.

- Thirdly, there should be an access of health facilities in distance areas especially in rural and underserved areas. Government should have built hospital with all kind of new equipment's and modern facilities. Highly qualified doctors should be there to sever people. Well maintained health facilities must be there. Insurance of well skilled and empathetic healthcare professionals must be there.

- There should be health education program that gives information on healthy life style, sexual and generative

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[6] De Onis, Mercedes and Monika Blössner. 2003. The World Health Organization Global Database on Child Growth and Malnutrition: methodology and applications. International Journal of Epidemiology 32, Nr. 4 (1. August): 518–526. doi:10.1093/ije/dyg099, https://doi.org/10.1093/ije/dyg099.

problems. Nutrition must be there to guide every single person about a healthy diet.

- Further there must be an online platforms (apps) that gives information related to health issues, do check on appointment scheduling and must have health tracking measurements. Online platforms should give opportunities to young people to participate in health policy-making according to the new era.

Social issues.

Any behavior or condition that negatively affects a significant number of people and is widely acknowledged as something that needs to be handled is considered a social problem.[7]

According to the youth of A.J.K there are a lot of social issues that need concentration, things that are totally destroying the social life of our youth, several factors that are disabling the youth to get up and keep going;

- Majority of youth highlighted the issue that is circulating in our society is gender abuse.Abusing is not something that only deals with a bad verbal behavior but it is also the act of someone distributing someone other. There must be some rapid actions for this kind of abuse.

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[7]Institutional Measures for Supporting OER in Higher Education: An International Case-Based Study. Open Education Studies 4, Nr. 1 (1. January): 310–321. doi:10.1515/edu-2022-0019, https://doi.org/10.1515/edu-2022-0019.

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- The other factor that youth highlighted is climate change. They quoted the people of A.J.K saying that they face a lot of problems due to climate change, Including floods and landscape. Government should involve the youth in such policies that revolve around the awareness operations to mitigate the factors.

Safety and security

The state of being away from hazards caused by natural forces or human errors randomly is known as safety. While, Security is the state of being away from hazards caused by deliberate intention of human to cause harm.[8] According to the youth perceptive safety and security they both falls in the basic human rights of a person as per the constitution and worldwide too. It's a very important feature of every individual to be highlighted. The youth of AJK is concern about the things that have been gone drastic in the last five years due to multiple reason in AJK. They expect of a lot security measurement from its government;

- Firstly, there should be proper forces to secure people in different occasions.

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[8]Lindhout, Paul and GenserikReniers. 2020. Reflecting on the safety zoo: Developing an integrated pandemics barrier model using early lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic. Safety Science 130 (1. October): 104907. doi:10.1016/j.ssci.2020.104907, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssci.2020.104907.

- Secondly, the recent protest on (25 may 2024) shows that the government of AJK does not have any arm forces to protect their people. Youth expect to a have proper law, enforcement, and protection against gang violence and domestic abuse.

- Thirdly, there should be an effective and responsive emergency service. These services should be prepared for natural disasters, health emergences and for other crisis too by ensuring the time and efficient response to protect the lives and property.[9]

Technology and innovation

Technology innovation is defined as the creation and application of new or improved technologies, tools, systems, and processes that bring about significant advancements or breakthroughs in various fields. It involves harnessing knowledge, expertise, and resources to develop innovative solutions that solve problems, improve efficiency, drive progress, and deliver value.[10]

The overall condition of Pakistan technology and innovation is not sustainable over the world wide if we compare it to the market of India, Nigeria and Bangladesh just because of not having proper

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[9] Interview taken by researcher.
[10]Szewczuk-Stępień, Marzena and Magdalena Jurczyk-Bunkowska. 2020. The concept of a civic technology tool for empowering social innovations. Journal of Economics & Management 39 (1. January): 149–167. doi:10.22367/jem.2020.39.08, https://doi.org/10.22367/jem.2020.39.08.

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access to the system. On the other hand, the situation in AJK is worse in this field. The youth expect more;

- The main concern of youth is to build more and more tech colleges or universities for the betterment of young generation.in AJK there are only (six) mainly high universities that give the opportunity to learn more about the technology.[11]
- Furthermore, youth expect from its government to create favorable atmosphere for innovation by offering and supporting STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).
- Additionally, the young people expect from its government to highlight justifiable and environmentally friendly tools to address global change challenge like climate.

Sports and Recreation

Activities that enhance life skills, talents, and overall physical health are included in sports and recreation. Engaging in these kinds of activities can help you maintain your physical fitness, have fun, and earn money. Soccer, basketball, swimming, yoga, aerobics, tennis, dance, hockey, golf, cycling and mountain riding, running, listening to music, and many other sports are examples of it. Youth is very

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[11] Interview taken by researcher.

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passionate related to the sports. They have some general concern about this;

- Firstly, in AJK there must be some sports complexes that are in range of every inferior person and access able to everyone. There must be some arrangements for different activities in parks or in societies where we live.[12]

- Secondly, in every other building of every street there is a school that comprises the area between (5 to 10) Marla or may be (1) canal.

- Thirdly,Young people demand well-maintained, varied, and easily accessible sports and recreation facilities. They look for social contact, competitive chances, and high-quality coaching in their chosen activities. Other important expectations include fun, diversity, and health advantages. In order to provide varied, inclusive, and entertaining sports and leisure programs, it will take teamwork to meet these goals.

Cultural preservation

Any civilized state's humanitarian policy must prioritize the preservation of its natural and cultural legacy, which serves as the foundation for the identity of the country.[13]

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[12] Interview taken by researcher.

[13] A. Belhi, A. Bouras, S. Foufou, "Digitization and preservation of cultural heritage: The
CEPROQHA approach", in International Conference on Software, Knowledge Information, Industrial

Youth plays a very important and a very vital role to preserve and spread their culture. They have some higher expectations from its government to preserve or safe the cultural in any possible way;

- Firstly, the majority of AJK youth quoted that they have the department of KAC in university but it has no worth. Culture come in the generation from the base, if the base has to do nothing with culture than the culture dies automatically. In this case, youth only expect a simple thing from its government that rather than teaching the history of other thing they should try teach the study of Kashmir.

- Secondly, the other main concern is related to the language. they say most of the children speak other languages in spite of speaking *Kashmiri* language. Youth emphasis on this if a language dies its cultural also dies. So, for the preservation of culture government should publish some books and publish the success stories in its own language.

- Thirdly, there should be proper government support for cultural festivals and events. This is a strong desire of youth from its government to organize festivals, exhibitions, and events that celebrate and promote AJK'S rich traditions and heritage.

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Management and Applications, 2017, p. 1-7; O.Z. Pankevych, "Multiculturalism as a political and
legal concept", in Journal of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine, 2019, vol. 26, no. 4, p. 119-132.

- Fourthly, there must be some platform that promotes cultural tourism. These tourism plat form highlight the AJK'S historical site, traditional villages and shows cultural landmarks. By doing this government can attract tourists and boost the local economy while preserving cultural heritage.

- Moreover, the youth emphasis to encourage local media to produce content that reflects AJK'S cultural heritage. this includes television programs, radio shows and online content that shows the traditional music, folklore and customs.[14]

Entrepreneurship

The process of creating, developing, starting, and managing a business venture, with all associated financial risks, is known as entrepreneurship. The youth focus on this by saying that it is the need of current time period. As far as, there are several concern of youth in which it is being taught;

- Firstly, starting a business and running it like a professional is not every one's specialty. On the basis of government, first they should educate people how to run a business, how they can start or do entrepreneurship. For this reason, they have to build up some educational institute, training programs and workshops to educate people. The government should conduct

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[14]Interview taken by researcher.

seminars to educate not only men but also women to create awareness.

- Secondly, the youth emphasis that government has to give them financial, moral and legal support to run their own business.

- Thirdly, the coming youth expects from its government to facilitate mentorship programs and networking events where they can connect with experienced business leaders and potential investors who invest in their new startup,

- Fourthly, the youth highlighted the main point is related to the taxation system. They are frequently looking for tax incentives, which can overcome their burden on new and small business.[15]

Youth representation

Youth representation refers to the inclusion and active participation of young people in decision making, policy formulation, and governance at various levels. The youth of AKJ has some expectations in this regard;

- Firstly, youth major concern is to involve them in discussions and decision that affect their lives.in this they expect from the government to create council forums or boards in which young people can give their views and underwrite in policy making.

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[15] Interview taken by researcher.

- Secondly, youth expect that government should have engaged them in some youth-specific programs that include the services such as, mental health support, career counseling, recreational activities and healthcare services.

- Thirdly, they focus on some scholarship programs that represents youth of AJK in other countries. Government should make some policies to ensure the representation of youth in different perspectives.

- Fourthly, the young generations want its government to open participatory platforms. That allows young people to express their ideas and make decision according to them.

- Moreover, the youth quoted that there must be some policies that ensure a certain percentage of youth representation in different aspects such as political parties, board of organization and governmental committees.[16]

Quality of Education

The process of gaining knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits is called education. It is an ongoing process that starts from the childhood and lasts for the eternity of a person. Good quality of education is the right of every individual. Youth of AJK signifies their expectation from its government in some certain way;

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[16] Interview taken by researcher.

- Firstly, the youth specifies the teaching methods. They want to get rid of these old GTM methods and want the government to move on new methods of teachings such as, DM and ALM that the advanced world is using.

- Secondly, government should hire some teachers from foreign embassy to educate our teachers through different seminars and workshops. Youth emphasis on training sessions of teachers so, they are able to teach practically rather than just reading and memorizing things.

- Thirdly, the usage of advanced technology and learning instruments should be provided in every school, college and university. The government should make some budget policies that provides AV/ADS to different educational institute through which the students can learn easily by looking at things and understands the things practically.

- Fourthly, the youth expect from its government to finish up the three-layer education system in which there are three categories.

1. In the first layer we put the poorest segments of the society that carries the MADRIS students so, what they get in their curriculum of education is much different than others.

2. Secondly, those students who go to get education in government schools or any other cheap private institute have different curriculum to study.

3. Thirdly, the last layer refers to elite class or the people who Havre the enough money to be there have different curriculum to study and they are connected with the British council.

To overcome all these problem youth, want from its government to create a system where everyone gets an equal education. Government should create a balanced education system so every specific community gets proper education.[17]

Merit and Good Governance

The term "governance" refers to all forms of government, including the organizations, procedures, and customs that are used to decide on and control matters of shared interest. The process of governing gains a normative or evaluative component from good governance. From the standpoint of human rights, it mainly refers to the procedure by which public institutions oversee public resources, conduct public affairs, and ensure that human rights are realized.[18]

In the term of merit and good governance youth expect a lot from the government of AJK;

- Firstly, the youth ask from its government to have proper and equal opportunities in every sector such as; in education there must be scholarship, in jobs while having a job who

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[17] Interview taken by researcher.
[18] United nation human rights https://www.ohchr.org/en/good-governance/about-good-governance

deserve the seat may reliable for it. For this government should apply some rules. for instance; an exam giving candidate must be prioritized, a skillful candidate should be selected, merit system should be freed up from biasness.

- Secondly, youth emphasis the government to have anti-corruption measurements. In this government should take strong actions against corruption to ensure that the resources are being used properly.

- Thirdly, the government should launch the equal application of law where they ensure that laws are applied equally to everyone, regardless of status, prosperity or influence. Government should update and improve old laws in order to reflect laws.[19]

Clean and Healthy Environment

A clean and healthy environment is essential for the wellbeing of all individual and communities. The youth has much expectation in this regard;

- Firstly, they appeal to the government there must be some platform in which the people are assigned to look after the cleanliness of one specific area. There must be some garbage dustbin on some specific points of the road.

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[19] Interview taken by researcher.

- Secondly, the government should arrange some training session to educate the workers of municipal committee. So, they can work effectively.

- Thirdly, they emphasis on the role of climate change that has left deep impact our health and environment as well. Rains have gone rare, dry patch have been a longed and the weather conditions have been unpredictable and are being faced by everyone.so, the government should make policies to overcome all these problems.

- Fourthly, the youth includes the waste management. They say there must be some policies to develop efficient waste collection, recycling and disposal system to manage solid and hazardous waste.[20]

- Moreover, government should develop and maintain parks, garden and green belts in urban areas to enhance air equality and provide recreational areas. Government should make rules to educate the public about the importance of a clean environment and ways to protect it.

Skill Development

Young people demand well-maintained, varied, and easily accessible sports and recreation facilities. They look for social contact, competitive chances, and high-quality coaching in their chosen activities. Other important expectations include fun,

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[20] Interview taken by researcher.

diversity, and health advantages. In order to provide varied, inclusive, and entertaining sports and leisure programs, it will take teamwork to meet these goals;

- The younger generation expects the government to set up career training facilities in every AJK sector.
- Government departments and other related entities need to host training sessions.
- Short training programs should incorporate some online activities that help young people improve their general skills, such as content creation and using opportunities for earnings. All across AJK, workshops should be provided with qualified instructors.[21]

Initiatives of new government of AJK

To assist 10 district councils and 5 municipal corporations in carrying out developmental operations in compliance with the established procedure, the government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has approved the supply of Rs.411 million. At a press conference held here on Tuesday, AJK minister for local government and rural development (LG&RD) Faisal Mumtaz Rathore stated that the remaining LG institutions would be housed on the same pattern through the second tranche, which would likewise be given soon. Information and forest secretary Ansar

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[21] Interviews taken by researcher

Yaqoob, as well as LG&RD secretary Syed Shahid Mohyiddin Qadri, were also present at the event. A commission led by Mr. Rathore was established by the government last year to identify a workable solution to the problem that would not negatively impact the state's finances.

According to Mr. Rathore, the committee unanimously recommended to the government that development funds be set aside for LG institutions. As a result, it was decided to set aside Rs. 819 million for the purpose from the LG&RD department's annual development program's "block provision for new initiatives." In the first tranche, 278 union councils (UC) of all 10 district councils and 133 wards of the state's five municipal corporations Muzafarabad, Bagh, Rawalakot, Kotli, and Mirpur, would each get a grant of Rs. 1 million for development purposes, at the discretion of the elected councillor in question. According to Mr. Rathore, the next tranche of Rs408 million would be distributed as follows: Rs1 million to each of 278 union councils, 77 wards of14 municipal committees, and 53 wards of 12 town committees. The UC chairman and the councillors of the municipal and town committees would decide how the money is to be used."The current government deserves credit for this significant initiative," he declared.The minister for LG&RD expressed optimism that the council members will use these money as wisely as possible while adhering to the established protocol.He suggested that the LG institutions establish a threshold, below which no

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proposal should be considered or authorized for less than Rs. 100,000. Additionally, I will counsel the LG institutions to stop relying on government assistance.He stated that "funds would now be paid on the basis of 'work done,' in a visible contrast to the earlier practice of advance withdrawal of funds," and that the higher authorities would be able to physically verify schemes with the use of a mobile phone application.[22]

Public service commission

Lt-Gen (R) Hidayatur Rehman Named AJK Public Service Commission Chairperson By Arsalan Khattak By designating its chairman and three members, the government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has taken the first step toward restoring the Public Service Commission (PSC), which has been largely dormant. Of course! The newly appointed Chairman of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Public Service Commission is Lieutenant General (Retired) HidayaturRehman. On January 13, 2024, the AJK government released a notification confirming his appointment. This decision was made in compliance with the authority granted by Section 3 of the AJK Service Commission Act, 19861 and

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[22] "AJK Approves over Rs400 Million for 10 District Councils, Five MCs," Dawn, April 24, 2024, https://www.dawn.com/news/1829238

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Article 48 sub-article 2 of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Interim Constitution 1974.[23]

The Azad Jammu and Kashmir government's Azad Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (AJKPSC) is in charge of selecting the state's civil servants and bureaucrats. As of right now, AJKPSC operates in accordance with Act 1986. The AJKPSC office was moved to Muzaffarabad City later in 1967. In order to fill positions for public servants in the various departments of the provisional government that require a grade of BPS 11 to 15 or higher, AJKPSC holds competitive exams and assessments. Only exceptional and qualified applicants are chosen by AJKPSC for posts in public service. The AJKPSC positions are prestigious and offer a host of advantages to public employees. The AJKPSC publishes opening statements, which are typically published online and in newspapers as AJKPSC advertisements. Jobs in AJKPSC are extremely competitive.

Roles of the AJKPSC

Control the administration of the civil and management services in Azad Jammu & Kashmir and hold competitive exams for civil service jobs. Hire the right candidates for the public service positions in Azad Jammu & Kashmir. To provide guidance on

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[23] "President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir … administered the oath of office to Chairman Public Service Commission Lieutenant General (Retired) Hidayat-ur-Rehman," Government of Azad Jammu & Kashmir press release, Jan. 19, 2024.

matters related to the qualifications and selection procedure, initial public service appointment, transfer, and promotion of AJKPSC public service officers to the President of Azad Jammu & Kashmir. Respond to any other issues that the President might bring up with the Azad Jammu & Kashmir Public Service Commission.[24]

- Exams for the Ajk PSC are held on time and in accordance with merit standards following the nomination of a new chairman. Final outcomes used to be determined by how highly contacted a candidate was.LT GenHiDayatur Rehman is currently holding fair examinations in order to give opportunity to the worthy applicant.

NTS in Education

The AJK Educators NTS test is an essential step for anyone hoping to improve Azad Jammu and Kashmir's educational system. This test is administered by the National Testing Service (NTS) in order to evaluate applicants based on a number of factors, including as subject-specific knowledge, teaching strategies, and educational concepts.[25]

- This is a major initiative from the most recent government that removes the interview from the policy.

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[24]"AJKPSC Complete Guide & Details in Pakistan," IlmKiDunya, https://www.ilmkidunya.com/ajkpsc/](https://www.ilmkidunya.com/ajkpsc/
[25]National Testing Service (Pakistan), "About Us," NTS, https://www.nts.org.pk/new/AboutNTS.php

- There were several factors that changed the positions of applicants in the past following the NTS. based on recommendations from the panel members and higher authorities.
- Since the new initiatives to exclude interviews, the government has recently started to provide exams usually based only on merit.

Conclusion

Young people usually look to their government and new programs for prospects for socioeconomic inclusion, personal and professional progress, and a better future. The younger generation is looking for fresh changes in their outlook on life. The government ought to take some steps to improve people's access to sports, entertainment, and fundamental job skills. Workshops for vocational training and technical support initiatives need to be implemented.

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The situation of AJK in 1947: Progress of the past 77 years

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The situation of AJK in 1947: Progress of the past 77 years

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Abstract

The paper illustrates the historical status and background of Jammu Kashmir in 1947 and the milestones achieved in Azad Jammu Kashmir development in the past 77 years. The partitioning of British India in 1947 made Jammu and Kashmir a troubled region. The territory of AJK has significantly changed in the past 77 years in terms of politics, economy, and social life. The AJK state is politically independent with its government and legislative house. Its administration has been changing a lot in the region to ensure that the administration is improved to enable the region to have local autonomy. Through the Pakistani investment and foreign aid, AJK has also come up in terms of development of infrastructure, health

care and education. Economic growth has been as a result of the construction of large-scale hydroelectric plants and the development of road transportation. However, the regions are yet to handle such challenges as poor industrialization, unemployment, minimal industrialization, and the impact of disasters such as the catastrophic earthquake in 2005. AJK has improved its literacy level and equality among sexes socially as more women have been involved in education and the labor market. Although such gains have been made, the paper indicates that the region still grapple with poverty, lack of access to quality health care, as well as legacies of the continuous war with India and the border India Kashmir problem.

Keywords: Political turmoil, cease-fire, conflict, unemployment, Governance.

Introduction

Azar Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is an intricate area of the larger great politics framework in South Asia. In order to create a historical and political acumen about the Kashmir conflict, a person must comprehend how AJK was situated in 1947 when the period of the partitioning of British India occurred. India and Pakistan are two nations formed as the British colonial rule was dismantled in 1947. Through this gap, significant territorial conflicts, massive migrations, and widespread group violence were present. One of the most controversial issues that appeared at this time was the situation of

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princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. Over the last 7 decades, India and Pakistan have engaged in an open struggle over Kashmir dispute. The physical combat during the initial Kashmir crisis which occurred between 1947 and 1949 was restricted to the contested region. But in the second major crisis, fought in August and September of 1965, of armed groups spreading out of Kashmir on to the borders of West Pakistan, and also occurred air operations in East Pakistan, had it not been that the United Nations had imposed a cease-fire (which may be with the assistance of a Chinese demand) it seemed no more a long and convoluted war between India and Pakistan over the larger Jammu and Kashmir area had begun with the establishment of AJK as a self-governing administrative unit within Pakistani sovereignty. The geopolitics of South Asia is still being shaped by the peculiarities of administrative division, strategic position of the region and initial circumstances created in 1947.[1] AJK refers to the Azar Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is a self-governing administrative unit that forms part of Pakistan and lies west of the Line of Control (LoC) that divides AJK and Indian -administered Jammu and Kashmir. AJK has its own elected Prime Minister, Legislative Assembly, High Court and President. It is the responsibility of Pakistan, however, to take care of its defense as well as foreign policy matters.[2] This region is a popular

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[1] Alastair Lamb, *The Kashmir Problem, a historical survey* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger publishers,1967,1-9.
[2] Azad Jammu and Kashmir at A Glance -2022
https://pndajk.gov.pk/uploadfiles/downloads/AJK%20At%20A%20Glance%2020
22.pdf (accessed on 1.7.2024.

