



Ceasefire Violation and Education: A Study of Youth in Arnia Town of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K)

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Abstract

Borders are the visible symbol defining the geographical limit and scope of a state's sovereign rights. Simultaneously, borders became the psychological markers that separate individuals and their sense of identity between us and others. But in the Union Territory of J&K, borders have become the cause of prolonged suffering for the border-dwellers. Cross-border gunshots have increased drastically over the last decades, leading to the victimization of most of the population. It had an enormous impact on the people living near the border. The violation of the ceasefire line had a tremendous impact on the lives of people near the International Border, particularly on the education of students. It has disturbed their learning routines and accessibility to quality education. Compared to others, those living near the International Border face challenging living conditions. Thus, the present study is an attempt to analyze the impact of ceasefire violations on the education of the students of Arnia town of Jammu and Kashmir and the difficulties faced by them. The significance of this study is to highlight a variety of challenges and problems faced by the students, which will help the government in further policy framing.

Keywords: International Border, Ceasefire Violations, Jammu & Kashmir, youth, Education, Challenges

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Introduction

Before the partition, 65% of India was under British control, known as British dominion, and the rest of the 35% was under the control of Indian rulers, called princely states (Ashutosh, 2013). British India passed the Independence Act on 18th July 1947 (Jammu Kashmir Study Centre, 2016). India became independent on 15th August 1947, and Pakistan became independent on 14th August 1947. The boundary line drawn between the two independent nations is called the International Border. The International Border is legally demarcated on the map of India and Pakistan. After the independence of India in 1947, the Pakistan army attacked the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir and illegally occupied some territories of the erstwhile state of Jammu

and Kashmir. To stop the Pakistan Army, the Karachi Agreement was signed in 1949, which was called the Ceasefire Line. Later, it was renamed as the Line of Control (LOC) in the Shimla Accord (Ashutosh, 2013). The partition of British India into two dominions i.e., India and Pakistan, plays a very significant role in defining the lives of the people living near the International Border. The entire international border is situated within the Jammu region. The length of the international Border is about 210km. There have been several incidents of ceasefire violations since independence. Still, it happened even after the Karachi Agreement came into existence. People who live near the borderline at a distance of 7-10 km from it face severe gunfire as they come within close range. Violation of

the ceasefire line has a tremendous impact on the lives of people living near the border, especially the youth. The physical and mental health of youth on the borderline is disturbing. They have to be displaced from their homes to camps several times, which hampers their daily activities. Gunshots at the border disrupted their day-to-day activities as well as their education routines. Students suffer negative consequences in their education due to the violation of the ceasefire line. They live every day in fear of gunshots. Due to the violation of the ceasefire, they do not have access to their school and colleges for many days which has affected their study routines. They face a huge loss in their studies, which affects the future outcomes of the youth. Violation of the ceasefire triggers fears among the youth, which affects their mental health and as a result of this, they are unable to focus on their studies.

Concept of Border

Borders are all around us in politics. Indeed, borders may be considered a continuation of political life. Borders are the visible symbol defining the geographical limits and scope of a state's sovereign rights. Simultaneously, borders become the psychological markers that separate individuals and their sense of identity between us and others. The concept of the border is conceptually related to the concept of the nation-state and is an imperative component of nationalism ideology (Elaine Correa, 2011, 189). Borders are a useful factor in the construction of national identity narratives. Borders between states have impacted and continue to impact people's lives in various ways depending on their citizenship, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, etc. The impact of such border changes depends on a person's historical and political circumstances. (Williams, 2009)

Border in Jammu and Kashmir

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, India shares its borderland with seven countries, including China, Pakistan, Nepal, Myanmar, Bhutan, and Afghanistan. India and Pakistan share a border of 3323km. Indian states that share a border with Pakistan are Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab, and Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir lie in the northern zone with a shared border with Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan. Jammu and Kashmir was the largest province with a total area of 222000 sq. km. The three regions that constitute the state are Jammu, the Kashmir Valley, and the Ladakh region. The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir occupies a total area of 2,22,236 sq. km, out of which Pakistan illegally occupied 78114 sq. km. of its land, and China also illegally occupied 5180 sq. km. area of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (Ashutosh, 2013). As a result, the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir faces a difficult border situation. One-third of the India-Pakistan border runs through the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, which has around 1225 km, and the international border is 210km extending from Kathua to Akhnoor (Das, 2021). The line of control divides Jammu and Kashmir from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in the west and northwest, respectively. After the war between India and Pakistan was suspended in 1949, the LOC, also known as the ceasefire line, was formed. The whole International Border falls into the Jammu district, having 12 blocks which are Samba, Vijaypur, Bishnah, R.S. Pura, Satwari, Marh, Akhnoor, Khour Ghagwal, Hiranagar, Barnoti, and Kathua (Government of India, 2003).