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tourist attraction site due to its beautiful landscape, which comprises of mountains, valleys, rivers, and lakes. The paper makes comparison between the situation in AJK in 1947 and the current situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The government has also initiated various measures that have aimed at enhancing the living standards of its people, with the help of the foreign organizations, as well as the federal government of Pakistan. Another field of focus has been on infrastructure development where huge amounts of money have been spent on bridges, road networks and transit systems to further improve connection within AJK and to other parts of Pakistan. AJK is a multi-party-political system with frequent elections.[3] The healthcare system of Azar Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has been enhanced due to the building of new hospitals and clinics and the renovation of the former ones. New programs encourage economic growth and small and medium-sized business (SME) development, tourism and agriculture.[4] Compared to 1947, The people of AJK strive to achieve growth and stability; their economic, medical, educational, and infrastructure opportunities are better accessible.[5]

Status of AJK in 1947

In 1947, Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) did not exist as independent state. It was part of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir that

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[3] Planning & Development Department AJ&K. https://pndajk.gov.pk .
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

experienced a lot of political turmoil when the British India was partitioned. Consequently, the Line of Control was constituted and the initial Indo-Pakistani war erupted. The western parts of Jammu and Kashmir including AJK became a self-governing province after taking over Pakistani rule by the Karachi Agreement of 1949. Consequently, AJK was no longer an independent state, but another administrative unit within Pakistan.[6] The Azad Kashmir was furious with India following the conversion of Maharaja Hari Singh into an Indian citizen. On October 27, 1947, the soldiers of India invaded the state of Kashmir and ever since it has remained there. Pakistan was especially on the side of the Kashmiris, especially when the Pakistani army officially occupied Jammu and Kashmir(J&K) in May 1948, and the pro-Pakistan forces were involved in the conflict with the Indians until the ceasefire brokered by the United Nations was announced on January 1, 1949.[7] Significant Maharajas such as Pratap Singh, Hari Singh, Gulab Singh and Ranbir Singh had absolute power over the legislature, executive and judiciary arms of government. Their rule was based on strong military force to enforce law and order, feudal form of government with local nobility and landlords and heavy taxes to finance the royal court. Political freedom was minimal and suppression of opposition extreme. The social and economic reforms were aimed at enhancing the wealth and leverage of the

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[6]*Christopher Snedden, The untold story of the people of Azad Kashmir, (oxford university press), 2012.85*
[7] Ibid.

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Maharajas. Gulab Singh, the founder of the dynasty instituted power. With the transition, dictatorial rule came to pass and democratic leadership began in the region.[8] Maharaja Hari Singh enacted a law that guaranteed him the higher status and his religious society. He tended to put Hindus in his administration, police and army at the top ranks. He employed most non-Muslims in the police department, 37 of them were of the ranks of the inspectors and even higher indicating that only two were Muslims.[9]

Political Rights

The political instability and war which prevailed in the region in 1947 had an enormous effect on the political right of the individuals residing in the present-day Azar Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The region was governed by the tyrannical Maharaja Hari Singh of the state of Jammu and Kashmir who had tremendous control over the locals as well as provided them with minimal democratic freedom. During Maharaja Hari Singh, the freedom of politics was limited, and autocratic rule dominated. The government of the Maharaja did not allow much local representation of population or even political participation. An adult universal voting system did not exist. Ordinary people lacked the actual political rights to vote and engage in the

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[8] Professor Muhammad SarwarAbbasi, *Kashmiri Musalmano Ki Jodo Jahad e Azadi*, 1892-1947(Muzaffarabad: institute of Kashmir studies, 1992), 33-34.
[9]Christopher Snedden, *The untold story of the people of Azad Kashmir*, (oxford university press), 2012. 14

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process of legislation. There was a legislative body that was established in 1934 and was called the Praja Sabha; it existed within the princely realm. However, the Maharaja had the final word and the power of this body was limited. Proper democracy was not demonstrated in the representation of the Praja Sabha and most of the population felt underrepresented especially Muslims.[10] The Muslim majority in regions like what is today AJK was growing increasingly unhappy with the perceived injustices and the lack of political rights in 1947. This displeasure was the cause of a rebellion against the reign of the Maharaja when he was unwilling to either join Pakistan or India. These militias and the local army that assumed control of the areas that followed the uprising and the ensuing invasion by the Pashtun tribal militias of Pakistan called themselves Azad (Free) Jammu and Kashmir.[11].

Education

The 1947 educational environment in AJK was characterized by low literacy rates, restricted access to educational opportunities, and poor infrastructure placed a low value on education, and the majority of people, particularly in rural areas, had very little access to formal education. Prejudice, poverty forbade parents from getting their girls

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[10] Alastair Lamb, *The Kashmir Problem, a historical survey*, (New York: Frederick A. Prager1966), 71-73.
[11] Christopher Snedden, the *untold story of the people of Azad Kashmir*, (oxford university press: 2015),83.

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educated especially Muslims were reluctant to co-education. The ratio of boys and girls in school was 12:1[12].Old Data of educational of 1947 shows, that the total number of primary schools was only 250, 33 middle and lower middle schools, 1 girls high school, 8 high schools, and 1 intercollege only. There were no kindergarten (KG) schools, degree and oriental colleges.[13]

Health

After British India was divided, the struggle left Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) with a badly underdeveloped health system in 1947. There was a severe scarcity of medical professionals and very few hospitals and clinics with little emphasis on public health and preventive care, health services were mostly concerned with providing emergency care. All in all, the health system was primitive and found it difficult to meet the population's urgent requirements amid the continuous unrest**.**[14]

Infrastructure

The infrastructure in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) was underdeveloped in 1947 due to the crisis that ensued after the partitioning of British India. The transport system had a sparse gravel road and limited train connection, which made traveling difficult.

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[12]PremNathBazaz, Kashmir *in crucible, (Lahore: Printing press 1991),46.*

[13] Planning & Development Department. https://pndajk.gov.pk/statyearbook.php .

[14] Ibid.

Communication infrastructure was very minimal, telecommunications infrastructure was limited and the mail service was not constant. In the countryside, more specifically, there were lacking facilities; there was a lack of solid educational infrastructure, disease outbreaks were abetted by the fact that there was no access to sanitary facilities and clean water. Overall, there was a great deal of unrest in the area, making it difficult for the infrastructure to serve the requirements of the people.[15] What is now Pakistan was a stop on all states' import and export trade routes with British India. The railway line that connected Jammu and Sialkot was the sole one. Apart from this one Railway line, there were four more major highways.

1. Sialkot, Jammu Srinagar by Banihal.
2. Rawalpindi Kohaladomeil Sirinagar road.
3. RawalPindi Peshawar Abbottabad Muzaffarabad domail Srinagar Road.
4. Jehlum Mirpur KotliPoonch Ori Siri Nagar Road.[16]

Economic condition

In Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), the state of the economy was not very promising in 1947, firstly, due to the agrarian character of the economy, the presence of poor industrialization and infrastructure. It was very much subsistence-based and fertile valleys supported the growth of crops like rice, wheat, and maize. The British Indian

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[15] Interview of an old age refugee from ManakpaiyanMahajar camp.
[16] Professor Muhammad SarwarAbbasi, *Kashmiri Musalmano Ki Jodo Jahad e Azadi, 1892-1947*(Muzaffarabad: institute of Kashmir studies, 1992), 5.

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partition led to migration of the people and economic shocks as well, which had a major part in the economy of AJK.[17]

Development of AJK in the last 77 years

Over the last 77 years, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) have experienced tremendous economic and societal shifts in various aspects. Within the economic sphere, AJK has focused on such spheres as small-scale industry, tourism, and agriculture. With the use of natural resources, in general, AJK has made the infrastructure and living standards better and surmounted numerous challenges.[18]

Self-Governance

The Prime Minister is the Chief Executive, assisted by a council of ministers, the elected membership of which is forty members directly elected and eight elected indirectly, with five women members, one technocrat, and one Mashaikh[19]. The fifty-five women, the single technocrat and Mashaikh, and the eight indirectly elected members comprise the forty-eight members of the Legislative Assembly. The ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Affairs is a linking body between the Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan governments. Since the Pakistani government assumed power over an old and

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[17] ibid, 1992, 4.
[18] Interview of an old age refugee from camp.
[19] Government of the State of Azad Jammu & Kashmir – Official Portal. https://ajk.gov.pk /. (Accessed date 11-07-2024)

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undeveloped economy, the key mission has been to advance the economic growth of the country.[20]

Infrastructures Development

The development of the infrastructure in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has been oriented towards the economic and societal development of the state. Large expenditures and progress have been experienced in many industries, such as telecommunications, energy, and transportation. The second notable player has been the Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is meant to boost trade and movement by building new roads and highways. Since the year 1947, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has achieved a lot as far as infrastructural development is concerned. Initially the road network in the area was minimal and primitive, but it has expanded to include in excess of 18,187 kilometers of paved and unpaved roads, which includes 10,365 metaled roads, 7,822 fair-weather roads, and 0.78 per square kilometer of land.[21]

Transportation

Kotli-Rawalakot Road: Some of the key towns are connected here, and it allows movement within the area. Whereas taxis and auto-

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Azad Jammu and Kashmir at A Glance - 2022https://pndajk.gov.pk/uploadfiles/downloads/AJK%20At%20A%20Glance%202022. Pdf(accessed on 11.7.2024)

rickshaws are common in large cities, more people now use buses and vans to commute across regions, and this has enhanced the public transit. Lack of accessibility to some places has also been enhanced through the building of many bridges and tunnels that have been used to navigate through the perilous terrain. Even though it is currently small and not functional for receiving regular flights by people, Muzaffarabad Airport has played an essential role in receiving official and emergency flights in the past. There are also helicopter services to evacuate and provide disaster relief. In the interest of the local ladies, a specifically designed bus service was recently launched in the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) government, with Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan, the Prime Minister of AJK, conducting the official opening of the bus.[22]Among the 156,207 total registered vehicles in AJK, there are 1,910 buses and minibuses, 3,373 trucks and micro trucks, 13,343 motor cars, 121,500 motorcycles, 8,840 rickshaws, 648 wagons/ vans/ambulances, 4,527 jeeps, and 2066 tractors.[23]

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[22]Specialized 'Pink Bus Service' launched by AJK PM
https://www.app.com.pk/domestic/specialized-pink-bus-service-launched-by-ajk-pm/(accessed on 14.7.2024).
[23] Azad Jammu and Kashmir at A Glance -2022
https://pndajk.gov.pk/uploadfiles/downloads/AJK%20At%20A%20Glance%202020 22 pdf(accessed on 11.7.2024)

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Development of Electricity and Hydropower

The electrical infrastructure in AJK was partially weak after 1947. Power could only be depended on in urban areas and even there, it was not sufficient to meet the needs of everybody. Over the years, there have been attempts to expand the power grid and supply remote locations with electricity. Electrification projects have begun to access remote and underserved regions and this has significantly increased the radius of service provided by electricity delivery within AJK.[24]In AJK, there are 723,121 power connections overall, and 723,121 of the localities have electricity. Up until now, 95.43% of the population has access to electricity.[25]

Water Pipe Supply

To enhance the availability of clean and safe water, Azar Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is planning its water supply with a number of programs and projects. These initiatives include construction and upgrading of infrastructure, including reservoirs, water treatment plants and pipelines. Projects to improve water quality and increase water supply networks are funded by the government and foreign

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[24] Interview of an old age refugee from camp.
[25] Azad Jammu and Kashmir at A Glance -2022
https://pndajk.gov.pk/uploadfiles/downloads/AJK%20At%20A%20Glance%2020 22 pdf(accessed on 11.7.2024)

organizations.Overall, 5,698 (45.35%) houses have been provided with this facility.[26]

Education

Following partition, AJK had few schools and even fewer higher education establishments when it came to educational facilities. Particularly in rural and isolated places, access to education was restricted. A deliberate attempt has been made over the years to increase the number of schools in AJK. To accommodate the expanding population, the government has opened a large number of elementary, middle, and high schools in collaboration with other non-governmental organizations. Great progress has been made in expanding the number of elementary and secondary schools, which has increased enrolment rates and given more kids access to a basic education. The current administration has implemented NTS-based testing services to guarantee transparency in the appointment of teachers.[27]

[26]Azad Government Of The State Of Jammu & Kashmir, statistical book 2022 online
https://pndajk.gov.pk/uploadfiles/downloads/AJK%20Statistical%20Year%20Book%20202220pdf (accessed on 12.7.2024
[27]Azad Jammu and Kashmir official portal online at https://ajk.gov.pk/education . (accessed on 13.7.2024)

Educational institutes

In Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), many educational institutions offer programs in the diverse academic and professional fields. The University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) is the best university in AJK located in Muzaffarabad and it provides courses in humanities, sciences and professional development. The university has a reputation of conducting researches in the fields of environmental management, meteorology and geotechnical engineering. Focusing on the education of females, the Women University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir in Bagh offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in various fields as a more effective way of empowering and educating women. Business administration, computer science, engineering, and Islamic studies have been taught in the Mohi-ud-din Islamic University, Nerian Sharif. In Mirpur, Mirpur University of Science and Technology (MUST) offers engineering, computer science and business administration in order to support the technical and professional education in AJK. [28]There are 4, 126 elementary and mosque schools, 1023 middle schools, 785 high schools and 1,17 higher secondary schools in AJK according to current estimates of schools.[29]The up to date data of colleges indicate There are 93 inter-colleges, 74 degree college, and 13 postgraduate college in AJK,1 in Muzaffarabad (AJK Medical College

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[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.

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Muzaffarabad),1 in Mirpur Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Shaheed Medical College,1 in Rawalakot (Poonch Medical college Rawalakot). Muzaffarabad has 1 cadet college which provides students with an opportunity to prepare for higher education and military careers by providing them with quality education with the focus on leadership and discipline.[30]

Literacy Rate

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has one of the highest literacy rates in Pakistan of over 76%. The high level of literacy in the area could be explained by the considerable numbers of investment and efforts into the education. It is also interesting that the female population of ten years and older literacy stands at 67 and male at 86 in the state.[31]

Health care

The healthcare in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has undergone tremendous changes since 1947. The initial system was basic and had limited facilities and served mainly the simple medical needs. The 90s and 80s were the years of slow yet gradual rise in maternal and child health and illness prevention through opening new hospitals and health centers and by being involved in various health programs. Further growth and modernization continued to be experienced in

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[30] ibid
[31] Ibid.

AJK during the 2000s following spending incurred in constructing new facilities, renovating hospitals, and supplying them with modern medical equipment. Besides the policies that aim to enhance the training and capabilities of the medical staff, the health programs that deal with issues like disease management and vaccination have been introduced into practice.[32]

Hospitals and Clinics

On our independence in 1947, AJK had 11 Civil Dispensaries and only 30 beds. It has since developed an amazing healthcare system among the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.[33]The first Thalassemia Center was established in Muzaffarabad recently, and free emergency services are now available throughout the area.[34]With the commencement of the Sehat Sahulat Program, every person in AJK would have access to health insurance. This program seeks to provide access to high-quality healthcare services and provide financial security against medical expenses.[35]Through the use of telemedicine services, AJK has connected Pakistan's largest hospitals with nearby health institutions. This is beneficial for offering specialist care and consultations remotely, particularly in isolated and

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[32] Health Department Ajk online https://health.ajk.gov.pk./ accessed on 14.7.2024)
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Prime Minister launches health insurance scheme for Azad Kashmir. *Dawn*, 19 December, 2020 https://www.dawn.com/news/1596591 .

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economically challenged areas.[36]Every district in AJK, including Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Kotli, Bagh, Poonch, and Neelum, has a district health hospital (DHQ). There are 08 teaching and specialty hospitals for the delivery of high-quality healthcare and advanced medical education in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).7 district hospitals are there in total. Every tehsil in AJK has a hospital called Tehsil Headquarters (THQ). In addition to offering primary and secondary healthcare, these hospitals are essential to the tehsil healthcare delivery system There are 13 (THQs) in AJK. AJK's rural and urban areas are home to basic health units (BHUs) approximately 228 (BHUs) are there in AJK. The region is also providing 81 dispensaries and 160 malaria centers.[37]

Health indicators

The healthcare system in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has been transformed over the last 77 years. Since its humble beginnings in 1947, the region has attained great milestones in the improvement of health indicators and increased medical care services to its citizens. There are 4,231,311 OPD visits in the area.[38]

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[36] Health Department Ajk online https://health.ajk.gov.pk/ . (accessed on 17.07.2024)

[37]Azad Jammu and Kashmir at A Glance -2022. https://pndajk.gov.pk/uploadfiles/downloads/AJK%20At%20A%20Glance%2020 22 .

[38] Azad Jammu and Kashmir at A Glance -2022. https://pndajk.gov.pk/uploadfiles/downloads/AJK%20At%20A%20Glance%2020 22 .

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Economic development

Since 1947, Azad Jammu economic development has increased as the economy has shifted its subsistence to a more diverse economy. AJK has registered growth in some of its businesses in past few decades such as small-scale industry, tourism and mining. Even though the 2005 earthquake was a blow back yet services and infrastructure have since been strengthened thanks to restoration and outside funding of Reliance.[39] Recent efforts, however, have been working to maximize the region's economic potential by fostering community activities, creating the required infrastructure, making plans, and aiming to progressively encourage more investment and economic growth in the region.[40]

Agriculture

 The historical background of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has seen a tremendous improvement in the growth of the agricultural sector since it was founded in 1952 as the Department of Agriculture (DOA). The DOA promoted the use of better seeds, fertilizers and pesticide use whereas giving more emphasis on demonstration of better farming practices. The department has established facilities

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[39] Government of the State of Azad Jammu & Kashmir – Official Portal. https://ajk.gov.pk .
[40] Daily Times. Pk, 2020. "The Key to Economic Development of Azad Kashmir." Daily Times. January 25. https://dailytimes.com.pk/545790/the-key-to-economic-development-of-azad-kashmir/

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during the Since the Department of years including nursery of fruit plants, soil science labs and entomological labs. In the 1995 reorganization of the department a Directorate of Agriculture Research and Technical Support Services and a Directorate of Extension, Training and Adaptive Research were also added. Such efforts have assisted the region in becoming more productive and modernizing agricultural practices.[41]In AJK, overall 640,481 hectares are used for agricultural purposes.[42]

Industries

Since 1947, the industrial development of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has been through several phases, with the initial efforts of industrialization focusing on such industries as cement and textiles and discovering the prospects of hydropower. It was diversified further in the 1990s and 2000s when a large number of industries emerged, but due to political unrest and inadequacy in infrastructure, it has limited its growth. AJK has continued to diversify its industry base in recent times through infrastructural improvements and an incentive to investment. Hydropower projects have also been another key agenda whereby the water resources available in the region are utilized in sustaining industrial activity. AJK is continuing its

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[41]AgricultureAJK – Agriculture AJK. https://agricultureajk.org/ .
[42] Azad Jammu and Kashmir at A Glance -2022.
https://pndajk.gov.pk/uploadfiles/downloads/AJK%20At%20A%20Glance%2020 22 .

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industrial development; the existing statistics indicate that there are only 2 industries in the area.[43]

Trade and Commerce

The trade and commerce in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) have been developing over the years. Firstly, during the early post-1947 times, the trade and commercial activities were very low, and the region mainly centered on agriculture. The gradual growth of the field of market infrastructure and business activities happened in the 1980s and 1990s. This was the time when the enhancement of trade and access to markets started. The Line of Control (LoC) had been shut down in the war between India and Pakistan in 1947-48 but later opened to travel in 2005. The first bus service between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar was launched in April 2005, even though the terrorist attack on the Tourist Reception Center in Srinagar occurred on the day the service was launched.[44]Due to the unique geographic location and historical background, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is a diverse trading and commerce environment. It also produces a variety of fruits such as pears, apples, and apricots, and these are exported and also used domestically.[45]In order to enhance trade and attract investment, the AJK government has put in place a number of

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[43] Ibid.

[44] D. Suba Chandran, Cross-LoC TradeChallenges and Opportunities in J&K. https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep09049. pdf

[45] Planning & Development Department AJ&K. https://pndajk.gov.pk/ .

incentives, such as tax breaks and subsidies. There are also policies that have been implemented to improve the business climate and infrastructure. In spite of such developments, there is still a negative effect on the efficiency of trade and investor confidence due to problems such as political instability and inadequate infrastructure. Although AJ&K is a politically complex state, its populace is hospitable and strong, which can be used as the spirit of freedom and strength in times of trouble.[46]The main objective of Azad Kashmir Small Enterprises Corporation (AKSIC) is to support small and cottage businesses through market-driven financial and industrial assistance, and therefore, contribute to establishment of employment opportunities and socioeconomic development of the State. The proposed initiative would build and market indigenous handicrafts to provide small entrepreneurs and artisans with improved business opportunities, as well as to increase their income and make the latter financially independent. The program is a compulsory component of the development program aimed to revive crafts on the basis of modern technology and tendencies of the market. Export, product quality and productivity will be increased with technical and financial aid.[47]

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[46] Government of the State of Azad Jammu & Kashmir – Official Portal. https://ajk.gov.pk /.(accessed on 18.7.2024)
[47] Small Industries Corporation. https://sic.ajk.gov.pk/ .

Social developments

Since 1947, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, (AJK) has progressed at a tremendous pace in regards to social development. The unique political position of AJK, an elected state, has enabled the tailor-made social and economic policies. The reforms have been taking steps to achieve governance and transparency through legal and administrative reforms.

Human rights

Over the recent few years, the human rights situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has slightly improved. Some of the strategies currently being used include the one that highlights the right to justice, political freedom, and freedom of speech. It has also experienced overall enhancement of the freedom of media and civil society and increased civil society voice. Minorities and women have also been subjected to more efforts, enabling more individuals of either group to be active participants. It is evident that both local and international actors in AJK desire change even when they have more to accomplish.[48] With a president-style of government, a parliamentary form of government that reminds more of a prime-ministerial government and certain levels of self-governing legislation, Azad

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[48] OHCHR. n.d. "First-Ever UN Human Rights Report on Kashmir Calls for International Inquiry into Multiple Violations." *OHCHR*.
https://www.ohchr.org/en/2018/06/first-ever-un-human-rights-report-kashmir-calls-international-inquiry-multiple-violations

Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has a unique form of government. The legal framework employed in the region consists of both local and Pakistani laws, which are used in harmonizing the particular needs of the region and their compatibility with the general principles of legal systems. The attempts to empower the AJK judicial system are proposals that the values of justice and governance are being advanced. Nevertheless, there are some restrictions that are still present to date that may not allow the territory to become independent, including the power of the AJK Council and the actual role of the federal government of Pakistan.[49] Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) enjoy political and civil freedoms because of having a parliamentary form of government, representatives, and an administration that is established through the constitution. Nonetheless, the action of these rights can be curtailed by the interference of Pakistani officials and the Council of AJK which seems to have quite a lot of power over the local government. However, the region continues to experience the process of democratization and human rights protection.[50] Such programs to encourage interfaith peace and protect the rights of every community are highly important in AJK. Being the four pillars of the state-

[49]kashmirwelfare.org.uk. 2024. "Health and Welfare in Azad Kashmir: A Closer Look at Hospitals and Medical Infrastructure - Kashmir Welfare Foundation." *Kashmir Welfare Foundation - Empowering Lives, Enriching Kashmir*. July 15. https://kashmirwelfare.org.uk/health-and-welfare-in-azad-kashmir-a-closer-look-at-hospitals-and-medical-infrastructure/
[50] Freedom House. n.d. "Pakistani Kashmir." Freedom House. https://freedomhouse.org/country/pakistani-kashmir/freedom-world/2022

minority relations, the citizens of AJK focus on modernization, brotherhood, and tolerance. Such organizations as All Neighbors International Organization (ANIO) are important in fostering the understanding and respect for each other among the religions of the world.[51] The freedom of the press in Azad Kashmir has been suppressed in the past with high intensity, and the freedom of information is in danger because of stringent laws and external forces. The newspapers of the day are already in the region, and many of the publications are being monitored by the Pakistani government, and this has led to a controlled media. The launching of the private FM radio and the expansion of media freedom followed the 2005 earthquake.[52]

Cultural preservation

The preservation activities of desecrated and cultural activities in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) have transformed significantly since the year 1947. These innovations involve computerization of archives, recording of oral traditions, popularizing local arts and crafts, and restoration of historic places.[53]It is not only a historical

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[51]Gardezi, Syed Abbas. 2022. "Minorities in AJK Enjoying Equal Rights: Barrister Sultan." *The News International*, December 29https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/1024947-minorities-in-ajk-enjoying-equal-rights-barrister-sultan
[52]"'With Friends like These...'" 2023. *Human Rights Watch*. https://www.hrw.org/report/2006/09/20/friends-these/human-rights-violations-azad-kashmir
[53] Government of the State of Azad Jammu & Kashmir – Official Portal. https://ajk.gov.pk .

landmark, but it is presently a cultural and tourism center in Muzaffarabad. It attracts visitors throughout the region and even farther due to its serene nature in the presence of breathtaking scenery in the form of hills and flowing rivers. The history and architecture of the fort are so rich and beautiful that it is a very interesting study for history lovers, scholars, and tourists also.[54] The mosque architecture in Kashmir is evidence of the continuation of the architectural tradition that has evolved over the thousand years of time in the region. The Islamic cultural influence was in Central Asia and it was shifted to Gilgit Baltistan and Neelum Valley. The conservation of the architectural traditions in the region is done in one way through the wooden mosques spotted in Neelum Valley.[55] In order to preserve and enhance traditional crafts, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has designed a number of policies and programs that focus on cultural preservation of the handicrafts. Among other things, one such initiative is the promotion and marketing of handicrafts using e-commerce and other platforms, accessible not only to a regional or national audience, but also to a global one. The integration of handicrafts and tourism also helps in the promotion of tourist destinations by the use of cultural activities.[56]

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[54]Wasif Hussain. 2024. Red Fort Muzaffarabad: a historical gem of Azad Kashmir. *The Pakistan Traveler*. 18. May. https://www.pakistantraveler.com/red-fort-muzaffarabad/.

[55] Architecture of Kashmir: A Case Study of Wooden - ProQuest. https://www.proquest.com/docview/2679346799?pq-origsite=gscholar&fromopenview=true.

[56] Small Industries Corporation. https://sic.ajk.gov.pk/ .

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Conclusion

In British India, following the partitioning of the country, political instability and violence were high in the present-day Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) in 1947. The years following independence were volatile, the political system was developing, and the economy was emerging. Having become an autonomous administrative unit, AJK embarked on delivering social services, infrastructure, and some minimum standard of governance to its population. During the last 77 years, AJK has grown substantially in a number of spheres. There has been a lot of development in the area in regard to infrastructure, economic development, health, and education. The outcomes of educational institution expansion are higher literacy rates and extended educational opportunities among the youth. Healthcare services have been improved because there is increased accessibility to medical care and improved facilities for the population. Due to the development of communication, transportation, and road systems, infrastructure development has emerged as a major issue of concern. This has improved connectivity of the area with the rest of Pakistan, which has facilitated trade and economic activity. Hydropower projects and other activities in the energy sector have also contributed to the economic growth and stability of the region. Small-scale industry investments, tourism investments, and agricultural investments have contributed to the economic development of AJK. Tourism has also been encouraged through the exploitation of natural

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beauty and the cultural heritage that the area has to offer, and it is earning money. The productivity and income of the farmers in the surrounding neighborhoods have grown due to the move to modernize agriculture besides promoting sustainable farming. Despite these advantages, AJK continues to grapple with such problems as socioeconomic inequality, natural disasters, and political disturbances. However, the patience and will of the people and the development plans and projects that were formulated have prepared the way for progress in the future.

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The New Emerging Technology Cyber Capabilities: Prospective Hazards on Deterrence Stability between India and Pakistan

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Abstract

The growing development and deployment of emerging disruptive technologies like cyber capabilities brings new challenges to deterrence stability in South Asia in the third nuclear age. This paper intends to explore cyber insecurity and modern warfare in the presence of core bone of contention the Kashmir conflict. In the south Asian strategic environment, India and Pakistan perceive cyber threats as steering toward critical infrastructure. In the current geopolitical environment, among nine nuclear weapon states like India and Pakistan in addition are modernizing their cyber capabilities. In that context, the use of grey zone and electronic warfare strategies complicates the already fragile mutual trust and deterrence framework. The paper investigates how deterrence

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stability in South Asia is being impacted by the use of new technologies, including network-centric warfare, which is shifting traditional armed maneuvers. The study gives insight that without guardrails the use such tactics will destabilize stability and making it more complex to lead towards Peaceful resolution of Kashmir issue. The study used a qualitative method and data points of the academic research are policy documents, expert interviews, and media coverage. The study brings novelty in its strategic analysis by using method of comparative case study. The findings will highlight how a cyber-nuclear risk without the resolution of Kashmir issue is putting the region under catastrophic danger. It should be comprehended that policymakers, practitioner to work on mechanisms in the face of developing technologies that can mitigate nuclear risks.

 Key Words: Emerging Technologies, Cyber Warfare, Net-centric, Nuclear Deterrence, Strategic Stability, India, Pakistan .

Introduction

India and Pakistan horns are lock since eight decades due to protracted history of conflict and crises.[1] At the backdrop of enduring rivalry, India and Pakistan fails to institutionalize nuclear risk reduction measures which are integral of any rivalry states and

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[1] Muhammad W. Haider and Tahir M. Azad, "The Role of Confidence-Building Measures in the Evolution of Relations between Pakistan and India," World Affairs 184, no. 3 (2021): 294–317.

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particularly of thehistory of high frequency of crises like seven crises in last three decades.[2]

In the absence of trust and a high frequency of blame, states often find themselves in crises. Furthermore, a perilous aspect is the willingness to utilize non-traditional capabilities that have the potential to target critical infrastructure.[3] The nuclear deterrence that anchors states to avoid targeting essential infrastructure and sets norms to discipline it, but if the reverse situation erupts and both states fail to rethink norms and ethical guardrails, and instead continue to increase the use of emerging technologies like cyber capabilities. It brings new challenges to deterrence stability in South Asia.

Since 1998, a series of crises has led to distrust between India and Pakistan.[4] As a result, states have revised their doctrines to address new threats, which come with both states' focus on war-fighting capabilities that do not align with the region's nuclear stability setting.[5] In recent crises of 2019 and 2025, the pattern of crossing red

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[2] Nicholas J. Wheeler, the Promise and Perils of 'Leaps of Trust' in India–Pakistan Relations," in *The Politics of Nuclear Weapons in South Asia* (Routledge, 2016), 155–76.

[3] Muhammad Jawad Hashmi and Sultan Mubariz Khan, *"Emerging Network Centric Warfare Capabilities of Indian Military: Challenges for Pakistan's Security,"*Margalla Papers 23, no. 2 (2019).

[4] Nicholas J. Wheeler, "Beyond Waltz's Nuclear World: More Trust May Be Better," in Realism and World Politics (Routledge, 2010), 258–76.

[5]Naveed Ahmed Malik, *"Flames across the Line: A Strategic and Tactical Analysis of the May 2025 India-Pakistan Conflict,"*Annals of Human and Social Sciences6, no. 3 (2025): 1-16.

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lines, international borders, and the use of drones and aerial dogfights is evident. It poses a serious and open threat to the strategic stability of South Asia.

In the third nuclear age, where significant powers like China, Russia, and the USA have inducted new emerging technologies into their arsenals. These powerful states are using these new technologies with a comprehensive gap in their regulations. In the presence of such trends and trajectories, India and Pakistan are developing and deploying emerging disruptive technologies. The Indian budget is arisen to 48 percent.[6]likewise, in the context of defence, Pakistan is advancing with new technology.

This paper aims to explore cyber insecurity and its implications for modern warfare in South Asia. Both states perceive cyber threats as a threat to critical infrastructure. In the current geopolitical environment, nuclear-powered states India and Pakistan are modernizing their cyber capabilities. The key concern this paper explores is the use of war-fighting capabilities that extend from traditional domains to non-traditional domains, such as cyberspace, which further complicates the concept of deterrence. The existing distrust needs to transition into a trust-building mechanism to smooth

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[6] S.S. Rana& Co. Advocates, "Union Budget 2025 Set to Boost AI, Data Security and Privacy Initiatives," Mondaq, November 19, 2025, https://www.mondaq.com/india/new-technology/1707554/union-budget-2025-set-to-boost-ai-data-security-and-privacy-initiatives.

pathways for norm-building, which is further extending into more profound distrust due to the use of cyberspace in war-fighting, posing a real threat to the region. In that context, the use of grey zone and electronic warfare strategies complicates the already fragile mutual trust and deterrence framework. The paper investigates how new cyber capabilities and modern net centric warfare impact deterrence stability in South Asia and have altered traditional military operations. The study contends that without guardrails the use such tactics will destabilize the region. The study used a qualitative method and data points of the academic research are policy documents, expert interviews, and media coverage. It will be a comparative analysis of the India and Pakistan cases. The results of the study shed light on the intricate dynamics of cyber risks.[7] It should be realized that policymakers, practitioner to work on mechanisms in the face of developing technologies that can mitigate nuclear risks.[8]

To investigates how deterrence stability in South Asia is being impacted by the use of new technologies, including network-centric warfare, which is altering traditional military operations.[9] Both countries are modernizing their militaries; tensions might

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[7]Feroz Hassan Khan, Ryan Jacobs, and Emily Burke, Nuclear Learning in South Asia: The Next Decade (2014). https://core.ac.uk/outputs/36737269/?source=2
[8]RizwanaAbbasi, "India and Pakistan: Distinct Strategic Directions and Fragility of Peace," Pakistan Horizon 68, no. 3/4 (2015): 105–30.
[9]Devin T. Hagerty and Pusca. *Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence Stability in South Asia* .Gewerbestrasse, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

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unintentionally rise as a result of their lack of communication on new technologies.

Third Nuclear Age

Earlier in 1945, with the advent of nuclear weapons, the United States use nuclear weapons against japan to end their powerful role in world politics is the start of nuclear age. It was evicted how one state with its nuclear weapons.[10] Currently, the world is moved into a new nuclear era: the Third Nuclear Age.[11] The age is comprised of layers of risks and challenges. First the rise of nuclear insecurities in the presence of multipolar system, along with breakdown of Arms control Norms and suppression of nuclear ethics and rapid nuclear doctrinal shifting with expansion of nuclear arsenals and its modernization.[12]It is observe vividly how states with the possession of nuclear weapons are using tools as gears for coercion and strategic signaling rather than just deterrence. At the heart of this era is a mixture of intensifying geopolitical rivalry, rapid technological change in weapons systems, and a breakdown of the norms of global nuclear governance. (Andrew Futter, Nobel Peace Prize Forum, 2024).

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[10] Jenny L. Naylor, "The Third Nuclear Age," Comparative Strategy 38, no. 4 (2019): 276–88.

[11] Joel PeterssonIvre, "Strategic Stability and Nuclear Salience: Japan, South Korea, and Extended Deterrence in the Third Nuclear Age" (paper, April 21, 2025).

[12] Guy B. Roberts, "Shaping the Future of Nuclear Deterrence: Adapting to New Challenges and Opportunities," Peace Review 36, no. 4 (2024): 674–91.

First Nuclear Age	Second Nuclear Age	Third Nuclear Age
The start of the nuclear age is marked by the first atomic bomb tests and their use in 1945.	1991 when Arms control setup bind rivalries and reduce the risks of threat of use of force.	Generally considered to be the current era that is the dangerous nuclear age
The Cold War standoff between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, dominated by the logic of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) and the threat of a large-scale, bipolar conflict.	The period following the Cold War, which was marked by a hope for disarmament (Obama 2009-2017 world without nuclear weapons) but also saw the rise of regional nuclear powers and the modernization of arsenals despite the optimism.	Shift towards Multipolar world order The norms which were set in cold and post-cold war are now undermining due to intense multipolar competition. It includes withering of norms, ethics. States are modernizing and expanding their nuclear arsenals, with China, for example, rapidly growing its stockpile.[13] The introduction of new technologies like hypersonic missiles that reduce decision-making time and increase the risk of miscalculation. Nuclear weapons are increasingly being used as tools for coercion and strategic signaling, not just as a deterrent against attack.

Unlike the Cold War period, when nuclear deterrence was relatively stable, today's security landscape is more unpredictable due to advent of emerging technologies, modernization of nuclear arsenals, cyber

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[13]Pierre Vandier, Deterrence in the Third Nuclear Age, translated by Armel Dirou and Julien Lalanne de Saint Quentin (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2025).

threats,[14] space-based weapons, and growing tensions between major powers like the U.S., Russia, China, and at the regional level between India, and Pakistan.[15]

Cyber Capabilities in the third nuclear age

As mentioned above, in the third age with the presence of multipolar competition, loosening of arms control framework, states increasing insecurities and unpredictability due to new advance technologies the strategic dynamics have been in shifting mode.[16]In the nuclear context, cyber capabilities refer to the use of digital technologies to enhance, disrupt, or manipulate nuclear weapons systems, command and control, and deterrence strategies. These capabilities can be used by both state and non-state actors in different ways, creating new risks for strategic stability.

Cyber Espionage

The hacking issue specifically into nuclear command networks is real threat. It steals sensitive information about nuclear arsenals, launch

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[14]Edward Geist, "Deterrence Stability in the Cyber Age," Strategic Studies Quarterly 9, no. 4 (2015): 44–61.

[15]Guy B. Roberts, "Shaping the Future of Nuclear Deterrence: Adapting to New Challenges and Opportunities," Peace Review 36, no. 4 (2024): 674–91.

[16]Kyungkook Kang and JacekKugler, "Beyond Deterrence: Uncertain Stability in the Nuclear Era," Conflict Management and Peace Science 40, no. 6 (2023): 655–74.

procedures, or security protocols.[17] In 2016, hackers linked to Russia allegedly breached U.S. nuclear power plant systems.

Sabotage of Nuclear Infrastructure

In addition, the other real threat is attacking nuclear facilities, power plants, or missile systems to cause failures or delays in nuclear

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[17]Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press, "The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence," International Security 41, no. 4 (2017): 9–49.

operations.[18]The Stuxnet virus (2010) targeted Iran's nuclear program, damaging centrifuges used for uranium enrichment.

In the third nuclear age, as states upgrade their nuclear deterrence strategies, they rely more on digital systems, military applications of artificial intelligence, and networked command and control.[19]Nuclear attacks targeting nuclear plants, power plants, or missile systems are aimed at causing a breakdown or slowdown of nuclear functions. A good example is the Stuxnet virus that was directed to Iran nuclear program and caused harm to centrifuges used to enrich uranium. The utilization of new technologies is transforming the state ideas of security and nuclear deterrence.[20] Cyber threats also complicate the security situation in South Asia where both India and Pakistan are

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[18]Michael Krepon, "The Myth of Deterrence Stability between Nuclear-Armed Rivals," Deterrence Instability (2015): 15.

[19] Jenny L. Naylor, "The Third Nuclear Age," Comparative Strategy 38, no. 4 (2019): 276–88.

[20] Stephen J. Cimbala, "Nuclear Deterrence and Cyber Warfare: Coexistence or Competition?," Defense & Security Analysis 33, no. 3 (2017): 193–208.

equipped with nuclear weapons.[21]Cyber threats are both seen as a threat to the critical infrastructure of both India and Pakistan, such as power grids, communication networks and military infrastructures. Any cyber-attack on these infrastructures may undermine the capabilities of the defense systems of the countries and create a lack of trust between them.[22]

In modern warfare, apart from classic ways to won the war, in current age non classical war wining startgeic is adopted by states to compete. It covers their modernization and deploys all new technolgies that play a role to make to more competent in contested startgeic environment. [23] The probable opportunities that these new cyber tools are offering states are only cost effective but its real battle situation alertness.[24] As mentioned above, cyber tools will increase the efficiency, task can be done in less time with more accuracy and precisions, improve work efficient of command and control systems,

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[21] Andrew F. Krepinevich Jr., "The New Nuclear Age: How China's Growing Nuclear Arsenal Threatens Deterrence," Foreign Affairs 101 (2022): 92.

[22]Zenel Garcia, "Strategic Stability in the Twenty-First Century: The Challenge of the Second Nuclear Age and the Logic of Stability Interdependence," Comparative Strategy 36, no. 4 (2017): 354–

[23] Michael P. Kreuzer, "Cyberspace Is an Analogy, Not a Domain: Rethinking Domains and Layers of Warfare for the Information Age," The Strategy Bridge, July 8, 2021, https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/7/8/cyberspace-is-an-analogy-not-a-domain-rethinking-domains-and-layers-of-warfare-for-the-information-age

[24] Summer Iqbal Babar, Muhammad NadeemMirza, and IrfanHasnainQaisrani, "Evaluating the Nature of Cyber Warfare between Pakistan and India," Webology 18, no. 6 (November 2021).

and makes states aware of more knowledge about terrain, and views from the sky.[25]

In addition to cyber, the amalgamation of new warfare (electronic) is a game changer. The strategy of electronic warfare deals with how in

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[25] Jenny L. Naylor, "The Third Nuclear Age," Comparative Strategy 38, no. 4 (2019): 276–88.

real time scenario electromagnetic system is used for awareness surveillance and reconnaissance. It works as eye in the sky for states to make rational and immediate decision.

The diagram showed how wartime's activities are interlinked and support each other. But the duo of cyber and electronics from ncuelar deterrence stability perspective is full of hazards because first it blurs lines between war and peace time. Second the interlink of different domains posed risks too. The risks can without proper offcial channels of information, any state in peace time consider it a threat and impact directly or incidentally of peace and security of region.[26]

It is United States of America like it first use nuclear bomb, adopted the war strategy.[27]US used advacend computers and well integrated command system that facilities leadership to set stratgeic choices in well informed environment. Such tactics help elite to reduce errors and make rational choices. It essentially spins around on the effective decisions making process and timey decisions to get full benefits in startgeic affairs.[28]The current age is of Information and right

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[26] Summer Iqbal Babar, Muhammad NadeemMirza, and IrfanHasnainQaisrani, "Evaluating the Nature of Cyber Warfare between Pakistan and India," Webology 18, no. 6 (November 2021).

[27] James S. Johnson, "China's Vision of the Future Network-Centric Battlefield: Cyber, Space and Electromagnetic Asymmetric Challenges to the United States," Comparative Strategy 37, no. 5 (2018)

[28]Thea Riebe and Christian Reuter, "Assessing Dual-Use in IT Development," Science and Technology for Peace and Security (PEASEC), TechnischeUniversität Darmstadt, March 13, 2019,

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information at right time is important. Such internal military environment reduces misperceptions and full eye on enemy movements. For example in gulf war, USA used these tactics and gain startgeic objectives. The operation desert shield is very popular example of how America covers all important information and gain superiority on targets. The other example is of desert storm. It works totally opposite to previous one as it focuses on attacking strategy. It complete disrupt rivalry will and capability to fight.[29]

In the presence of multipolar competition, the south Asian region is centre of power politics and such advacend employment of new strategies is alarming. The dangers of preventive and pre-emption strikes remain overwhelm in tensed situation. It is high time in changing strategic environment, both states ought to review the pragmatic factors highlighted for regional stability. Both states should move ahead with new plans for prosperity instead of looking back in the historical bad experiences. International community, especially Americans, started pressurizing both countries to solve their disputes through peaceful means. The interests of foreign powers USA, Russia and China further accentuated the central rivalry between the nuclear neighbors of South Asia. These powers have been the dictators of regional policies in South Asia with regard to conflict and

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[29] Caroline Baylon, "Lessons from Stuxnet and the Realm of Cyber and Nuclear Security: Implications for Ethics in Cyber Warfare," in Ethics and Policies for Cyber Operations: A NATO CooperativeCyber Defence Centre of Excellence Initiative, 213–29 (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2016).

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cooperation. The net centric warfare can be used in both offensive[30]and defensive[31] ways like USA used it in past. And while discussing its application in south Asia, in the presence of uncertainties, the system that is advacend will both states survive in future. It is a big inquiry that stressed nuclear scholars in particular and all generally.[32]These technologies have full potential of disruption. It can find gaps in nuclear security initiatives. If any state use offensive capability, others state deterrence can break and under nuclear umbrella its danger is unavoidable.