Objectives and Area of the Study

The study aims to analyze the impact of the violation of a ceasefire on the education of youth in Arnia town and to trace the difficulties faced by the youth. The Area for the study is Arnia town in the

Jammu district of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Arnia is a notified town in the Jammu region, which has around nine thousand population and it is located near the International Border within a distance of 5km. the two villages selected from Arnia Town for the study are Jabowal Khurd and Kothey.

Research Methodology

The data will be collected from primary and secondary sources. This study has quantitative and qualitative aspects but relies more on qualitative data. The phenomenological approach is used for the student to know the lived experiences of the students. Discussions years.

with school administration, parents, and teachers have been done to collect the data from the field. Home and school visits have been done to know the conditions of school and home during cross-border firing. The purposive sampling technique has been used to select the villages which are located at a minimum distance from the international border. A random sampling technique has been used in this study to select the sample from the field. The age group for the sample is 10-18

S.no	Name of the villages	Distance from the International Border
1.	Jabowal Khurd	1 km
2.	Kothey	1.5 km

(Government of Jammu and Kashmir, 2020)

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1, Discuss the responses of the youth who feel that cross-border conflicts had a major impact on their education.

RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
YES	93.33%
NO	6.66%

The study indicates that 93.33% of youth in Arnia agreed that cross-border conflicts have a very bad or harmful impact on their

education. 7% are those people who are not serious about education.

Table 2, Discuss the responses of the students who feel cross-border firing is one of the major reasons for school dropouts.

RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
YES	83.33%
NO	16.66%

It reveals that 84% of the students agreed that frequent ceasefire violations have become one of the major reasons for students dropping out. During the shelling, their schools were converted into relief

camps, due to which their educational routines have been greatly affected. The remaining 16% cite poverty as the reason for the school dropout.

Table 3, Discuss the responses of the students who feel scared during cross-border firing.

RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
YES	86.66%
NO	13.33%

It clearly shows that most of the students feel scared during the firing, which had a tremendous effect on their mental health. During the border firing, they haven't slept the whole night. Their fear leads to an

interruption in their daily educational routines. The remaining have said that "*jab maut aayegi tab koi nhi bacha sakta darr ke kya hi ho jayega*".

Table 4, Discuss the respondents' responses to the question of whether they are worried about their future or not.

RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
YES	93.33%
NO	6.66%

94% of youth are worried about their future in Arnia town because of frequent gunshots. The students feel extremely vulnerable because they can't attend their schools or colleges due to cross-border firing. As a result, they are not able to complete their education on time.

Findings of the Study

The incidence of cross-border shootings has been on the rise in recent years. In the border region, there is a concise span of peace. Tensions at the border have existed for years. The following are the major findings of the study:

Fear and Uncertainty

One sibling respondent said, "*Ek baar humare exams chal rahe thay hum padh rahe thay sudden se bhut firing shuru ho gyi, hum dono books ko shod kar bed ke niche shup Gaye or fer thodi daer humne*

khud ko store room main lock kar diya aur saari raat darte darte wahi rahe or padh bhi nhi paaye". Ceasefire violation incidents instill fear in them. Those who have lost loved ones are deeply affected and have become more sensitive and worried about their lives and futures.

Respondents have mentioned that there is no fixed timing of Ceasefire violations; these can occur at any time, day or night, making them highly unpredictable. Ceasefire violations are very uncertain as they can start at any time, day or night. Sometimes it continues for the whole day or night. The youth in Arnia town expressed living in constant fear of death every day.