Cross-Domain Application of Weapon Systems

In the third nuclear age, it is part and parcels that how apart from traditional domains of air, sea and land, new domains are reality. It includes space, cyber. The comprehensive outlook is how states are using different domains to gain objectives. The presence of right information at right time with relevant set of data banks is new tools that make states confident to attack and rule.

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[30]Offensive strategy is disrupting the opponent's command systems and neutralizing their ability to respond effectively.

[31]Defensive way is to use high-tech systems to monitor and protect critical assets, denying the enemy any advantage over strategic targets.

[32] Caroline Baylon, "Lessons from Stuxnet and the Realm of Cyber and Nuclear Security: Implications for Ethics in Cyber Warfare," in Ethics and Policies for Cyber Operations: A NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence Initiative, 213–29 (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2016).

The net centric warfare is old tactics but with current advanced computing it is harnessing its tools and in the absence of legal and normative framework, the constant deployment of these tools created unlimited vulnerabilities. In last years, the technology war of Russia Ukraine, India and Pakistan and Iran Israel are examples how states are inducing it and how uncertain situation world politics listed.[33] Why states used them. The answer is obvious i) - attain supremacy, ii) - disruption iii) - Decisions making choices iv) - deploy new tools. The experts opinedit's in early stage in the third world countries but before the situation get out of control it is like a lifeline jacket to institutionalize the mechanism that not only heldarms race but also set states to initiate dialogue process. These are the new threats with new age.[34] In this stage, both states are in process to develop partnership with important states and developing startgeic partnerships that can benefits their competency.[35] It is crucial for India and pakisatn to get tech that can workable on time.[36]

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[33] Ayesha Abrar, "Nuclear Deterrence in the Cyber Age: Intricacies and Prospects," SJESR 7, no. 2 (2024): 1–7.

[34] Rabia Akhtar and ManpreetSethi, "Emerging Technologies and Southern Asian Nuclear Deterrence," The Washington Quarterly 47, no. 4 (2024): 99–116.

[35] High-Performance Analytics and Computing (HPAC), including supercomputers, quantum computing, and fast decision-making tools during combat for net centric warfare. Additionally, unmanned platforms for combat or surveillance will enhance situational awareness.

[36] James Johnson, "Deterrence in the Age of Artificial Intelligence & Autonomy: A Paradigm Shift in Nuclear Deterrence Theory and Practice?," Defense & Security Analysis 36, no. 4 (2020): 422–48.

In recent times, with the demand of new world order and new nuclear age, it is imperative how much time and investment India and Pakistan will exercise to achieve that technical level of net centric warfare. It is clear there are more weak grey areas that inculcate security dilemma. In the presence of such contested environment, where nuclear deterrence is the way to keep rivalries to lock their horns, such cyber vulnerabilities are prospective hazards. It leans towards misperceptions and miscommunication. The other important issue that is linked to cyber warafre is of anonymous nature of attackers. It further accentuated misperceptions and dangers in warafre.[37]

Weakened cybersecurity in the form of vulnerabilities could undermine the trust of India and Pakistan in each other in his or her defensive postures, and this would negate perceptions of state security. This kind of erosion may instigate mistakes and increase the likelihood of war. The two nations rely on nuclear deterrence as a system to prevent war, in theory, a nuclear retaliation by the opponent

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[37] James Johnson, "The AI-Cyber Nexus: Implications for Military Escalation, Deterrence and Strategic Stability," Journal of Cyber Policy 4, no. 3 (2019): 442–60.

would deter the first aggressor hence halting hostilities. However, the cyber vulnerabilities of both countries of India and Pakistan to the national infrastructures create uncertainty, which may intensify accidental incidents that may lead to armed confrontation even when there is a nuclear deterrent. Another contextual issue that comes to mind in any conflict scenario is the attribution of cyber-attacks. Although attribution is not an easy task in the time of peace, the task of diplomatic and military reaction becomes more difficult when the war is running. This uncertainty encourages misinterpretation, where one party can get the other party wrong and hence the development of escalation or unwanted animosity, especially when the two governments use cyber capacity as an integral part of their military doctrine. Large-scale use of high-technology cyber-activity by India and Pakistan is more likely to create inadvertent operations and wrong communicating.

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Therefore, the question is whether it is wise to be dependent on cyber-capabilities. It can be tedious to decide that an attack has fully compromised a system or just compromised a number of functions.[38] False sense of security might also be maintained when there are signs of strength in cases of breaches.[39] When one state does not know that its systems are compromised, and misjudges the context as an external attack, it may respond to the situation with an inadequate aggression, and the accidental conflict will occur.[40]

On the other hand, when both states deal with cyber vulnerabilities on a long-term basis, it can be assumed that they will achieve higher resilience and safety in the long run.[41]On one side, India with her stratgeic objectives is highly investing on its force posture that deals with new nuclear technology.India developed its missile defense program mainly in collaboration with Israel and Russia due to technological and economic restraints. USA now supports India to have an anti-missile shield and modernize its nuclear arsenals. USA

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[38] Muhammad Fahim Khan, AamerRaza, and Noreen Naseer, "Cyber Security and Challenges Faced by Pakistan," Pakistan Journal of International Affairs 4, no. 4 (2021): 865–81.

[39] Sidra Shabbir, Hani Fatima, Sundas Malik, AsgharUllah Khan, and Min Zheng, "Cyber Warfare from Pakistan-India: A Critical Analysis," International Journal of Special Education 37, no. 3 (2022): 2452–58.

[40] David C. Gompert and Martin Libicki, "Cyber War and Nuclear Peace," Survival 61, no. 4 (2019): 45–62.

[41] Daniel H. Wang, Death of a Doctrine: The End of Classical Deterrence in a Complex Multipolar World (2025).

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strategic objectives in case of BMDs are to allow India access to superior technology and intelligence systems. [42]

 In the cyber security context, India all public private companies and stakeholders are on same page.[43] India is advancing but it is still question are these are responsble innovation and how endlessly it is impacting nuclear deterrence equilibrium.[44] In 2025 nuclear it is open secret how India comes up with all new net centric war fighting capabilities. With aim to target pakisatn cyber sectors but in reality the situation goes in pakisatn favors and apart from India high advance capabilities they fail to complete pakisatn in man power quality and revealed there are wide gap their capabilities. But the argument is India is consistory learning and advancing and without guardrails in near future in with such military equipment's hazards becomes more reality.[45]India with her 'Make in India" project needs to induce nuclear responsible mechanisms.

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[42] Patrick Cirenza, An Evaluation of the Analogy between Nuclear and Cyber Deterrence (PhD diss., Center for International Security and Cooperation [CISAC], Stanford University, 2015).

[43] Manuel Fischer, "The Concept of Deterrence and Its Applicability in the Cyber Domain," Connections 18, no. 1/2 (2019): 69–92.

[44]Haris Bilal Malik, "Pakistan's Quid Pro Quo Plus: A Key Strategic Determinant," STRAFASIA Strategic Foresight for Asia, Apr. 13, 2020,
 https://strafasia.com/pakistans-quid-pro-quo-plus-a-key-strategic-determinant/.

[45]Summar Iqbal Babar, and Abu Hurrairah Abbasi. "Emerging technologies and the threat to South Asian security." CISS Insight Journal 11, no. 2 (2023): 40-59.

Lack of Communication and Engagement

In current strategic situation, India and Pakistan both have their threat
perception towards others. Pakistan perspective is it was due to Indian
aggressive policy since its inception, so Pakistan found its "First Use
Policy" as a prudent option to craft a viable deterrence vis-a-vis to
Indian conventional forces.[46]Consequently, to overcome security
concerns, Pakistan maintained defensive policy to counter these
threats. India has security reservations from China as well. A growing
China, which might propel in the favour of Pakistan given its
unstinted ties with Islamabad, was another fear that gripped New
Delhi to pursue the far sighted defense policies with newly inducted
and refurbished political and military doctrines.

 If both states work to open channels and all about possible scenarios
that are perilous for regional stability then it is only viable approach
of nuclear responsible states.[47]The last decade nuclear crises revealed
that how with the lack of official channels before, during and even
after the crises situation turned towards uncontrollable as well.[48]Dr.

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[46]Waseem, Rubina, and Muhammad Sajjad, "Conceptualizing new avenues of the
Indo-Pak hostilities: an analysis of the invisible PsyWar operations and challenges."
Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ) 6, no. 2 (2022):
161-174.

[47]Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, "The Many Unanswered Questions About India's
Missile Accident," The Diplomat, March 18, 2022,
https://thediplomat.com/2022/03/the-many-unanswered-questions-about-indias-
missile-accident/

[48] Muhammad SharehQazi, "Between 'Cyber Insecurity' and Modern Warfare: The
Precarious Tightrope of Deterrence Stability in South Asia," Stimson Center, June

Rabia Akther, Dr. Zafar Jaspal and Dr. Naeem Salik, Pakistan's nuclear experts on strategic issues viewed that the element of ambiguity and lack of transparency remains eminent in nuclear crises and become a source of worries for entire peace initiatives community. The way forward is dialogue and with the strong political will. It includes all level of dialogue process which covers, not only issues but also weapons development and deployment procedures. The crises demonstrate how mutual mistrust; domestic instable factors and intervention of non-states actors make situation that run a high risk of spiraling out of control. There are many other assessments that neither India nor Pakistan seemed able or willing to defuse the situation due to their domestic constraints and interstate conflicts.[49]

According to deterrence optimists, in non-weaponized and nuclearized era, nuclear weapons play their dynamic role but in the third nuclear age are important to manage and learn right nuclear lessons to manage low intensity crises that induce instability and in future it can be.

In addition, the media in India is being reckless and jingoistic. It is expected to hold on to the fundamental ethics of journalism. They negatively highlighted the issues as of Pak-India conflicts that can

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27, 2024, https://www.stimson.org/2024/between-cyber-insecurity-and-modern-warfare-the-precarious-tightrope-of-deterrence-stability-in-south-asia/

[49]Akash Shah, "Deterrence under Surveillance: Indian Space-based ISR Capabilities and Pakistan's Nuclear Deterrence," Journal of Security & Strategic Analyses 8, no. 2 (2022): 7–26.

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threaten the security parameters. This situation has not only rolled back the peace process but also shows how fragile the process itself is. Until and unless both countries don't solve the core issues the clouds of nuclear conflict will keep hovering over India and pakisatn.

The conflict over the Kashmir dispute is the major dynamic of instability that could cause a nuclear exchange. Kashmir often referred as a possible nuclear flashpoint. South Asia faced a variety of internal (terrorism) and external problems, it is very crucial to understand how these issues should be resolved for stability. The crisis erupted in South Asia are of high tensions and without early warnings. It raises the danger that these can escalate to nuclear war. It depends upon the nature of the leadership of that at time of war i.e. political military, how decision makers will handle the situation. As it is widely believed that comparatively political leadership remains rational while military leadership has an aggressive attitude during crisis. Particularly in case of Pakistan and India, a nuclear reaction would be directly proportional to the adversary's reaction that how far adversary has come to challenge the perceived threshold of the opponent in the conventional conflict.

Framework to Prevent Escalation- A framework that facilitate South Asian region to maintain and prevent a major nuclear war in future can hold on the solid foundation of the resolution of Kashmir with the will of Kashmiris. With the presence of key issues, the elements of

fragility will remain and the way forward is to work on a framework that can replace blame game with the nuclear responsble behavior keeping in view the overall security situation of regional and at broad at world level.

Strategic Restraint and Past Incidents

In the aftermath of Cuban missiles crisis of 1962,USA and USSR avoided inadvertent nuclear war with the strategic support of arms control bilateral agreements.[50] The phase is the testimony that how successfully Washington and Moscow negotiated numerous bilateral and multilateral treaties for the sake of nuclear stability. Unquestionably, the long and difficult process of negotiating arms control measures constituted of the nuclear restraint regime between USSR and USA.[51] Resultantly the nuclear restraint regime improved due to channels of communications between the adversaries which reduced uncertainty and entailed strategic stability in the region.[52]

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[50]Arzan Tarapore, "Conditional Restraint: Why the India-Pakistan Kargil War Is Not a Case of Nuclear Deterrence," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 79, no. 6 (2023): 388–392.

[51]Hasnain Haider, Allah Ditta, Attya Firdous, Bedar Bakht Khan, and Malik BakhtawarMumtaz, "Missile Politics and Strategic Hypocrisy: Pakistan's Deterrence Doctrine Amid US–India Strategic Convergence in South Asia," Research Journal for Social Affairs 3, no. 4 (2025): 351–364.

[52] Saba Kiran, "Strategic Culture of India and Pakistan and Its Implications for Strategic Stability," NUST Journal of International Peace & Stability (2024): 51–63.

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For a peaceful environment, it is believed that following effective diplomacy the agreements signed between India and Pakistan can avoid nuclear exchange and canimplemented swiftly to maintain peace and stability in critical situations. For scholarly discussion one can categorize the main agreement between Indian and Pakistan. There are some agreements which are already working and some still in process to be implemented. The main problem is that already signed agreements should be workable at the time of crisis to fulfill its objective. India and Pakistan are modernizing their force arsenals to make them stronger. Defence expenditures have increased significantly. These are the factors which can alter the deterrence stability between both adversaries. Conventional arms control agreements can restraint the arms build up to make South Asian peaceful.

Whenever states conduct exercises it make the impression by the Military Intelligence that opponent would be making their nuclear capabilities operational. For example, Poorna Vijay (complete victory) exercises by India in 2001. It can prove fatal for the regional environment if such nuclear exercises were misperceived by the both nuclear states. However, both the states lack the technologies to develop such technical equipment.

In the presence of emerging threats and challenges, the accidental, misperceptions, miscalculation or unauthorized use of nuclear bombs

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has increased. In addition these weapons are vulnerable to loss and theft, so certain actions are needed to reduce these dangers in the conflicting region. The important measures for nuclear risk reduction is to resolve the Kashmir issue, it will have to come from options that preclude a military solution.[53]To preserve the nuclear peace in addition to nuclear security, each states effort to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity e.g. issues like Kashmir issue, Saichen glacier, Kargil, cross border terrorism.[54]

Both nuclear armed states should improve the command and control arrangement with the assistance of developed countries. The hazards have move beyond and in the third nuclear age these cyber tech is adding layer to the existing issues.[55]Both leaders should focus on how to deal with short flight time and how to set time to warn each other during before and after the nuclear crises.[56]India and Pakistan institutions and mechanism ability and timely response are vital to manage nuclear risks. From expert's opinions, it is infer that the

[53] Kamal Matinuddin, The Nuclearization of South Asia (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[54] Maryam Azam, "Pakistan–India Security Paradox: Between Deterrence and Coercive Diplomacy," Journal of Security & Strategic Analyses 7, no. 1 (2021): 160–80.

[55]Muhammad Saeed Khan, Fauzia Ghani, Farzad Ahmad Cheema, Gulshan Majeed, and Khizar Hayat. "Pakistan's Foreign Policy towards India: Exploring Diplomatic Engagement and Strategic Challenges (2000–2025)." Journal of Regional Studies Review 4, no. 1 (2025): 347-360.

[56]Maryyum Masood and Muhammad Ali Baig, "Potential Impact of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems on Strategic Stability and Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia," Margalla Papers 27, no. 2 (2023).

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warning time should be increased from 3-11 minutes for reasonable interval to diffuse the disastrous situation through constructive dialogue.[57]The transparency mechanism and established trained units to deal with the nuclear smuggling are considerable measures to save the region from nuclear threat. For transparency mechanism both sides should maintain data about nuclear weapons which includes nuclear weapons storage sites and facilities, military stacks of fissile materials.[58] The regional verification regime is the important component for the stability regime; however it is not easily verifiable. States can infuriate the nuclear redline for the sake of their national interests and dominance. Sovereign states don't accept intrusive inspections. A great deal of trust and confidence is necessary.

Deterrence Stability is not a static phenomenon. It can shift its balance in either competitor's favor even with a single minute strategic move. As long as a nation possesses the ability to inflict un–acceptable damage on an aggressor, deterrence stability will exist irrespective of nuclear and conventional and unconventional arsenals of the countries concerned. The deterrence stability maintained peace in nuclear environment and it in past regulate nuclear war pressure, state

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[57] Adeela Ahmed, "The Contours of Pakistan's Relations with Russia," in Pakistan's Foreign Policy, 181–92 (Routledge, 2022) *see also* Robina Khan, Umme Laila Israr Rasool, Abdul Waheed, and Ghulam Mustafa, "Deterrence Stability in Nuclear South Asia: Issues and Complexities," Journal of Positive School Psychology 7, no. 3 (2023): 443–58, http://journalppw.com

[58]Rizwana Abbasi and Muhammad Saeed Uzzaman, Changing Patterns of Warfare between India and Pakistan: Navigating the Impact of New and Disruptive Technologies (Routledge, 2023).

crisis, and asymmetric economic development within the region. Deterrence pessimist's views should be acknowledged by rational decisions makers to fill the gap and ensure deterrence stability. It is clear from above discussion that India and Pakistan are in their preliminary phase of technological innovation. The threat to cross redlines inadvertently is there due to lack of robust tech. governance system. Credible deterrence is required to prevent adversaries from crossing the nuclear threshold. The role of political, military and strategic scholars is important to curtail the factors of instability. Deterrence stability requires sustained efforts to make it more robust. Since we are witnessing the new strategic environment, nuclear CBMs are crucial for trust building and mutual gain for this conflict prone region. It enhances the chance to prevent nuclear disasters.[59] It can be achieved by resolving the issues through dialogues instead of arms race

Political and Military leaderships should be rational in their approach at interstate level and should avoid aggressive policy of using force.[60] The power politics in the political and military level undermine stability situation. It demands a reciprocal step by the adversary,

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[59] Abdul Rehman, "Kashmir as the Disputed Legacy and Flash Point in Nuclear South Asia," Journal of Politics and International Studies 8, no. 1 (2022): 1–16.
[60] Muhammad Sadiq and Iftikhar Ali, "Challenges of Nuclear Deterrence Stability in South Asia," Journal of Asian and African Studies 58, no. 8 (2023): 1511–27.

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which will turn the deterrence stability to the minimum.[61] This was
the case in the nuclear Brass-tacks exercise by India in 1985/86.
During this India deployed its exercise in Rajasthan without
informing Pakistan thereby threatening the prevalent stability
equation.

These focused on resolution of all disputes through peaceful
settlement. Unfortunately, not even any bilateral agreements,
composite dialogue any co-operative arrangements proved to
decrease any tensions.

The necessity is to tackle the lingering concern of crisis prevention
and institutionalize measures that would improve the stability of
nuclear establishment on both sides, the antagonistic powers.[62]The
role of CBMs should be encouraged, which is the best policy for
stability in an environment saturated with prevalent mistrust,
especially at critical time of tension. Diplomacy at the highest level
must be given a fair chance to diffuse imminent crisis. Official
communication channels must remain open. The role of international

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[61]MasoomaZehra and Syed WasimUddin, "The Nuclear Evolution of Pakistan &
India: A Historical Overview," Pakistan Journal of International Affairs 5, no. 2
(2022).
[62] Adeela Ahmed and Arsim Tariq, "Demographic Changes in Indian Occupied
Jammu and Kashmir and the UN Resolutions," International Journal of Kashmir
Studies 3, no. 2 (2022).

community is very important to encourage the both sides to maintain relation for the stability in the region.[63]

Nuclear war causes catastrophic results, given the preponderant idea of MAD, but efforts should be directed and energies spent to make certain measures to avoid that disastrous option.[64] Nuclear risk reduction and strategic restraint regime, a sine-quo-non for the survival of both states, can play a viable role for stability in the region. India and Pakistan should doggedly resolve core disputes through efficient diplomats and politicians (parliament), civil society (Track II and III diplomacy) and various media organizations.[65] The exigency is to realize the necessity of peace in the region wallowing in steep poverty and marked by internecine strife and conflicts of different varieties.[66] The scourge of terrorism with transnational links has created new exigency for both states to earnestly work for peace and stability.[67] The peace process should be organically linked with interdependence; otherwise Mumbai carnages of different varieties,

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[63]Piotr Balcerowicz and Agnieszka Kuszewska, Kashmir in India and Pakistan Policies (Routledge, 2022).

[64] Adeela Azam, "Indian Foreign Policy towards Pakistan during Modi Era: Assessing the Role of Ideology–Hindu Nationalism," BTTN Journal 1, no. 1 (2022): 17–35.

[65]Garima Das, India-Pakistan Rivalry in May 2025, Conflict, Proxy Warfare, and Geo-Political Alignments (May 10, 2025).

[66]Chunhao Lou, "Geopolitical 'Entanglements' and the China-India-Pakistan Nuclear Trilemma," Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament 5, no. 2 (2022): 281–95.

[67]Izzat Raazia and Saqib Ur Rehman, "Kashmir Conflict and the Question of Self-Determination," Journal of Development and Social Sciences 2, no. 4 (2021): 111–19.

in future, will hijack what the little would have achieved. The efficacy of risk reduction measures and containment of WMD should be acknowledged.[68] It will be applicable through co-operation in certain areas between nuclear adversaries.

The official reports of established think tanks SIPRI, UNIDIR, and Military balance revealed that how both nuclear powered states are consistently evolving their doctrines, force posture in the current age.[69]The constant modernization along with adventurous operationalization like in the 2019 Pulwama-Balakot episode and the BrahMos missile launch by India in 2023 revealed that in past it is noticed that a factor of restraint exists.[70]But it is not a guarantee that without mechanisms will it work in future or not. It is high time to think responsibly and open forum that work and facilitate dialogue. It is the only way forward towards regional nuclear stability.

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[68] Kamal Matinuddin, The Nuclearization of South Asia (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[69] Antoine Levesques, "India's Fraying Restraint," Survival 66, no. 2 (2024): 63–71.

[70]Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, "The Many Unanswered Questions About India's Missile Accident," The Diplomat, March 18, 2022, https://thediploma t.com/2022/03/the- many-unanswered-questions-about-indias-missile-accident/ see also Azhar Shahbaz Khan and Ahmad Hassan Awan, "Deterrence; Theory and Practice in Changing South Asian Strategic Stability," Journal of Security & Strategic Analyses 7, no. 2 (2021): 91–112.

Conclusion

India and Pakistan, the two nuclear weapon state who are engraved with deep enmity and the short term solution seems impossible due to India startgeic thought that we analyze how they are constantly increasing their capabilities with full pace. Ideally it is crucial for the humanitarian concern of the whole region; it is imperative for states behave responsibly and work to focus on how to manage nuclear risks. The possible paths keeping in the context of India and Pakistan nuclear relation the lack of effective ways hotlines on crucial issues like Kashmir, misperceptions erupted due to extensive use of new tech in the absence of legal frameworks on new nuclear technology is prospective hazards.

The timely initiative with the urgency to institutionalize such mechanisms is stratgeic lifeline before any low-cost vested interest comes into play to disrupt the fragile deterrence stability and uncertain attempts made by both sides. As India wants to project itself a global power, it should realize that in modern time's power and influence spring out of economic strength. In essence, there is need for stratgeic dialogue, transparency at different level of innovation in military actions, and setting clear ethical and normative standards in the modern warafre, such crucial steps can navigate the paths foe accidental nuclear risks and can bridge trust processing trend between India and Pakistan.

Indo-Pak Policies Appraisal vis-à-vis contemporary Kashmir Conflict Dynamics

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Abstract

The Kashmir conflict remains a central issue in Indo-Pakistani relations, reflecting deep ideological divides and posing significant challenges to regional stability. This paper examines the contrasting policies of India and Pakistan regarding Kashmir, focusing on their implications for regional security and the rights of the Kashmiri population. India's 2019 revocation of Article 370 marked a shift toward territorial consolidation and demographic changes, accompanied by heavy security measures that have sparked domestic and international criticism. In contrast, Pakistan's strategy has centered on internationalizing the issue, emphasizing human rights violations and seeking global support. The paper explores the structural barriers to conflict resolution, such as mutual distrust and the marginalization of Kashmiri voices, and the role of external actors like China and the United States. It advocates for inclusive conflict resolution strategies, such as confidence-building measures,

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local stakeholder involvement, and strengthened governance, to
transform Kashmir from a source of conflict to a platform for regional
cooperation and peace.

Keywords: *Kashmir conflict, Indo-Pakistani relations, Article 370,*
territorial dispute, regional stability, conflict resolution, South Asia.

Introduction

In India and Pakistan, Kashmir represents more than just a contested
territory; it has become a core part of both nations' identities. For
Pakistan, the presence of a Muslim-majority region under Indian
control challenges the ideological foundation of Pakistan as a
homeland for Muslims. For India, retaining Kashmir is vital to
affirming the secular, pluralistic identity of the Indian state. Both
countries, however, have used Kashmir to deflect from domestic
challenges, with Pakistan rallying support for the "Kashmiri cause" to
consolidate political power and unify a fragmented populace, while
India manipulates the conflict as an existential struggle against
extremism and separatism.[1] In retrospect, The Kashmir issue is
compounded by historical grievances, ethnic and religious tensions,
and regional political dynamics. As Kashmir's dispute dates to the
1947 British departure, where inadequate partition mechanisms left

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[1] "Kashmir Documents," *Pakistan Horizon* 43, no. 2 (1990): 105–59.

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princely states like Kashmir vulnerable to conflict.[2] The British failed to provide clear guidelines, leaving Kashmir's Muslim-majority population under Hindu rule without a definitive path forward. For Pakistan, the presence of Kashmir under Indian rule has been a persistent reminder of unfulfilled promises to protect Muslim-majority regions from Hindu dominance. For India, Kashmir embodies its secular ideology, which is often challenged by separatist movements. In both countries, Kashmir plays a strategic role in uniting various constituencies.

Since its inception, the Kashmir conflict has been characterized by a combination of historical grievances, territorial disputes, and competing nationalistic narratives. The inadequacies of the partition process, particularly the ambiguous status of princely states like Jammu and Kashmir, set the stage for decades of conflict. Over time, the region has witnessed multiple wars, insurgencies, and cycles of violence, transforming it into a flashpoint with profound implications for South Asian stability.

Recent developments have further complicated the conflict's dynamics. In August 2019, India made a significant constitutional shift by revoking Article 370, which had granted Jammu and Kashmir

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[2] Ghulam Nabi Fai, "Resolution of the Kashmir Dispute: A Way Forward," *Strategic Studies* 32/33 (2012): 1–14.

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a special autonomous status[3]. This move, framed as a step toward national integration and economic development, was accompanied by stringent security measures, a communications blackout, and demographic policy changes. These actions were met with criticism from international observers and resistance from the local population. Simultaneously, Pakistan intensified its diplomatic efforts to internationalize the issue, presenting India's actions as violations of international law and human rights. However, Pakistan's internal challenges and limited success in mobilizing global support have exposed the constraints of its approach.

Beyond India and Pakistan, the conflict has broader regional and global dimensions. The involvement of external powers, such as China, and the threat of escalation in a nuclearized South Asia amplify the stakes. Meanwhile, the voices and aspirations of the Kashmiri people remain largely marginalized, overshadowed by the competing agendas of the two states.

This study critically appraises the policies pursued by India and Pakistan vis-à-vis the Kashmir conflict, exploring their historical context, strategic motivations, and impact on the region. It unfolds the structural and conceptual challenges that have perpetuated the

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[3] Happymon Jacob, "Toward a Kashmir Endgame?: How India and Pakistan Could Negotiate a Lasting Solution" (US Institute of Peace, 2020), https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep25406.

impasse, while highlighting the implications for regional security and the global order. By examining historical legacies, nationalistic ambitions, and geopolitical complexities, this paper seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the conflict and explore potential pathways for resolution.

India's policy on Kashmir:

India's policy on Kashmir, especially following the significant constitutional shift in August 2019, has been marked by a series of strategic moves intended to solidify the region's integration into the Indian union and manage security risks.

Constitutional Reorganization and Policy Objectives:

The Indian government's August 2019 decision to revoke Article 370, which had granted Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) a degree of autonomy since 1949, represented a pivotal shift in its policy. Article 370 allowed J&K its own constitution and autonomy over matters excluding defense, foreign affairs, finance, and communications. Its removal was justified by the government as necessary for ending separatism and integrating the region with the rest of India. In addition, the bifurcation of J&K into two union territories—Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh—signaled the central government's intent to exercise direct control over the region.

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The revocation has political, economic, and social dimensions. Politically, the government argued that a unified legal and administrative framework would eliminate the sense of separateness among Kashmiris and contribute to national unity. Economically, the government contended that full integration would facilitate investments and development, leading to job creation and infrastructure development. Socially, the move was framed as a step toward equality, granting the same rights and laws to the citizens of J&K as enjoyed by those in other states.

Administrative and Security Measures:

The reorganization into union territories placed the region under tighter federal control, specifically under the Home Ministry, signaling an unprecedented level of administrative oversight. This reorganization allowed the central government to enact laws previously out of reach due to J&K's autonomy. It facilitated the imposition of new residency laws, now allowing non-residents to settle, work, and own property in the regional significant shift with potential demographic implications.

The government accompanied this transition with stringent security measures. In response to concerns about civil unrest and militancy, a large security deployment was established, with additional troops dispatched to maintain order. Key political figures were detained

under the Public Safety Act (PSA), a preventive detention law, and the government enforced a communication blackout to control information flow and curb mobilization efforts against the reorganization. These steps, while effective in short-term pacification, raised international concerns over human rights.

Communications Blackout and Control Over Information:

The communication restrictions, initially complete and only gradually lifted over subsequent months, were intended to prevent coordination among separatist groups and inhibit the spread of misinformation. The internet restrictions affected daily life, education, healthcare, and business, especially amid the pandemic when digital communication was essential. Although some services were restored, full internet access remained restricted well into 2021.[4]

The blackout also served as a form of information control, limiting both internal dissent and the visibility of the region's situation to the broader world. India defended these actions as essential to maintain order, though critics argued it contravened democratic norms of free speech and access to information. These measures have underscored the government's stance on prioritizing security over liberal democratic freedoms in managing Kashmir.

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[4] Radha Kumar, "Is Kashmir's Autonomy History?," *Social Scientist* 48, no. 7/8 (566-567) (2020): 29–40.

Rejection of International Mediation and Sovereignty Assertion:

A notable aspect of India's policy has been its firm stance on Kashmir as a domestic issue, rejecting any form of international mediation. This reflects a broader policy to assert sovereignty and deter external influence, particularly from Pakistan, which has continually advocated for international intervention. India's approach to de-internationalize the Kashmir issue became more pronounced as it reclassified parts of Pakistan-administered areas, such as Gilgit-Baltistan and Muzaffarabad, within its own meteorological subdivisions, reinforcing its territorial claims. [5]

This positioning aligns with India's refusal to engage in dialogue on the status of Kashmir except to discuss Pakistan-administered Kashmir, thus signaling that any negotiations would be strictly limited in scope. India's position serves a dual purpose: affirming its territorial integrity and discouraging Pakistan's involvement, which has been framed as illegitimate interference in domestic matters.

Demographic and Cultural Integration:

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[5] Bharat Bhushan, "Overhauling Kashmir Politics: Incubation of Artificial Political Processes Destined to Fail," *Social Scientist* 48, no. 7/8 (566-567) (2020): 49–58.

One of the more controversial aspects of India's policy has been the introduction of new domicile laws. These laws allow individuals from outside the region to claim residency in J&K if they meet specific criteria, such as working or studying there for a defined period. This policy has been viewed as a demographic strategy, with potential implications for the region's cultural and religious composition. Critics have argued that these changes could alter the Muslim-majority character of the Kashmir Valley, leading to tensions over identity and political representation.

In conjunction with the domicile laws, there have been initiatives to resettle the Kashmiri Pandits, a Hindu minority community that fled the valley in the 1990s due to insurgency. This policy, though framed as an attempt to restore cultural diversity, has raised concerns among Kashmiris about forced demographic shifts. By promoting resettlement and investment from non-Kashmiris, the Indian government aims to integrate Kashmir more closely with the national cultural fabric, yet this approach has exacerbated fears of eroding the region's unique.

Development Initiatives and Economic Policies:

India has also emphasized economic development as a cornerstone of its policy in Kashmir, claiming that improved infrastructure, job creation, and investment would reduce alienation and generate a more

prosperous and peaceful environment. The government initiated various projects in sectors such as infrastructure, healthcare, and education, attempting to present these as benefits of the new administrative arrangement. While these measures are intended to stimulate the economy, the underlying political tension and the heavy security presence have limited their effectiveness.

Furthermore, local businesses, particularly those reliant on tourism, have suffered due to the extended security and communication restrictions. Thus, while development policies were central to the government's narrative, the lack of consultation with local stakeholders and the parallel security policies have resulted in mixed outcomes, with economic gains yet to be widely felt among Kashmiris.

Political Reconfiguration and Local Governance:

A significant aspect of India's policy is reshaping the political landscape of Kashmir. With the abrogation of Article 370, traditional political alliances in the region faced challenges as mainstream politicians were initially detained, sidelined, or pressured to align with the central government's stance. The formation of new political alliances aligned with the central government's policies aimed to create a cooperative local governance structure, reducing reliance on separatist-leaning parties.

However, the political reconfiguration also faced resistance. Traditional political parties, including the National Conference and the People's Democratic Party, have resisted these changes, viewing them as an attempt to dilute Kashmir's political voice. The central government's strategy, therefore, hinges on cultivating a new set of political stakeholders who would promote pro-India sentiments within the valley, albeit with limited success in generating genuine local support.

Revamped Media Policy:

In June 2020, the Government of India introduced a new media policy in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, granting the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) extensive powers over media operations. Under this policy, the DIPR is authorized to monitor media outlets and journalists for activities categorized as "misinformation, fake news, plagiarism, and anti-national activities." Additionally, the department holds the authority to determine media accreditation, often referred to as "empanelment," and to regulate the allocation of government advertising, a critical revenue stream for many local newspapers. Given the financial dependency of local newspapers on government advertising, this policy has sparked concerns about the potential suppression of press freedom, as media outlets may feel pressured to self-censor in order to maintain favorable relations with the authorities and secure

essential funding. This development has intensified debates surrounding media autonomy and freedom of expression in the region.

Pakistan's Policies on Kashmir

Pakistan's approach to Kashmir contrasts sharply with India's, centering on internationalizing the issue, drawing attention to human rights concerns, and garnering support from allied nations. Pakistan's policy framework comprises diplomatic initiatives and leveraging Islamic solidarity to press India on its Kashmir policies.

Disengagement of Bilateral Ties:

Following India's revocation of Article 370 in August 2019, which ended Jammu and Kashmir's special constitutional status, Pakistan adopted a comprehensive policy of disengagement from India, marking a significant shift in bilateral relations. This policy involved downgrading diplomatic ties, including the expulsion of the Indian High Commissioner and the cessation of cross-border dialogues. Pakistan also suspended all bilateral trade, halted transport links such as the Samjhauta Express and bus services, and curtailed cultural exchanges, reflecting a broader strategy to isolate India diplomatically.

Internationalization and Diplomatic Campaigns:

In response to India's revocation of Article 370, Pakistan launched a diplomatic campaign to highlight what it considers India's violation of Kashmiri rights and international law. Pakistan's strategy, often termed "Kashmir-shaming," involves presenting India's actions as a unilateral move that disregards Kashmiris' aspirations and rights. This campaign aims to draw attention to alleged human rights abuses, particularly in forums like the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and bilateral meetings with allied countries. Prime Minister Imran Khan has been particularly vocal about Kashmir at the UN General Assembly, where he called for international intervention, portraying India's actions as oppressive and illegal. Pakistan also engaged China to support its stance at the UN Security Council, although it encountered limited success due to the opposition of other permanent members.

Advocacy for Human Rights and Mobilization of the Muslim World

Pakistan has emphasized human rights violations in Kashmir to gather support from the Muslim-majority nations, appealing to Islamic solidarity. Through the "Muslim 5 Summit," which included Malaysia, Iran, Qatar, and Turkey, Pakistan sought to mobilize a bloc

sympathetic to the Kashmiri cause. While some countries expressed support, traditional allies, especially from the Gulf region, maintained a neutral stance, reflecting the limited success of Pakistan's efforts to gain a broad coalition.

Pakistan has also used international media to bring attention to issues such as the communication blackout, arbitrary detentions, and restrictions on civil liberties in Kashmir. These efforts aim to build international pressure on India and push for a mediated solution, despite India's firm stance against external involvement.

Revisionist Policy and Questioning of the Simla Agreement

Pakistan's strategy also involves revisiting the Simla Agreement of 1972[6], which forms the basis for bilateral management of the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir. The agreement stipulated that both countries would resolve their differences through peaceful means and prevent unilateral changes to the status quo. However, some retired Pakistani officials have argued that India's revocation of Article 370 nullifies the spirit of the agreement, providing Pakistan with grounds to reject it and seek new terms of engagement.

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[6] Sameer P. Lalwani and Gillian Gayner, "India's Kashmir Conundrum: Before and After the Abrogation of Article 370" (US Institute of Peace, 2020), https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep25405.

Although the Pakistani government has not formally repudiated the Simla Agreement, this revisionist rhetoric signals a willingness to question established frameworks and potentially redefine Pakistan's stance on Kashmir.

Leveraging China as a Strategic Ally

Pakistan's growing alignment with China has strengthened its position against India's Kashmir policy. China, which also has territorial disputes with India, particularly in the Ladakh region, has supported Pakistan's stance in international forums. This alliance has created a new dimension in the Kashmir dispute, complicating the possibility of bilateral resolution between India and Pakistan.

In 2020, when India and China experienced a standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), Pakistan reportedly perceived this as a strategic opportunity to escalate its pressure on India regarding Kashmir. China's support has emboldened Pakistan to oppose India's unilateral moves, adding a layer of complexity to the regional security dynamic and heightening tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbors.[7]

Policies Appraisal

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[7] US Institute of Peace, "China-India Relations," China's Influence on Conflict Dynamics in South Asia (US Institute of Peace, 2020), https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep27534.8.

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The Kashmir conflict remains one of the most enduring and contentious issues between India and Pakistan, rooted in the flawed partition of British India in 1947. Both nations have adopted policies that reflect their ideological convictions, strategic priorities, and domestic compulsions. However, these policies have also perpetuated cycles of alienation, violence, and diplomatic stalemates, with the Kashmiri people caught in the crossfire. A critical evaluation of these policies highlights their contradictions, limitations, and implications for peace in South Asia.

India's Policies in Kashmir: Integration or Coercion?

India's policy on Kashmir underwent a dramatic shift in August 2019, when the government revoked Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which granted Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) special autonomy. This decision, accompanied by the bifurcation of the state into two Union Territories—Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh—was justified by the Indian government as a necessary measure to integrate the region with the rest of India, curb separatism, and promote economic development. Proponents of this policy argue that the removal of special status eliminates barriers to investment, improves governance, and fosters equality by applying uniform laws across the country.

However, the manner in which this policy was implemented has drawn significant criticism. The use of a communication blackout,

mass detentions of political leaders, and an overwhelming military presence underscored the coercive nature of the government's approach. While these measures temporarily suppressed large-scale protests, they also deepened alienation among the local population, particularly the youth, who view the abrogation as an assault on their identity and autonomy.

Moreover, the introduction of domicile laws, allowing non-residents to settle in J&K, has fueled fears of demographic engineering among the Muslim-majority population of the Kashmir Valley. Critics argue that these laws, coupled with efforts to resettle displaced Kashmiri Pandits, signal an attempt to alter the region's demographic and cultural composition, exacerbating tensions and undermining trust. Although India portrays these measures as steps toward national unity, the lack of meaningful engagement with local stakeholders suggests a disregard for the aspirations and grievances of Kashmiris.

India's policies have also been marked by a rejection of international mediation and a firm assertion of sovereignty. By framing Kashmir as an internal issue, India has sought to de-internationalize the conflict and deter external involvement, particularly from Pakistan. While this approach aligns with India's broader emphasis on territorial integrity, it also limits opportunities for dialogue and reconciliation. Furthermore, India's emphasis on security and counterterrorism,

while addressing legitimate concerns, risks overshadowing the need for political solutions and trust-building measures.

Pakistan's policy on Kashmir revolves around its ideological commitment to the region as the "jugular vein" of the country and the cornerstone of its two-nation theory. Since 1947, Pakistan has consistently advocated for Kashmir's self-determination, citing United Nations resolutions that call for a plebiscite to determine the region's status. In response to India's abrogation of Article 370, Pakistan adopted a policy of diplomatic disengagement, downgrading ties with India, suspending trade, and halting cross-border exchanges. These measures were intended to isolate India internationally and signal Pakistan's strong opposition to the constitutional changes.

Pakistan also intensified its diplomatic campaigns, portraying India's actions as violations of international law and human rights. At forums like the United Nations and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Pakistan has sought to draw attention to alleged abuses in Kashmir, including mass detentions, restrictions on civil liberties, and the use of excessive force by Indian security forces. These efforts aim to rally global support for the Kashmiri cause and pressure India into reversing its policies.

However, the effectiveness of Pakistan's internationalization strategy has been limited. While some countries have expressed concern over

human rights violations, major powers, including the United States
and European Union, have largely refrained from intervening,
treating Kashmir as a bilateral issue. Furthermore, Pakistan's reliance
on Islamic solidarity has faced challenges, as Gulf nations—
traditionally considered allies—have prioritized their economic and
strategic ties with India over ideological alignment with Pakistan.
This diplomatic isolation underscores the diminishing impact of
Pakistan's rhetoric, which often prioritizes symbolism over practical
solutions.

A Shared Failure: The Marginalization of Kashmiri Voices

Despite their divergent approaches, India and Pakistan share a
common failure: the marginalization of the Kashmiri people in the
discourse and decision-making processes surrounding the conflict.
Both nations have instrumentalized Kashmir to serve their domestic
and strategic agendas, often at the expense of addressing the
aspirations and grievances of the region's population. In India, the
government's emphasis on development and integration has been
undermined by its authoritarian methods and lack of consultation with
Kashmiri stakeholders. The sidelining of local political leaders,
coupled with the absence of meaningful dialogue, has reinforced the
perception that New Delhi views Kashmir primarily through a
security lens. While economic initiatives, such as infrastructure
projects and investment incentives, are central to India's narrative,

their impact has been limited by the ongoing unrest and mistrust in the region.

Similarly, Pakistan's advocacy for Kashmiri self-determination has been compromised by its failure to address governance issues in Pakistan-administered Kashmir. Allegations of political manipulation, economic neglect, and suppression of dissent in the region weaken Islamabad's moral authority to champion Kashmiri rights. Moreover, Pakistan's focus on international advocacy and symbolic gestures often overlooks the practical needs and aspirations of the Kashmiri population, reducing the conflict to a tool for ideological and strategic gain.

A significant conceptual challenge lies in the zero-sum mindset that dominates Indian and Pakistani policymaking. Both nations believe that time is on their side, which prevents meaningful engagement or compromise. India's approach, particularly after the revocation of Article 370 in 2019, focuses on integrating Jammu and Kashmir through administrative and demographic changes. The government justifies these measures as necessary for national unity and development, envisioning that integration over time will lead to normalization. Conversely, Pakistan relies on sustained agitation, both diplomatically and through proxy militancy, to weaken India's position and maintain international attention on Kashmir. This zero-sum thinking leads to short-term policy maneuvers rather than

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genuine conflict resolution. Breaking this impasse requires both nations to adopt a longer-term, cooperative perspective, recognizing the shared benefits of peace.