Impact on Education

In the field, it has been observed that cross-border firing has a detrimental impact on students' study routines and access to quality education. Due to ceasefire violations, educational institutions are forced to close, disrupting students' educational routines. Their study timetable and syllabus get completely messed up by these incidents. Completing a syllabus on time becomes a tougher task for them. As a result of this, students are unable to complete their coursework on time, negatively affecting their final grades. It's disheartening to see how these circumstances hinder their educational progress.

Frequent Dislocation

Some respondents mentioned that they rush to a relative's house as soon as possible whenever there is cross-border firing. During cross-border firing, they have to be displaced multiple times from their homes to safer zones or relief camps provided by the government. Schools are converted into temporary homes for the displaced people. These repeated incidents of ceasefire violations disrupt their lives and force them to move again and again.

Sense of Insecurity

Respondents have stated that they do not feel secure even in their own homes due to continuous cross-border shelling. During firing, the Civilian movement was restricted, and they couldn't sleep the whole night. Walking to the washroom becomes a scary act for them. They have to switch off their lights at night, unable to turn on. All of these things are very harmful to their mental and psychological well-being.

Financial Diffidence

Some respondents revealed that during these frequent ceasefire violations, those who had the means or financial resources have permanently relocated from the area. Most affected are those who are left

behind, i.e., lower and middle-class residents. Because they do not have the money to build a house outside, those who have vehicles temporarily go to their relatives' homes during the firing, and those who do not have vehicles do not go out and remain inside their homes during the firing. These individuals have suffered losses socially, mentally, educationally, and economically.

Right to Education Act Violated

Article 21-A deals with free and compulsory education for all children as a fundamental right. Their Right to Education Act has been violated due to the uncertain and frequent ceasefire violations. Their education system is fully affected because of border conflicts. Their schools were closed during the firing and have been dismantled as a result of the firings in the border areas. It is not easy for schools to run smoothly throughout the year. During such serious situations, it's unfortunate that many students feel compelled to drop out of school.

Affected Personal Lives

Ceasefire violations have had a significant impact on the social lives of individuals in the border region. The study highlights the challenges faced by young men in finding marriage partners, as parents avoid their daughters from marrying in the border area. Similarly, young women in the affected region often face different circumstances, leading to early marriages. It's disheartening to see how these violations affect not only the safety but also the personal lives of the people living in these areas.

Impact on Mental Health

In the field, it has been observed that youth living in Arnia face immense stressful and challenging lives that experience constant fear, uncertainty, and security threats. This suffocating environment greatly hampers their overall personal growth. This constant state of insecurity greatly hinders their overall personality development. The

ceasefire violation is detrimental to borderline youth's mental health.

Even though Arnia town is not very far from Jammu city, still the youth there face educational, political, and social backwardness. Due to the persistent Ceasefire Violations since the partition, they have been dealing with various problems and challenges that hinder their access to a quality life. The challenges they are facing because of ceasefire

Impact of Abrogation of Article 370

On 5th August 2019, time took a turn. Article 370 from the Indian constitution was removed by the Indian Government, and the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir became a union territory. After the 2019 Ceasefire violations have reduced, but didn't end. Government Data shows that since 2020, the people who are living near the International Border have also started receiving ALC reservations for jobs, which were earlier only for areas adjoining the actual line of control (LOC).

Conclusion

Education plays a crucial role in the development of youth, and, unfortunately, the ceasefire violations at the International Border have resulted in violating of the Right to Education Act for the youth in Arnia. Ceasefire violations instill fear among students, especially when someone from their region is injured. The constant cross-border firing disrupts their sleep and fills them with anxiety about their future. This emotional turmoil affects their study routines and ultimately impacts their final grades. The government needs to establish relief camps to provide a sense of security for these students. Additionally, setting up discussion and awareness campaigns can help strengthen their emotional well-being. The school administration should consider providing extra or special classes to support these students. The government must take measures to ensure the emotional stability of the youth in Arnia through remedial actions. By recognising their requirements and actively seeking solutions, we can pave the way for a brighter future for

violations have had a profound impact on their lives, causing significant hardships for them. These circumstances have affected their psychological well-being very badly. The residents living near the International Border require special attention from the Government to address the problems and challenges they face in their daily lives. The Government needs to understand their unique circumstances and provide the necessary support and resources to improve their quality of life.

the people living near the border. It is important to understand their needs and take proactive steps to address them, ensuring that they have access to a better quality of life.

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