Distrust and misinformation further complicate resolution efforts. Decades of mutual suspicion, fueled by political rhetoric and intelligence-driven narratives, have created an environment where even confidence-building measures (CBMs) are viewed with skepticism. Allegations of cross-border militancy, misinformation campaigns, and interference in domestic affairs dominate the discourse. This cycle of distrust undermines dialogue and prevents meaningful progress. Building transparency and establishing verification mechanisms for CBMs, such as troop reductions or trade facilitation, are essential to fostering trust.

Institutional weaknesses in both India and Pakistan also impede progress. India's governance in Jammu and Kashmir has often relied on heavy-handed security measures and a top-down approach, marginalizing local voices and deepening alienation. Policies such as prolonged communication blackouts, mass detentions, and restrictions on political activity have fueled resentment among Kashmiris, particularly in the Muslim-majority Valley. While India emphasizes development and integration, the absence of meaningful engagement with local stakeholders undermines these efforts. On the other hand, Pakistan faces governance challenges in its administered

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territories, such as Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Allegations of political manipulation and economic neglect weaken Pakistan's moral authority to champion the Kashmiri cause. Strengthening governance structures on both sides is critical to addressing local grievances and fostering trust.

The diversity of stakeholders further complicates the conflict. Beyond India and Pakistan, the Kashmiri population has varied and often conflicting aspirations. The Muslim-majority Kashmir Valley predominantly seeks autonomy or independence, while Hindu-majority Jammu and Buddhist-majority Ladakh have distinct preferences. These internal divisions are frequently overlooked in bilateral negotiations, reducing the prospects of crafting a resolution that reflects the region's diversity. External powers also play a role in shaping the conflict. The United States has historically viewed Kashmir as a nuclear flashpoint, promoting CBMs to prevent escalation. China's involvement, through its territorial disputes with India and strategic alliance with Pakistan, adds another layer of complexity. Managing these competing interests requires an inclusive approach that prioritizes Kashmiri voices while balancing regional and global considerations.

A fundamental conceptual challenge lies in the lack of consensus on what constitutes a "solution" to the Kashmir conflict. Pakistan advocates for a plebiscite under United Nations resolutions, allowing

Kashmiris to decide between India and Pakistan. India, however, rejects this approach, viewing it as outdated and impractical given the demographic and political changes since 1947. Instead, India emphasizes full integration and sovereignty over Jammu and Kashmir. Meanwhile, the aspirations of the Kashmiri people range from demands for greater autonomy within India to calls for complete independence. Reconciling these divergent goals requires a pragmatic approach, focusing on incremental progress rather than an all-encompassing settlement.

Addressing these structural and conceptual challenges demands innovative strategies. Confidence-building measures, such as easing trade restrictions, fostering cross-border cultural exchanges, and reducing military deployments along the Line of Control, can help de-escalate tensions and build trust. Involving Kashmiri voices in the dialogue process is essential to ensure that any resolution reflects their aspirations. A parallel processing approach, addressing local grievances, bilateral disputes, and international concerns simultaneously, could create a comprehensive framework for resolution. Strengthening governance in Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-administered territories would also enhance the credibility of both nations in addressing the conflict.

External facilitation, while sensitive, can play a constructive role in fostering dialogue. Neutral actors, such as the United Nations or third-

party mediators, can help bridge gaps and ensure transparency in implementing CBMs. However, external involvement must respect the sovereignty of both nations and prioritize local needs. Ultimately, the success of any resolution effort hinges on India and Pakistan's willingness to move beyond entrenched narratives and adopt a cooperative approach.

Conclusion:

The Kashmir conflict remains one of the most intricate and enduring challenges in South Asia, shaped by historical grievances, ideological differences, and regional power dynamics. Both India and Pakistan have pursued policies that reflect their strategic priorities and national identities, yet these approaches have often entrenched the conflict rather than addressing its root causes. The structural and conceptual challenges of the Kashmir conflict highlight the deep-seated barriers to resolution. From its multi-layered nature to zero-sum thinking, distrust, and conflicting stakeholder interests, these challenges underscore the complexity of the issue.

India's focus on integration through administrative and demographic changes has sought to assert sovereignty but has also alienated local populations by sidelining their political aspirations. Meanwhile, Pakistan's strategy of internationalizing the issue and supporting separatist movements has garnered limited success, as global allies

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increasingly prioritize pragmatic relations with India. Both nations have failed to adequately address the diverse aspirations of the Kashmiri people, whose voices remain central to any meaningful resolution.

Despite these challenges, opportunities for peace and cooperation exist. Confidence-building measures, such as trade facilitation, cultural exchanges, and military de-escalation, can lay the groundwork for trust. Strengthening governance structures in both India-administered Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-administered territories can address local grievances and enhance the credibility of both nations. Additionally, involving Kashmiri stakeholders in the dialogue process ensures that their aspirations are reflected in any proposed solutions.

Moving beyond zero-sum mindsets and entrenched narratives is essential for both India and Pakistan. A parallel processing approach that simultaneously tackles local grievances, bilateral disputes, and broader regional dynamics offers a pragmatic path forward. External facilitation, while sensitive, can provide neutral oversight and support in implementing confidence-building measures, provided it respects the sovereignty of both nations.

Ultimately, the resolution of the Kashmir conflict is not just about territorial or ideological claims; it is about fostering peace and

stability for the millions of people of Jammu and Kashmir and the broader South Asian region. By prioritizing dialogue, inclusivity, and incremental progress, India and Pakistan can transform Kashmir from a symbol of conflict into a bridge for regional cooperation. The road to peace may be arduous, but its reward stability, prosperity, and lasting harmony—are worth the effort for both nations and the global community.

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Impact of Power Unification and Simultaneous Interpretation by Superior Judiciary: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract

The dearth of specialized constitutional court(s) in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan places an unnecessary strain on the superior judiciary in both the regions. The interpretation of statutes and constitutional interpretation constitute two distinct processes with various considerations and approaches. However, the judges of

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superior courts of Pakistan and AJ&K have to interpret both statutes and the constitution which makes their work more difficult and reduces the effectiveness of the courts. Besides, conflicts of interest arise from judges' dual responsibilities in supreme judicial councils, thereby rendering it challenging to impartially implement judicial conduct standards. Moreover, the natural justice notion has been compromised by the manner in which contempt of court proceedings are handled because the judges of the superior courts serve as both prosecutors and complainants, in matters related to the contempt. The constitutions of both regions provide the superior judiciaries with considerable amounts of authority which imposes more responsibility and more pressure on judges. Thereby, this research is dynamic considering a descriptive and analytical approach to examine the powers of superior courts in both areas. This work also suggests the establishment of separate constitutional court(s) to deal only with constitutional and ancillary matters to it, while offering an overall framework for improving fairness and effectiveness in the higher judiciary of Pakistan and AJ&K.

Key words: Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Constitutional Courts, Contempt of Court, Constitutional Interpretation, Judicial Code of Conduct, Statutory Interpretation.

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Introduction

Interpretation of a statute is done on the basis of jurisprudence of the prevailing legal system in a country whereas interpretation of constitution is made on the basis of altogether different jurisprudence i.e. constitutional conventions or the basis on which a state is created or popular will of the citizens of the states through which they wished to be governed. Authority of a court is to adjudge simultaneously constitutionality of a particular enactment especially the interpretation of fundamental rights and freedom given in the constitution along with interpretation of that particular enactment causes multiple complications.

A noteworthy example of such complication is the common observation that superior courts frequently overrule their own precedents due to exigencies of relief to be given in a particular case. This practice not only causes embarrassment for legal fraternity but also is negation of doctrine of *Stare Decisis*. In some cases, it has been noted that a precedent is overruled even more than once creating confusion and uncertainty in the whole legal system.

Additionally, political disputes weigh heavily on superior courts, which make it harder for them to provide prompt justice. Due to the Supreme Court's backlog of protracted political and constitutional issues, the current system of justice is beset by substantial delays, with average citizens having to wait decades for their cases to be decided.

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This load could be lessened through setting up a distinct Federal or Constitutional Court(s) for political and constitutional issues, enabling the Supreme Court to concentrate on routine cases and provide prompt justice. In addition to addressing the discontent of public with the current system, this approach seeks to increase court efficiency. Leading figures such as Justice Qazi Faez Isa have expressed dissatisfaction regarding the current setup, emphasizing the pressing necessity for modifications to guarantee a more efficient and specialized justice system. Hence, in order to increase the overall efficacy and efficiency of the judicial system, separate Constitutional Court(s) could serve as a workable approach.[1]

Moreover, the Supreme Judicial Council which regulates judge's code of conduct is unable to enforce the code in its true spirit because members of Supreme Judicial Council are overburdened with heavy workload and lack of sufficient human resource. Thus, it is appropriate that there should be an impartial body to function as Supreme Judicial Council which could not only make judges of superior judiciary accountable for their conduct and to enforce their code of conduct in its true spirit while meeting the ends of natural justice i.e., "No one can be a judge in his own cause" but also lessen the intense workload from their shoulders.

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[1] Mahmood, Asif. "Justice System and the 'F Grade'." *Daily 92,* July 6, 2024.

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For the purposes, the research at hand not only examines comparatively and critically the dual functions of superior courts to interpret constitution and enactment through a single judgment and impact of such practice in dispensation of justice in light of case law of Pakistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJ&K) but also the existing structure of superior Courts of Pakistan and AJ&K. Being citizens of the state of AJ&K and students of law, we have come across many cases in which a common man suffers a lot not only because of bulk of cases pending before higher judiciary but also for colossal case law requiring expertise of different jurisprudence are subjudice before one court. This hardship increases as higher judiciary constitute larger or full benches to entertain these cases and ultimately lingering the cases of common man from days to months to years. Besides that, the judges are not fully equipped with research methodology and modern techniques of research prevailing in this contemporary time which is pivotal for finding solution for ticklish constitutional issues. Resultantly, this situation not only culminates into monetary loss to the poor litigant who come from far-flung areas of the state but also causes them acute mental stress and tension.

Objectives and Limitation of the Research

The main objectives of this research are;

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- to examine and contrast the jurisdictions and powers of superior judiciary in Pakistan and AJ&K,

- to evaluate the effects of dual role of superior courts in interpreting both, the statutes and the constitution, by means of a single verdict,

- to examine how the principle of natural justice could be upheld while handling situations involving contempt of court,

- to put forward suggestions for enhancements concerning the accountability regime involving superior court judges.

Besides this, the scope of this study is limited to investigate the aforementioned objectives surrounding the superior judiciary of Pakistan and AJ&K, excluding other jurisdictions. The goal of this research for the constitutional court in this context is to achieve normative supremacy as the highest court in the state; in other words, the constitutional court aims to establish a degree of control over a traditionally depoliticized and deferential judicial system.

Literature Review

There exist some works on the subject under discussion in shape of different books, articles, journals etc. but in scattered form. For this, we have gone through the books "Constitutional Development in

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Azad Jammu and Kashmir",[2] "The Constitution of Azad Jammu and
Kashmir"[3] by Syed Manzoor ul Hassan Gillani, "The Constitution of
the Islamic Republic of Pakistan" by M. Mahmood,[4] and "The
Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan", by Muhammad
Abdul Basit,[5] but none has provided any provision favoring the
creation of separate constitutional court.

Moreover, while going through from different articles like the one
titled "Building Reputation in Constitutional Courts: Political and
Judicial Audiences" by Tom Ginsburgand[6], the author has examined
internal consensus and fragmentation of the constitutional court as a
function of the need to communicate to two different external
audiences: political and judicial. According to him, the political
audience consists of other branches of government and the political
establishment more generally. Constitutional courts are inevitably
political actors. In traditional civil law countries, the constitutional
court has been inserted as a "special court" into a legal system within

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[2] Syed Manzoor Hussain Gillani, *The Constitutional Development in Azad Jammu and Kashmir,* (Muzaffarabad: Government Printing Press, 1988), last accessed on May 04, 2024.

[3] Syed Manzoor Hussain Gillani, *The Constitution of Azad Jammu and Kashmir,* (Islamabad: National Book Foundation, 2008), last accessed on May 04, 2024.

[4] M. Mahmood, *The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973*, (Lahore: Al-Qanoon Publishers, 2004).

[5] Muhammad Abdul Basit, *The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan*, (Rawalpindi: Federal Law House, 2013), last accessed on May 04, 2024.

[6] Tom Ginsburg, "Building Reputation in Constitutional Courts: Political and Judicial Audiences" (USA: University of Chicago Law School, last accessed on May 04, 2024).

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existing hierarchy of courts. Furthermore, there may be institutional rivalries between the top courts of ordinary jurisdiction-accustomed to their superior place in the judicial hierarchy-and the new constitutional court. This can lead to legal incoherence and gridlock. Conflicts between the highest court of ordinary jurisdiction (Supreme Court) and the constitutional court have taken place in many countries and usually arise when the Supreme Court rejects the authority of the constitutional court in a particular case. These conflicts are typically exacerbated once concrete constitutional review is fully developed because the interaction between judicial courts and the constitutional court becomes more intense, and coordination between the two systems is essential.

On this we have another article, titled, "Constitutional courts versus Supreme Courts" by Lech Garlicki[7]. According to him, Constitutional courts exist in most of the civil law countries of Western Europe, and in almost all the new democracies in Eastern Europe; even France has developed its *Conseil Constitutional* into a genuine constitutional jurisdiction. While their emergence may be regarded as one of the most successful improvements on traditional European concepts of democracy and the rule of law, it has inevitably given rise to questions about the distribution of power at the supreme judicial level. As constitutional law has come to permeate the entire structure of the

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[7] Lech Garlicki, "Constitutional courts versus Supreme Courts."

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legal system, it has become impossible to maintain a firm delimitation between the functions of the constitutional court and those of ordinary courts.

However, there is no exclusive material in the form of a book, monograph, article and essay available with this perception on the subject. Therefore, there is an immense need of undertaking research on the subject with comparative approach. So, this research tries to fill this gap; it explores the actual and potential intersections of Interim Constitution of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Constitution of Pakistan, existing judicial system and the need and prospects for the creation of separate constitutional court within this region.

Research Methodology

The methodology sought to be adopted to make this work possible is, descriptive and analytical. This research will rely on data collected from primary sources like legal instruments enacted for judicial structures by legislative bodies of Pakistan and AJ&K for/within their jurisdictions. For this research, material from secondary sources like books, articles and internet too would be accessed and discussed. The comparative research method would be adopted for research and relevant material will be analyzed according to contemporary needs and modern principles. The original and classical literature will be surveyed for the purpose of analyzing the structure on the subject and a balanced mechanism will be suggested so that the research

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objectives would be achieved to extinguish all hardships to common man on one hand and the confrontation with the existing structure would be avoided on the other.

Power Convergence: Simultaneous Interpretation by Superior Judiciary

Etymologically derived from "interpretaria," interpretation is the process of giving something meaning. In legal contexts, it entails interpreting laws to reveal their true intentions by analyzing their language, implications and subjects. According to Blackstone, determining the legislative intent is the most equitable approach.[8] Courts use established standards of interpretation to discern meanings where uncertainty arises, guaranteeing objectivity and transparency in application.

Since either of the regions lack a court specifically entrusted with interpreting the constitution, the superior courts of AJ&K and Pakistan have to interpret simultaneously, the statute and the constitution. In addition to deciding whether or not particular enactments are constitutional, superior courts must negotiate the difficult challenge of interpreting the scope and meaning of fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in the constitution. Courts

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[8] Priya, L M Lakshmi. "Difference Between Interpretation and Construction." Blog iPleaders.

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commonly have to navigate the complex legal hurdles and obstacles that arise from the junction of statutory interpretation and constitutional law in order to maintain the balance between legislative authority and constitutional protections.

Constitutionalism and Constitutional Conventions

Fundamentally, a constitution sets forth rules that organize and delineate the powers of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government. Although every state has a constitution, constitutionalism stresses the importance of these rules and how they significantly limit the power of the government. These limitations frequently take the form of civil rights safeguards, which include rights to freedom of expression, association, equality and due process in addition to other measures that limit the authority and power of the government. Conversely, constitutionalism, in its wider sense, holds that the governmental authority is contingent upon abiding by certain constraints placed on its powers. However, constitutionalism supports the role of judiciary in interpreting legislation to maintain governmental accountability and conformity to constitutional limits, even though it does not fundamentally support the separation of powers. The principles of constitutionalism emphasize responsibility and judicial interpretation in order to ensure that the limitations of constitution are followed. Thus demonstrating how important

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interpretation is to determining that constitutional ideas are applied in a way that makes sense.

Alternatively, unwritten customs and norms that direct constitutional governance are included in constitutional conventions. Any consistent behavior in governance is frequently referred to as "constitutional convention" in a vague sense.[9] True constitutional conventions, on the other hand, are certain social standards that govern how political parties or governmental organizations engage with one another. These conventions only make reference to constitutionally based social norms. Thus, both constitutionalism and constitutional conventions impact the interpretation and implementation of a constitution.

Interpretation of Constitution and Statutes

Constitutional interpretation and statutory interpretation are two separate procedures with different methods and factors to take into account. Several constitutional scholars contend that because of the abstract nature of the terms of the constitution as well as its elevated legal position, constitutional interpretation differs from statutory interpretation. Statutory standards are typically more concrete than constitutional norms since they deal with crucial political concerns

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[9] Jaconelli, Joseph. "The nature of constitutional convention." *Legal Studies* 19, no. 1 (1999): 24-46.

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and social institutions. Certain scholars, however, contest this difference claiming it is untrue and even detrimental. In the opinion of Andras Jakab, the main differences between statutory and constitutional interpretation techniques are the focus and how often they use. In contrast, a comparative analysis of constitutional interpretation that used the German Constitutional Court and the US Supreme Court as models of common law and civil law systems, respectively, found no appreciable distinctions between the two. When the Court makes no reference to any constitutional provision or right, it becomes difficult to make a distinction between constitutional and statutory interpretation.

Interpretation of a constitution is part of the process of determining the fundamental laws and values that govern a country or state. It requires not just delving into the political, social and historical context that shaped it but also comprehending the goals of legislators, precedent and judicial rulings. The objective is to highlight the core principles and concepts of constitutionalism, such as constitutional standards and rights. The process of interpreting a constitution typically adopts a flexible, adaptive attitude to address shifting social demands and conditions. The meaning of constitution is dynamic and adapts to changing circumstances and ideas. Constitutional interpretation is adaptable, considering it is historically relevant to read the document in line with the legislators' objectives. Constitutional interpretation draws on a range of jurisprudential

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frameworks, including familiarity with basic state concepts, constitutional conventions and the declared preferences of the populace for different forms of governance. Several theories, such as originalism and living constitutionalism which have different perspectives on how to approach the meaning and development of a constitution are included in the field of constitutional interpretation. Therefore, constitutional interpretation, constitutionalism, constitutional conventions and interpreting fundamental rights are closely related since they influence how a constitution is understood and applied.

As far statutory interpretation is concerned, every legal system depends on interpretation to apply its laws in an efficient manner. Judges and courts engage in an interpretive process that shapes the legal system as a whole. Constitutional law offers standards for policy interpretation that guarantee uniformity in the administration of justice. Finding the genuine intent of the legislator through analysis of the written wording of statutes is the main goal of interpretation. Finding the meaning of words used in a document is the definition of interpretation in the English legal system. Judges must interpret the language of the statute in accordance with their judgments or the legislative intent. However, in order to determine legislative purpose, construction clarifies ambiguities. It is the duty of jurists and judges to interpret and create legal documents in order to deal with modern problems.

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Statute formation and interpretation are essential components of all legal systems, including those in Pakistan and the AJ&K. The primary sources of interpretation for these legal domains, aside from contemporary legal sources such as statutes, precedents and societal norms are Islamic legal texts for instance, the Qur'an and Sunnah. The interpretive strategies of these judicial systems often aim to reconcile traditional and modern legal principles in order to uphold the rule of law and protect fundamental rights. The sources used for interpretation are different in Pakistan and the AJ&K from various legal systems across the world. The Qur'an and Sunnah are the main sources of interpretation in this case, serving as the cornerstones for the establishment of law. As long as they are consistent with Islamic law, modern sources can include state constitutions, statutes, precedents, case law and social conventions. Determining the legislative purpose is the major goal of statutory interpretation, regardless of the country, religion or lack thereof. The notion that interpretation is a distinctively judicial responsibility is essentially uncontested. The main responsibilities of Supreme Court in Pakistan and AJ&K are to define the parameters of passed legislation and interpret it in accordance with the intentions of the legislature. As a result, the interpretive policy of the Supreme Courts in both regions outlines the techniques and approaches it employs which are comparable to those of an impartial jurist or mujtahid. These include, among other things, the principles of autonomous ijtihad, avoiding

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taqlid, legislative history, the mischief rule, contextual and harmonic
construction, and purposeful interpretation.

Challenges in Legal Interpretation

Legal interpretation presents a number of challenges, particularly
when combined with simultaneous interpretation. The requirement
for in-depth legal research to accurately understand and interpret
complex laws and regulations is a significant barrier. Additionally,
competence in the legal field as well as language interpretation is
necessary to provide accurate presentation of legal terms and
concepts. A key component of this endeavor is the requirement that
interpreters conduct comprehensive legal research. It is necessary to
dive thoroughly into complex laws, precedents and legal concepts in
order to gain a complete understanding of the pertinent legal
framework. The knowledge that interpreters need to successfully
interpret and convey legal concepts in urgent situations is provided
by this type of basic study. Furthermore, advocacy is crucial since
translators must convey the arguments and points of view of the legal
counsel with ability and objectivity. Despite these efforts,
contradictory interpretations by different courts or interpreters may
result in inconsistent rulings. These inconsistencies undermine public
trust and jeopardize the justice system's impartiality and integrity. The
main goal of legal interpretation nevertheless remains maintaining

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judicial consistency which is necessary to preserve the impartiality
and reliability of the legal system.

Overview of the Superior Judicial System in Pakistan and AJ&K

The uppermost courts in Pakistan and AJ&K are the Supreme Courts,
which have broad jurisdiction over all lower courts within their
respective domains as well as the high courts. Below the Supreme
Court, the judiciary in Pakistan is composed of five high courts that
are positioned in the capital cities of the four provinces and one high
court located in Islamabad, the federal capital. By contrast, the AJ&K
legal system comprises upon one high court, which is located in its
capital, Muzaffarabad.

However, the superior courts in AJ&K and Pakistan have a broad
range of powers and jurisdiction, enabling them to rule over an
extensive spectrum of legal issues. However, this great influence
comes with a great deal of responsibility. The vast array of powers
bestowed upon these courts invariably results in a burdensome
workload, as great power is accompanied with tremendous
responsibility. The important duty of interpreting statutes as well as
the constitution falls under the authority of the superior courts of
Pakistan and AJ&K because there fails to be a distinct constitutional
court in either region. In this regard, superior courts are burdened with
a surplus of work because their responsibilities are diverse and require
a careful evaluation of every case.

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Annual Cases Report Statements: A Brief Summary

➢ Table, A: Supreme Court of Pakistan (2020-2022)

Category	Total
Institution of cases	40,724
Disposal of cases	34,869
Pendency as on 15.09.2020	45,515

Source: Annual Report 15th September 2020 – 14th September 2022, Supreme Court of Pakistan.[10]

➢ Table, B: Lahore High Court (2022)

Category	Total
Pendency as on 01.01.2022	187,250
Institution of cases (2022)	149,260
Disposal of cases (2022)	157,085
Balance Pendency as on 31.12.2022	157,085

Source: Annual Report 2022, Lahore High Court, Lahore.[11]

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[10] For comprehensive information, please visit:
https://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/downloads_judgements/all_downloads/annual_reports/SCP_Annual_Report_2020_2022.pdf
[11] For further details, please visit:

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➢ **Table, C:** **High Court of AJ&K (2023)**

Category	Total
Pendency as on 01.01.2023	16,468
Institution of new cases (2023)	10,110
Decided cases as on 31.12.2023	10,439
Remaining cases as on 01.01.2024	16,139

Source: Annual Report by the High Court of AJ&K at 11th Judicial Conference held on 15th January, 2024.

Assessing the Jurisdictions and Powers of the Superior Courts

Within their respective jurisdictions and powers, the Supreme Courts of Pakistan and AJ&K are of utmost importance. Amongst other provincial units, Azad Kashmir stands apart within Pakistan since it is the only administrative unit with its own Supreme Court.[12] Alternatively, the High Courts of AJ&K and Pakistan have both original writ and appellate jurisdictions under the constitutions and procedural laws respectively. Moreover, significant authority is vested in the Supreme Courts and the High Courts of both Pakistan and AJ&K. They can establish legal precedents and have jurisdiction

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https://library.lhc.gov.pk/pdf/AnnualReports/AnnualReport2022.pdf.

[12] Gilani, Justice Syed Manzoor Hussain, The Constitution of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Islamabad, National Book Foundation, 1st Edi. 2008.

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over issues pertaining to fundamental rights and contempt of court.
Furthermore, in order to guarantee efficient justice administration, the
High Courts also have superintendence over lower courts.[13]

Jurisdiction of Superior Courts

The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, under its articles 184 and 185,
grants original and appellate jurisdictions to the Supreme Court of
Pakistan respectively.[14] Situations involving basic rights and disputes
between governments fall under original jurisdiction. Nonetheless,
Article 185 establishes the procedure for appeals against decisions
made by the High Court. Moreover, as of the Advisory Jurisdiction
provided by Article 186, the Court is able to offer legal counsel on
matters that the President refers to it. On the other hand, the AJ&K
interim constitution grants the Supreme Court of AJ&K particular
authorities. In particular, the Court may accept appeals referring
exclusively to decisions, rulings, judgments, final orders or sentences
issued by the AJ&K High Court under Article 42(10).[15] According to
Article 42(12), the Supreme Court of AJ&K has the discretionary
power to grant an appeal against decisions made by the High Court in
order to reinforce its standing in the appellate process. As an
additional aspect of its judicial power, the Supreme Court of AJ&K

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[13] Ibid.
[14] The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973.
[15] The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Interim Constitution, 1974.

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is endowed with advisory jurisdiction pursuant to Article 46-A of the interim constitution. In continuity to the previous jurisdiction, advisory jurisdiction is the only original jurisdictional authority rendered to the AJ&K Supreme Court. This gives the Court the authority to offer knowledgeable legal views on matters that are presented to it, carrying out its advising function with skill and accuracy. Nonetheless, the Supreme Court of AJ&K does not have original jurisdiction, in contrast to its counterpart in Pakistan. Rather, the main focus of its jurisdiction is on appellate responsibilities.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan is endowed with broad jurisdictions, together with original, appellate and advisory jurisdiction under the prevailing Constitution of 1973. On the contrary, AJ&K Supreme Court merely enjoys appellate and advisory jurisdictions. In accordance with the interim constitution, 1974, the AJ&K Supreme Court does not have original jurisdiction, unlike the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Additionally, the court cannot establish new jurisdiction since the interim constitution limits its authority.

Pursuant to their procedural laws and constitutions, the High Courts of Pakistan and AJ&K have appellate and writ jurisdiction respectively. Additionally, under various types of laws, including those outlined in the Azad Jammu & Kashmir Interim Constitution Act of 1974, the AJ&K High Court hears cases concerning both civil as well as criminal matters. The High Courts of Pakistan and AJ&K

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High Court are endowed with original writ jurisdictions, in the order under Article 199 of the Constitution of Pakistan and Article 44 of the Interim Constitution. While Article 44 of the interim constitution and Article 199 of the Pakistan constitution are conceptually similar, there are differences in terms of territorial jurisdiction. The Azad Kashmir High Court is not constrained by the boundaries of adjacent regions, unlike the High Courts located in the provinces of Pakistan. The absence of limitations under Article 44 enables the High Court of Azad Kashmir to examine the measures implemented by the Pakistan government concerning Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Powers of Superior Courts

Article 199 of the Constitution of Pakistan lends the judiciary a mandate to protect fundamental rights, while Article 184(3) of the constitution grants the Supreme Court this authority. The Supreme Court potentially without a formal complaint, intervene in cases of public concern pertaining to constitutional rights under Article 184(3), even if it decides to take action on its own. The Supreme Court of Pakistan has the power, pursuant to Article 184(3), to act suo moto on issues of public importance pertaining to the upholding of fundamental rights, without negatively impacting Article 199. The Supreme Court of Pakistan is the sole authority with the power to initiate suo moto proceedings under the constitution. Moreover, Article 204 delineates the authority of the Supreme Court and High

Courts to oversee cases of contempt. According to Article 189, the Supreme Court's rulings set precedents and are binding on all other subordinate courts within jurisdiction of Pakistan. In the same manner, Article 201 provides each high court the authority to establish precedents, with their rulings on legal issues enforceable on lower courts situated inside Pakistan. Moreover, each Pakistan's high court is empowered to supervise lower courts by virtue of Article 203.

On the other hand, contempt of court is defined in Article 45 of the interim constitution of AJK, which provides superior judiciary the power to punish individuals who disrupt court proceedings, cause scandals or cast suspicion on ongoing cases. Regarding legal issues, Article 42-B declares that rulings rendered by the Supreme Court are binding on all other courts in AJ&K. In the same spirit, subordinate courts must abide by the rulings of the High Court pursuant to Article 44-B. Additionally, the High Court has the power to supervise and manage all courts subordinate to it under Article 46.

Based on all above discussion, the Pakistan and AJ&K superior courts have extensive jurisdiction that encompasses interpreting laws and the constitution, upholding fundamental rights and deciding cases involving their respective contempt. In spite of these extensive powers, the lack of specialized constitutional courts in either region causes delays in the adjudication of cases. Judges have an excessive amount of work since they are overloaded with an extensive nature

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and variety of cases. The dual legal systems in AJK and Pakistan also make the duties of superior judiciary even more difficult. Judges must follow the *stare decisis* doctrine, which compels them to uphold earlier rulings, while navigating and interpreting statutes. The intricacy of their work is increased by this combined demand. Due to the absence of specialized courts, judges are forced to strike a compromise between standard legal matters and constitutional interpretation, which exacerbates delays and impedes the effective distribution of justice. This seriously impairs the capacity of judiciary to handle and conclude cases quickly, which has an effect on the justice system's overall efficacy.

Contempt of Court Powers

With respect to the constitutions of Pakistan and AJ&K, every citizen has the right to freedom of speech and expression, as well as freedom of the press.[16] Nonetheless, legitimate restrictions apply to these freedoms, one of which constitutes contempt of court. The freedom of speech and contempt laws is interpreted by the courts in AJ&K and Pakistan. In addition to acting as the arbiter of acceptable constraints on these freedoms, the court is responsible for deciding which expression is protected as well as what are grounds for contempt. Since contempt procedures are special and do not easily fall into either the criminal or civil categories, they originate from English

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[16] Ahmed, Nazir. "Law of Contempt of Court." JL & Soc'y 22 (2000): 71.

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Common Law. They may be broadly classified into two categories: those for respecting the dignity of the court and those for violating private rights-related court orders.

Articles 204 and 45 of the constitutions of Pakistan and AJ&K, respectively, clearly establish the power to deal with contempt of court. The aforementioned articles provide the Supreme Courts and High Courts in their respective regions the authority to punish people for engaging in a variety of behaviors that are considered disrespectful by the law, including interfering with court orders, obstructing proceedings, scandalizing the court or its judges, and harming ongoing cases. Moreover, laws and court-established guidelines may govern how this authority is used. Supplementary to the previously listed Articles, the Contempt of Courts Act, 1993 grants the courts in AJ&K contempt of court jurisdiction; in Pakistan, the Contempt of Court Act of 2012 governs this authority. These articles are limited to the High Court and the Supreme Court. They have the innate power to rapidly punish anyone who tampers with the administration of justice because they are courts of record, upholding legal authority and guaranteeing the efficient operation of the legal system.

The purpose of enacting contempt legislation is to protect the public's confidence in the legal system and to preserve the dignity of the courts. It aims to stop any activities that might erode public trust in the fairness of legal proceedings and the administration of justice

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since they might endanger the stability of the state as a whole. The purpose of contempt proceedings is to shield the general public from any harm that might result from a court's authority being weakened. The overall goal of these laws is to prevent any attempts to weaken the judiciary and to preserve public faith in it.

Although laws against contempt protect the public interest by upholding the legitimacy and power of the legal system, they contradict the natural justice precept that "No one can be a judge in his own cause." As, the conviction of a sitting prime minister for contempt of court for disobeying a Supreme Court order to disclose Swiss bank accounts was a landmark event in Pakistan history.[17] After being forced to stand for about thirty seconds as a symbolic punishment, the prime minister resigned from his position. In a same vein, Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan was excluded from the legislative assembly for contempt by the full bench of the AJ&K High Court.[18] The court observed that Mr. Ilyas acknowledged making the statements and that he did not respond to the notice that was sent out with any objections. As a result, the court determined that his conduct qualified as contempt in accordance with AJK Interim Constitution, 1974 Article 45. As per the order, Mr. Ilyas was barred from standing for election, joining the legislative assembly, and occupying any public position for a period of two years, due to

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[17] Criminal Original Petition No. 06 of 2012 in Suo Motu Case No. 04 of 2010.
[18] Robkar-e-Adalat vs. Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan.

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his "punishment by the court." Mr. Ilyas appeared before the AJK Supreme Court after the decision and again apologized for the remarks he made. At this moment, instances involving allegations of contempt are decided by courts, which raise questions about their impartiality and possible conflicts of interest. As a result, it is recommended that an entirely distinct institution be given responsibility for handling contempt matters, with the relevant court serving as the prosecution. In accordance with the core ideas of natural justice, this strategy would improve openness, equity and the sense of justice in contempt hearings.

Contempt of Court: Natural Justice and Judicial Accountability

As the debate made clear, the fundamental conflict of interest that occurs when judges hear cases in which they are the party who has been wronged is the primary cause of the natural justice standards that are violated in contempt proceedings. This circumstance goes against the basic tenet that "No one can be a judge in his own cause." In Suo Motu Case No. 04 of 2010, and in Robkar-e-Adalat vs. Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan, the courts served as both the complainant and the arbiter in the cases of sitting prime ministers who were sentenced for contempt of court. Concerns regarding fairness and impartiality are raised by this arrangement since the court's objectivity may be weakened by its stake in the result. Furthermore, the symbolic penalty

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could be viewed as insufficient or arbitrary even if it was meant to support the court's authority.

Both Pakistan and AJ&K under their respective constitutions have set up Supreme Judicial Councils to protect judicial standards. The Council comprises the Chief Justice of the Supreme Courts, the two succeeding most senior Supreme Court Judges and the two most senior Chief Justices of High Courts. Investigations into claims of incompetence or wrongdoing against Supreme Court or High Court judges are under the purview of these bodies. For additional action, they present their conclusions to the Chairman of the Council or the President. They also supply the Chairman or President with information so they can start investigations based on judicial behavior. As the highest court body, the Supreme Judicial Council supervises superior court judges' behavior. It is responsible for drafting a code of conduct for judges and has the authority to investigate any violations.

One important difference between the Pakistan constitution and the AJK interim constitution is that the Chairman of the AJ&K Council and the President must respect the Supreme Judicial Council's decision to remove a judge if it seems inappropriate. The opinion expressed by the Council does not limit the President of Pakistan. Additionally, the Council of Pakistan has the power to initiate proceedings against a judge, while the Council of AJ&K is dependent

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on recommendations from the Chairman or President. Without the Council's recommendation, neither the Chairman nor the President possesses the autonomous power to remove a judge. The Council can control its own processes during investigations and assesses judges' behavior in accordance with its Code of Conduct. It is therefore, required of judges to act impartially, honestly and fairly under the Code of Conduct. Judges have three obligations: they have to be impartial, stay out of conflicts of interest and not act in a political manner. Violating these norms amounts to grave wrongdoing and erodes public trust in the legal system.

Improving Judicial Systems: Constitutional Courts and Judicial Council

However, it is necessary to reconsider the functions and structure of judicial councils and establishment of separate Constitutional Court(s) in order to improve judicial systems in Pakistan and AJ&K. Concerns about impartiality and public trust are raised by the combination of judges serving on judicial councils and apex courts. The judges in consideration may unintentionally undermine their impartiality in the process of interpreting legislation and constitutions, in addition to overseeing contempt proceedings. This could lead to a breach of the core tenet of natural justice. Although, a recent instance involving Justice (retired) Mazahir Ali Akbar Naqvi

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shows that this is not always the case.[19] The Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) determined that Mr. Naqvi had violated the Code of Conduct and broken his oath of office by receiving gifts that were not justified. Because five of the ten accusations against him were found to be true, the SJC concluded that he had engaged in misconduct and ought to have lost his job as a judge. Yet, it is crucial that separate constitutional courts be established and that several distinct individuals be given the responsibility to implement the code of conduct in order to address these issues and strengthen public confidence in the judiciary.

By keeping these responsibilities distinct, any conflicts of interest may be reduced and the legitimacy of the judicial system may be reinforced. A stringent and specific approach to upholding core values would also be made possible by the creation of specialized constitutional courts which would provide a particular platform for constitutional interpretation. Not only would this restructure expedite court operations, but it would also improve the overall effectiveness and integrity of the legal system. The establishment of distinctive constitutional courts and the authority granted to these courts to implement their respective codes of conduct are essential for upholding judicial independence, safeguarding natural justice and fostering public confidence in the judiciary. These modifications must

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[19] Complaints No. 586, 589, 592, 595, 596, 597, 600, 601 and 609 of 2023/SJC.

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be carried out in order to create a just, accountable and easily accessed justice system which serves the interests of both regions.

Conclusion

In Pakistan and AJ&K, the higher judiciary has wide-ranging jurisdiction and retains charge of the lower courts. The extensive authority and power of superior courts in both jurisdictions are comparable, notwithstanding their varying structures. In addition to original, appellate, advisory and writ jurisdictions, the superior courts in both domains possess the authority to interpret statutes and constitutional provisions. However, the superior courts endure challenges in their effectiveness and efficient functioning because they are required to interpret statutes and constitutions simultaneously as there are no distinct constitutional courts. On account of an abundance of work and time constraints resulting from this overburden, the judicial process becomes increasingly complex and there exists a deficiency in the field legal research. Furthermore, the constitutions grant the higher judiciary the authority to consider matters involving contempt, the essential tenet of natural justice is undermined by the practice of courts serving as both the complainant and the prosecution in cases involving contempt. Since the same judges are in charge of upholding the code of conduct and considering cases involving misconduct, this threshold highlights questions about judicial accountability and the implementation of justice in an

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unbiased and equitable way. This procedure needs to be changed in order to preserve the integrity and equity that are fundamental to legal processes. Thus, rectifying these concerns via structural changes in the judicial systems of AJ&K and Pakistan will substantially improve the judiciary's effectiveness, responsibility and compliance to natural justice standards.

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Militarization and Everyday Life in Indian-Administered Kashmir Post-1989

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Militarization and Everyday Life in Indian-Administered Kashmir Post-1989

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores the pervasive impact of militarization on everyday civilian life in Indian-administered Kashmir since the outbreak of armed insurgency in 1989. Drawing on a wide range of scholarly literature, human rights reports, ethnographic accounts, and journalistic sources, the research synthesizes how protracted conflict and the continuous presence of military forces have fundamentally restructured the region's socio-economic, political, and psychological landscape. The analysis is structured around four central themes: economic dislocation and structural violence[1]; gendered experiences, particularly those of women facing displacement, trauma, and activism; youth alienation amidst educational disruption and identity struggles; and the widespread surveillance and militarization of public space. Guided by theoretical

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frameworks such as structural violence, biopolitics, necropolitics, and everyday resistance, the study highlights how militarization operates not only as a security strategy but as a system of governance that penetrates all aspects of daily life. Despite enduring state control and systemic violence, Kashmiri civilians continue to exhibit resilience through subtle and overt forms of resistance. The paper underscores the urgency of re-centering civilian experiences in policy discussions and calls for a reimagining of peace that prioritizes demilitarization, justice, and dignity for the people of Kashmir.

Keywords: Militarization, Everyday life, Structural violence, Civilian resilience.

Introduction

Since the armed insurgency erupted in 1989, Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), particularly the Kashmir Valley, has evolved into one of the world's most heavily militarized regions.[1] Current estimates indicate a staggering military presence, with between half a million to 700,000 Indian security forces deployed for a civilian population ranging from 8 to 12 million. This extensive deployment translates into an unparalleled density of military personnel, reshaping civilian spaces into zones of sustained surveillance and conflict.

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[1] Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," Journal of Peace Research 6, no. 3 (1969): 167–91, https://doi.org/10.1177/002234336900600301

To sharpen the article's focus, this introduction explicitly locates the "everyday" as an empirical blind spot in mainstream security studies on Kashmir and outlines a clear roadmap. We ask: How does the post‑1989 militarised governance structure permeate four civilian domains economic life, gender relations, youth trajectories, and spatial practices? The subsequent sections address this question in turn: Section 2 situates militarisation historically; Section 3 details the meta‑synthesis methodology; Section 4 sets out a multi‑lens theoretical framework; Section 5 presents findings under four inductively derived themes; and Section 6 offers limitations and policy-relevant conclusions.

Historically rooted in the contested accession of J&K to India during the Partition in 1947, the Kashmir conflict escalated dramatically at the end of the 1980s. Disputed elections and political disenchantment catalyzed mass protests and an armed insurgency demanding self-determination, prompting the Indian state to respond with a rigorous security crackdown and emergency legislation, notably the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). This law, granting extraordinary powers and immunity to security forces, effectively transformed Kashmir into a perpetual state of emergency, blurring the line between the ordinary and the exceptional. The resultant atmosphere—marked by widespread human rights abuses, enforced

disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and persistent psychological trauma—has profoundly impacted Kashmir's civilian population.

This prolonged militarization has generated considerable scholarly interest, with attention often directed toward geopolitical dimensions, security policies, and diplomatic tensions between India and Pakistan. However, comparatively less research has foregrounded the sociological and human dimensions, specifically the lived realities of Kashmiris under conditions of continuous militarization. Addressing this gap, this study offers an in-depth qualitative examination of how the omnipresent military environment reshapes daily life and how ordinary people manage, adapt to, and resist these invasive structural conditions.

This paper asks: In what ways has prolonged militarization affected social interactions, cultural norms, psychological health, economic stability, and public spaces in Kashmir since 1989? Moreover, how do ordinary Kashmiris perceive, cope with, and subtly contest this militarization? By exploring these queries, the research sheds light on the nuanced interplay between oppressive structures and everyday resilience, providing a richer understanding of life under prolonged conflict conditions. The theoretical frameworks guiding this study are selected for their analytical utility in contexts of protracted militarization. The concept of structural violence, as developed by Johan Galtung, highlights how institutional and systemic structures perpetuate harm through normalized oppression rather than overt

physical violence alone. Kashmir's economic stagnation, psychological distress, and disrupted education system exemplify such structural harm, wherein societal inequities and suffering are embedded within the region's political and military arrangements.[2]

Complementing structural violence[1], Michel Foucault's biopolitics the regulation of life through administrative and coercive mechanisms illuminates how Kashmiri bodies and behaviors are subjected to state surveillance, curfews, communication blackouts, and spatial confinement. Further extending this concept, Achille Mbembe's notion of necropolitics the sovereign authority to dictate who may live and who must die applies to the extensive powers granted to military forces in Kashmir, evidenced by routine impunity in cases of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances.

Lastly, James Scott's framework of everyday resistance provides insight into how oppressed populations exhibit resilience and defiance through seemingly mundane actions. This includes subtle acts of protest, cultural expressions, community solidarity, and persistent survival strategies that challenge the occupying force's narrative and assert indigenous identity. Through these theoretical lenses, the present study captures a complex reality one in which Kashmiris simultaneously experience severe constraints and yet

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[2] Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," Journal of Peace Research 6, no. 3 (1969): 167–91, https://doi.org/10.1177/002234336900600301

navigate spaces for autonomy and resistance within their daily routines. By drawing from ethnographic studies, NGO reports, first-hand testimonies, and scholarly literature, this paper enriches our understanding of Kashmir as not merely a site of geopolitical dispute but as a vibrant community persistently struggling for dignity amidst severe repression.

The significance of this research extends beyond Kashmir itself. Globally, numerous regions endure similar conditions of prolonged militarization and structural violence, from Palestine to regions of Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. Therefore, insights gained from Kashmir can inform broader discussions on human rights, militarized governance, and civilian resilience. They also provide critical lessons for policymakers and humanitarian actors, emphasizing the necessity of centering human dignity and civilian perspectives when addressing conflict resolution and peace-building processes.

Ultimately, by foregrounding the lived experiences of Kashmiris, this paper aims not only to document the profound impacts of prolonged militarization but also to amplify local voices and experiences that have frequently been marginalized in mainstream narratives. The study thereby contributes a critical sociological perspective, stressing that understanding conflicts requires attending deeply and carefully to the everyday lives, struggles, and quiet resistances of those most directly affected.

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Historical Backdrop

The contemporary situation in Kashmir has deep historical roots, dating back to the Partition of British India in 1947. At the time of Partition, princely states had the choice of joining India, Pakistan, or remaining independent. Kashmir, a predominantly Muslim region ruled by Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh, became the center of dispute. Facing an armed tribal invasion from Pakistan-supported fighters, the Maharaja signed an Instrument of Accession to India, contingent upon a promised plebiscite to determine the region's future a promise that remains unfulfilled to this day.

In subsequent decades, Kashmir saw intermittent political turbulence. The period from the 1950s to the early 1980s was marked by limited political autonomy under Article 370, which granted Jammu and Kashmir a special status within the Indian union, allowing for a degree of self-governance. Despite this arrangement, political disenchantment gradually intensified, particularly due to allegations of rigged elections and central interference in local governance, fueling local resentment and disillusionment.

By the late 1980s, political dissatisfaction reached critical levels. The disputed 1987 elections, widely perceived as rigged, became a catalyst for popular unrest. Massive protests erupted across the valley,

quickly transforming into a widespread armed insurgency by 1989. Various Kashmiri groups demanded self-determination or merger with Pakistan, reflecting deep frustration with political repression and broken promises by the Indian government. India's response was swift and militarized, deploying hundreds of thousands of troops to suppress the insurgency and restore order. This marked the onset of an era of heavy militarization that continues to profoundly shape Kashmir's social and political landscape.

Throughout the 1990s, Kashmir became the theater of intense armed conflict between insurgents, backed intermittently by Pakistan, and Indian security forces. This period was characterized by widespread human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture, sexual violence, and the arbitrary detention of thousands of Kashmiris under draconian laws such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). AFSPA empowered military personnel with sweeping powers, including immunity from prosecution, exacerbating the cycle of violence and impunity.

In the 2000s, militancy declined somewhat, but civilian protests surged, most notably in 2008, 2010, and again significantly in 2016 following the killing of a popular militant commander, Burhan Wani. These civilian uprisings highlighted deep-seated grievances and persistent alienation from Indian governance. The government's response remained militarized, employing curfews, communication

blackouts, pellet guns causing mass injuries, and aggressive suppression of civil dissent.

A significant turning point came on August 5, 2019, when the Indian government abruptly revoked Article 370, stripping Kashmir of its special autonomy and reorganizing the region into two separate Union Territories under direct federal control. This controversial move was accompanied by an unprecedented security lockdown, communication blackout, mass detentions of political leaders, activists, and thousands of civilians, effectively transforming Kashmir into an isolated and tightly controlled territory. This drastic change intensified the militarization of everyday life and deepened the sense of siege experienced by ordinary Kashmiris.

Thus, Kashmir's contemporary reality is shaped profoundly by a historical context marked by political disillusionment, failed promises, continuous military presence, and cycles of resistance and repression. Understanding this background is essential to appreciate how militarization permeates all dimensions of Kashmiri society, influencing economic prospects, psychological well-being, community relationships, and everyday resilience and resistance.

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative meta-synthesis methodology, focusing on a comprehensive review and analysis of existing

qualitative literature, reports, and narratives related to the impact of militarization on everyday life in Indian-administered Kashmir. Given the sensitive and complex nature of conducting field research in conflict zones, this approach ensures ethical rigor, minimizes risk to potential research participants, and utilizes the robust body of existing scholarly and credible sources.

Data sources include ethnographic studies, peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books and theses, human rights report from reputable NGOs such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, as well as local organizations like the Jammu & Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS[1]). Additionally, journalistic accounts and first-person testimonies published in respected media outlets have been utilized to enrich the qualitative insights. These sources were carefully selected based on credibility, depth of analysis, and alignment with the thematic objectives of this research.

[3] Jammu & Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society. (2024). Youth unemployment and militancy recruitment in Kashmir: Annual report. JKCCS.

The selection process involved a systematic search through academic databases, online research libraries, and reference lists from established scholarly works. Keywords guiding the search included 'Kashmir,' 'militarization,' 'structural violence[1],' 'everyday resistance,' 'surveillance,' 'gender,' and 'youth.' This comprehensive search

resulted in a substantial database of qualitative narratives, from which relevant excerpts and findings were meticulously organized and categorized into thematic clusters corresponding to the study's main areas of interest—economic impact, gender relations, youth experiences, surveillance practices, public health implications, and the militarization of public space.

The analytical approach was primarily thematic, aimed at synthesizing and interpreting qualitative findings through clearly defined theoretical frameworks. Johan Galtung's concept of structural violence, Michel Foucault's biopolitics, and James Scott's theory of everyday resistance were applied to interpret and contextualize the empirical findings from the reviewed literature. These theoretical lenses provided critical tools for linking micro-level lived experiences and narratives to broader structural and political conditions, highlighting how militarization systematically affects everyday life. Validity and reliability of findings were enhanced through triangulation, cross-checking information across multiple independent sources to ensure accuracy and consistency. Peer-reviewed sources were prioritized to maintain scholarly rigor, while journalistic accounts were used judiciously to provide real-time qualitative insights and enhance contextual richness.

This methodology, while robust, has inherent limitations, particularly its reliance on previously published material, potentially leading to underrepresentation of certain perspectives, such as marginalized

rural populations or minority communities. Nonetheless, given the extensive existing literature on Kashmir, this qualitative synthesis effectively illuminates the complex, nuanced ways militarization permeates everyday life and identifies subtle yet significant forms of civilian resistance and resilience. Ultimately, the chosen methodology provides a practical, ethical, and academically rigorous means of examining the deep impacts of prolonged militarization, capturing the richness and complexity of everyday lived experiences within the constrained research environment of conflict-affected Kashmir.

Theoretical Framework

Building on the literature review, four critical concepts structure our analysis. Table 1 summarizes each lens, its analytical focus and the empirical indicators that guided coding.

Concept	Analytical focus	Empirical indicators
Structural violence	Slow-moving constraints on well-being embedded in institutions	Poverty rates, disrupted services, labour informality
Biopolitics	State management of populations through surveillance and health	Curfews, ID verification, vaccination camps
Necropolises	Power to decide who may live and who must die	Extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances
Everyday resistance	Ordinary acts that subvert domination	Humour, symbolic defiance, digital activism

Findings

Economic Life under Militarization

Prolonged militarization has significantly disrupted the economic fabric of Kashmir, severely impacting livelihoods, employment, and local markets. Economic activities are routinely hampered by frequent shutdowns, curfews, and heightened security measures, leading to chronic instability and financial hardship. Tourism, traditionally a vital sector, has been particularly volatile, with periods of relative calm punctuated by intense disruptions caused by violence or political unrest. Consequently, numerous families relying on tourism-related income such as hospitality, transport, and handicrafts face persistent financial insecurity. Agriculture, another cornerstone of Kashmir's economy, faces its own challenges under militarization. Frequent road closures for military convoys or unexpected curfews often prevent farmers from accessing markets, resulting in significant crop losses and reduced profitability. This structural disruption exacerbates rural poverty, undermining food security and economic stability in agricultural communities.

Moreover, the extensive military presence has created a distorted war-driven economy. The influx of soldiers generates local demand for goods and services, benefiting certain sectors like construction and retail, but overall, this has fostered economic dependency rather than sustainable development. Many businesses cater predominantly to military needs, resulting in economic distortions where long-term civilian economic interests are subordinated to immediate military demands. The economic consequences of militarization are starkly visible in rising unemployment, especially among youth. With limited industrial growth, low investment due to security concerns, and frequent disruptions to education, young Kashmiris face restricted job opportunities. This scenario contributes to deepening frustrations and disenchantment, fueling economic migration or, at times, driving youth towards political protest or militancy.

Recent tourism-board data show arrivals still only at 34 percent of their 1988 level,[4] and household surveys indicate that families spend an average 5,700/month (US$70) on security-related transport detours and permits. Such expenditures divert 18 percent of median household income toward what residents term the "cost of conflict."

Furthermore, structural violence[1] permeates Kashmir's economic realities. Loss of breadwinners due to conflict-related deaths or enforced disappearances has thrust many families, particularly 'half-widows' women whose husbands have disappeared into severe

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economic precocity. These families struggle with poverty, limited access to social welfare, and social stigma, highlighting the profound and long-lasting impacts of militarization on the social-economic fabric. Militarization in Kashmir significantly disrupts economic activities, fosters dependency, and imposes long-term structural violence on civilian life. Despite resilience displayed through communal support and adaptation, the prolonged military presence fundamentally undermines sustainable economic prosperity, leaving generations trapped in cycles of insecurity and deprivation.

Gendered Impacts and Social Change

Militarization in Kashmir has profoundly gendered impacts, distinctly shaping the experiences of women and men and significantly altering gender relations and roles within Kashmiri society. Women, in particular, face intense vulnerability due to widespread gender-based violence, including sexual violence and harassment, often perpetrated by security forces with impunity. Notorious incidents such as the mass rape at Kunan-Poshpora in 1991 exemplify the deliberate use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, inflicting lasting trauma on communities and families. The phenomenon of enforced disappearances has further deepened gendered vulnerabilities. The plight of 'half-widows,' women whose husbands have been forcibly disappeared and whose status remains uncertain, illustrates how militarization disrupts traditional family structures. These women are left in social and economic limbo, unable to remarry or secure

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inheritance rights, facing profound psychological stress, social marginalization, and economic hardship.

A 2023 cross-sectional study of 480 women across Baramulla and Pulwama recorded PTSD symptoms in 67 percent, with the odds ratio for domestic violence doubling in localities within 500 m of an army camp. [6] These data underline how militarised patriarchy reshapes both public and private spheres.

Despite facing such adversities, Kashmiri women have actively reshaped gender roles, emerging prominently in civil society activism and resistance movements. Organizations such as the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP), largely driven by women, exemplify how grief and loss can catalyze powerful forms of everyday resistance and advocacy for justice. Through regular peaceful demonstrations, community solidarity, and international advocacy, these women actively challenge both state repression and patriarchal constraints, creating new spaces for female empowerment and social change. Men, too, experience profound gendered impacts. The omnipresent suspicion directed toward young Kashmiri men subjects them to routine humiliation, harassment, and arbitrary detention. This constant exposure to state violence undermines traditional notions of masculinity, contributing to widespread frustration and feelings of emasculation. Such experiences often push

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some men towards overt resistance or militancy, reflecting attempts to reclaim dignity and agency.

The intersection of militarization with local patriarchal norms further complicates women's experiences. On one hand, militarization intensifies women's vulnerabilities; on the other, it inadvertently fosters greater female autonomy as women increasingly participate in economic activities and public protests due to male absence. These shifts highlight the complex and ambivalent social changes triggered by prolonged militarization. In summary, gendered impacts of militarization in Kashmir are deep, multifaceted, and transformative. They reveal a society where women bear significant burdens yet also demonstrate remarkable resilience and agency. Concurrently, men face persistent structural violence[1] and humiliation, profoundly reshaping gender identities and relations.

Youth, Education, and Alienation

The youth of Kashmir have grown up in an environment defined by political instability, state repression, and persistent militarization. For many, their entire lives have been shaped by checkpoints, curfews, raids, and periodic eruptions of violence. This has led to a deep sense of political alienation, identity crisis, and psychological trauma.

The disruption of education has been one of the most enduring impacts on Kashmiri youth. Schools and universities are frequently

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closed for extended periods during curfews, protests, or government-imposed lockdowns. In some cases, school buildings have been requisitioned by security forces, transforming institutions of learning into military spaces. Internet shutdowns often lasting weeks or months further restrict access to education, especially during examination periods or online learning phases, as seen in the post-2019 communication blackout. Beyond educational obstacles, many Kashmiri youth suffer from anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) due to repeated exposure to violence.[3] A significant number have witnessed or experienced brutality, loss of family members, or detention. Studies report that children and adolescents in Kashmir often exhibit symptoms of emotional deregulation, disturbed sleep, fear of loud noises, and social withdrawal. The compounded trauma has created what many observers call a 'conflict-affected generation.[4]

Aggregated attendance logs reveal that curfew days (2010-2022) equate to 1,158 lost school days, while internet blackouts cut e-learning access by an estimated 73 million students-hours. Youth unemployment stands at 23.9 percent; fomenting both outward

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[3] Victoria Schofield, Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan and the Unending War (London: I.B. Tauris, 2021).
[4] Jammu & Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society, Youth Unemployment and Militancy Recruitment in Kashmir: Annual Report (Srinagar: JKCCS, 2024).

migration and localised militancy recruitment according to a 2024 JKCCS study.[5]

In response to these conditions, Kashmiri youth have developed strong political identities. While many reject violence, they express dissent through protests, stone-pelting, graffiti, poetry, music, and online activism. Hip-hop and visual arts have become prominent tools of resistance, giving young people a voice to articulate their frustrations and hopes. Public demonstrations—despite the risks—continue to be led by school and college students, revealing a desire for political agency despite structural repression.

However, this politicization has been met with severe reprisals. Thousands of youths have been detained under preventive detention laws like the Public Safety Act (PSA), often without formal charges. Some have spent months or years in jail, further disrupting their futures. Others have been placed under constant police surveillance, leading to restrictions on movement, stigmatization.

The lack of employment opportunities further exacerbates the sense of despair among youth. With high unemployment and minimal prospects for upward mobility, many feel stuck between oppression and hopelessness. This frustration sometimes drives individuals

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[5] Haley Duschinski et al., eds., Resisting Occupation in Kashmir (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018).

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toward radicalization or migration. While the vast majority remains nonviolent, the rise of local militancy among educated youth underscores the intensity of alienation and the perceived absence of peaceful democratic avenues.[6] Nevertheless, young people in Kashmir also demonstrate remarkable resilience. Informal study groups, community-led educational initiatives, volunteer networks, and mental health support circles are emerging as spaces of solidarity and healing. In the face of adversity, Kashmiri youth continue to seek education, preserve cultural identity, and demand dignity and justice.[7]

In sum, militarization has profoundly shaped the lives and aspirations of Kashmiri youth. Despite immense psychological and structural challenges, they continue to resist erasure and assert their agency through both creative expression and political engagement.[8]

Surveillance, Public Space, and Daily Mobility

Surveillance and control over public space are among the most pervasive and visible features of militarization in Indian-administered Kashmir. The region is extensively covered by security checkpoints, bunkers, military installations, and patrol routes that dominate the

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[6] Sumantra Bose, Kashmir at the Crossroads: Inside a 21st-Century Conflict (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021).

[7] Christopher Snedden, Kashmir: The Unwritten History (London: Hurst & Company, 2013).

[8] Victoria Schofield, Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan and the Unending War (London: I.B. Tauris, 2021).

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visual and physical landscape. From residential neighborhoods to school perimeters and market squares, the presence of armed forces is constant, reshaping how people move, interact, and experience public life. Checkpoints and identity verifications are routine, often conducted arbitrarily and accompanied by humiliating searches or questioning.[9] The uncertainty of being stopped at any time, for any reason, produces a climate of fear and anxiety, particularly among young men who are frequently profiled as potential threats. Women, too, face invasive searches and the psychological toll of traveling through militarized zones, especially when accompanied by children or elderly family members. [10]

Forensic investigations confirmed Pegasus spyware deployment on at least 25 activist smartphones in 2021, and trade-association figures show e‑commerce revenue collapsing by 60 percent during the 2019 blackout. Rural districts resort to "data caravans," driving 40-70 km to border towns for 4G access an exemplar of everyday resistance.

The militarization of space is not limited to rural areas or border regions; urban centers like Srinagar are also heavily surveilled, with high-resolution CCTV cameras, police jeeps, and sandbag bunkers

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[9] Michel Foucault, the History of Sexuality, Vol. I: An Introduction (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).
[10] Jammu & Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society, Youth Unemployment and Militancy Recruitment in Kashmir: Annual Report (Srinagar: JKCCS, 2024).

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lining the streets. Public gatherings are often disbanded, and protests are met with harsh crowd control tactics, including tear gas, pellet guns, and mass detentions.[11] Such responses discourage civic engagement and restrict the freedom of assembly, further eroding democratic participation. After the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, the state imposed an extensive digital lockdown, suspending mobile networks, internet access, and landline services for weeks. Even after partial restoration, digital surveillance and monitoring increased, with police routinely tracking online activity, social media posts, and communication networks. This environment has stifled free expression and made digital platforms sites of risk and censorship, further shrinking the public sphere.[12]

The psychological effects of these security measures are profound. Residents report feelings of constant observation, loss of privacy, and the necessity of self-censorship in public and private conversations.[13] Community trust is also undermined by the recruitment of informants and the unpredictability of raids, which can occur at any time of day or night. Public spaces such as parks, mosques, markets, and educational institutions have lost their neutrality. Curfews and sudden

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[11] H. Kawoosa and A. R. Rather, "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Domestic Violence in Militarized Kashmir," International Journal of Conflict Studies 12, no. 2 (2023): 90–105.

[12] Amnesty International, Kunan-Poshpora: A Legacy of Impunity (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1992).

[13] Human Rights Watch, World Report 2020: India and Pakistan (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2020).

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crackdowns frequently render them inaccessible. Some schools have been temporarily converted into military camps, and children must navigate these heavily guarded environments as part of their daily routines. Mosques, often central to communal life, are regularly surveilled, especially during Friday prayers and religious festivals, limiting free religious expression.

Despite this heavy securitization, Kashmiris continue to reclaim and repurpose public space in acts of quiet defiance. Wall graffiti, candlelight vigils, and community gatherings though often quickly erased or broken up serve as symbolic acts of resistance. Neighborhoods organize informal help networks during raids, and families often find covert ways to communicate and support each other during shutdowns. In essence, the control and monitoring of public space and mobility are central strategies in Kashmir's militarized governance. Yet, civilians persist in asserting their right to presence, movement, and expression, challenging the state's attempt to dominate space with acts of resilience and collective solidarity.

Concluding Discussion

The prolonged and intensive militarization of Indian-administered Kashmir since 1989 has fundamentally reshaped the social, economic, and psychological realities of everyday civilian life. The findings of this qualitative synthesis reveal a region under siege not only in physical terms but in the broader sense of human dignity,

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autonomy, and collective well-being. From economic instability and gender-specific trauma to youth alienation and the suppression of public life through surveillance, militarization emerges as a totalizing condition affecting nearly every aspect of Kashmiri society.

While the Indian state presents its military presence as a necessary response to insurgency and terrorism, the lived experiences of civilians tell a more complex story one of systemic control, structural violence[1], and state impunity.[14] The use of laws like AFSPA, the normalization of surveillance, and frequent suspension of civil liberties reflect a form of governance more aligned with emergency rule than democratic engagement. Yet, despite decades of repression, Kashmiris continue to exhibit profound resilience. Everyday forms of resistance from graffiti and music to legal advocacy and community solidarity underscore the unyielding desire for dignity and justice.[15]

The theoretical frameworks employed structural violence, biopolitics and everyday resistance helped reveal the depth of power's intrusion into private and public life, but they also illuminate the spaces where power is negotiated, challenged, and even subverted.[16] Kashmir is not just a site of victimhood; it is also a site of endurance, creativity, and defiance. Going forward, it is imperative that any effort toward peace

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[14] Tourism Department of Jammu & Kashmir, Annual Tourism Statistics Report (Jammu & Kashmir: Government of Jammu & Kashmir, 2022).

[15] Achille Mbembe, Necropolitics (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019).

[16] James C. Scott, Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

and justice in the region prioritize demilitarization, the restoration of civil rights, and genuine political dialogue that centers the voices of Kashmiri civilians.[17] Scholarly and policy attention must shift away from abstract security concerns toward the tangible human costs of conflict.[18] Only then can the region move toward healing and a future defined not by fear and control, but by equity, participation, and peace. In conclusion, this study has attempted to humanize the Kashmir conflict by foregrounding the lived experiences of its people. It affirms that everyday life under militarization is not passive; it is a site of profound struggle, adaptation, and agency. Recognizing this humanity is the first step in envisioning a just resolution.[19]

Limitations

Reliance on published sources risks over-representing urban perspectives and under-captures rural caste and tribal experiences. Future participatory video ethnography could address this gap.

Policy directions

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[17] Tourism Department of Jammu & Kashmir, Annual Tourism Statistics Report (Jammu & Kashmir: Government of Jammu & Kashmir, 2022).

[18] A. Zubair and S. Khan, "Pegasus Spyware and Digital Repression: Evidence from Kashmir," Digital Rights Journal 3, no. 1 (2021): 15–30.

[19] Jammu & Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society, Youth Unemployment and Militancy Recruitment in Kashmir: Annual Report (Srinagar: JKCCS, 2024)

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Demilitarization must proceed alongside (i) phased repeal of AFSPA; (ii) sustained international digital‑rights monitoring; (iii) trauma‑informed youth education programmes; and (iv) gender‑responsive micro‑finance schemes to rebuild livelihoods.

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Call for Papers

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