

# Changing Political Spectrum of Kashmir: A Transformational Study

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This paper engages in a comprehensive examination of the evolving political structure in Kashmir from 1990 to the present, employing a multidisciplinary approach drawing from media studies, gender studies, and social sciences. Through an analysis of historical events, governmental policies, and socio-cultural dynamics, the study aims to elucidate the complex interplay of factors that have shaped the region's political trajectory. Additionally, the paper investigates the impact of these changes on various societal aspects, considering the perspectives of different gender groups and cultural communities. By critically reviewing scholarly works, governmental reports, and media narratives, the research seeks to contribute to a nuanced understanding of the Kashmiri political landscape, acknowledging the multifaceted nature of the issues involved.

**Index Terms** - Comprehensive, Transformational, Historical, Socio-Cultural, Political Structure, Political Trajectory.

## **Introduction:**

The Strategic location of Kashmir has allowed different cultures and religions to come and settle down here. The geographical position of Kashmir is indicated in the best sense of the term 'The heart of Asia' (Bakaya: 2010). The valley of Kashmir has stood amidst peaceful contemplation, religious diversity and intellectual advancement co-existing in an atmosphere of tolerance. In the modern geopolitical era, this same diversity, evident from the blend of Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism in this state, has made it a centre of warfare rather than cultural advancement. (Ibid: 2010). The co-existence of signified Kashmir has proved to be a melting pot of many communities synchronising in harmony for centuries together. This princely state combined disparate regions which were ethnically, culturally and linguistically different to each other. (Hasnain: 2000).

Since the formation of princely state of Jammu and Kashmir from 1820 to 1858, it has suffered some brutal occupations, heavy political turmoil and highly challenging sociological imbalance. The propagated pre histories of Kashmir are counted and recounted by the local communities-mostly Kashmiri Pandits and Kashmiri Muslims that have been living harmoniously from centuries. The likely truth is both these histories are indeed true and the balance of the historical accounts is enough spacious for the historians of different categories to correlate the facts of Kashmir history. This hierarchical monarchy system of the Dogra's viewed the land and masses as their property and unleashed their reign of terror for the next century. The installed stooges of the British paramourcy established an uncontested political set up that narrowed the space for the Kashmiri locals to operate.

The division of British India proved to be another triggering point in the political history of Kashmir. The changing narrative of the Political history has left many un-nurtured voids in its struggle for existence. The coercion nature of the politics in Kashmir has witnessed uneven fluctuations since its disputed division in 1947 between India and Pakistan. The political aspects of its history since 1947, demonstrate a fractured state that has serious disfigurement in its timeline. The changing courses of politics gave rise to a series of movements that only added complex dimensions to the already punctured history of state. Over a period of time-Social, Cultural, Political and economic sectors have strangulated because of the changing historical narratives of Kashmir. This narrative focuses exclusively on the uprising of 1990's and its aftermath in the Indian-administered portion of Kashmir,

The chapter takes a pragmatic view at the changing scenario of political history and the growth of armed insurgency in Kashmir. Though, it gained momentum after 40 years of partition; the insurgency of 1990's changed the course of Kashmir history and deeply influenced the political and socio-economic sphere of the controlling nations- India and Pakistan. Also, it is evident that aspirations of free Kashmir never disappeared from the Kashmiri consciousness, despite the accession to India in 1947. So, this brief study tries to illustrate the causes of insurgency of 1990's and discusses the influence of Pakistan on Kashmir in that period of armed insurgency. Finally, the study

also looks at the oligarchical and undemocratic political setup leading to unfulfilled democratic aspirations which further paved way for the armed insurgency.

### 1. Disputed accession of the State:

The princely state of Jammu and Kashmir combined disparate regions which were ethnically, culturally and linguistically different to each other. The partition of the Indian sub-continent along religious lines led to the formation of India and Pakistan. During the negotiations leading to the partition the indigenous rulers of the colony's more than 500 principalities were technically allowed the choice to accede to either country, though for practical reasons most choices were dictated by a combination of geography and the religion of the majority of the inhabitants (Leather : 2000) .

On 14-15 August, 1947, the British transferred power to Pakistan and India as two separate sovereign entities separated along ostensibly religious lines, with the former claiming to be a homeland for the Muslims and the latter claiming to be a secular state. Since Jammu and Kashmir was a princely state, the decision to join either country rested in the hands of its last ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh (Shibli: 2009)

In theory, these princely states had the option of deciding which country to join, or of remaining independent. The princes decided their fate by signing two documents, a Standstill Agreement and an Instrument of Accession. The former enabled a princely state to maintain connections with the surrounding territories of British India during its transition to Dominion Status (be it India or Pakistan) in vital areas of supplies and communications. The latter was, in effect, a transfer of sovereignty from the prince to either India or Pakistan. The documents were deemed to work in tandem. Princely states signed a Standstill Agreement with their respective Dominion subject to negotiations over the Instrument of Accession. (ICG: 2003)

The demarcation of the international border dividing India and Pakistan in the Punjab produced widespread communal violence in 1947 and a massive exchange of populations (Talbot: 1996 ) It was against this background of widespread violence and administrative chaos that violence erupted in Kashmir in late September 1947 as well (Lamb : 1994) .

Jammu and Kashmir, because of its unique geographical location, signed Standstill Agreements with both India and Pakistan on 12 August 1947. But its Dogra ruler prevaricated on signing the Instrument of Accession (ICG: 2003)

News of the tribal invasion added a sense of urgency to the Maharaja's deliberations. On 24 October 1947, he wrote to the Indian governor general and former viceroy, Earl Mountbatten, requesting immediate military assistance. The letter was placed before the Indian Defence Committee on the morning of 25 October. The governor general stated that military assistance could only be offered on condition that the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession. (Hewitt: 1995). Maharaja Hari Singh sent Sheikh Abdullah as his representative to Delhi to seek India's help, and in turn signed the Statement of Accession. The next day, five days after the invasion began; Indian troops were flown into the capital Srinagar and fought alongside the local Kashmiris against the invaders, who had reached within a few miles of Srinagar. (Bamzai: 1994). The war was not over until the end of 1948 and left the former Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir split between India and Pakistan (Pakistan later gave a portion of its land to China).

V. P. Menon brought with him the signed Instrument of Accession and a letter by the Maharaja addressed to the Governor General that said the rebellion gave him no option but to ask for help from India ( Ibid : 1994). So, the decision to accede to India was not only natural in the circumstances but also the logical outcome of the ideals and objectives of the freedom movement. (Hasnain: 1988). The instrument of accession carried forward the legitimacy of the then King that the future of the state would be decided according to the will of the people by proper referendum.

From then onwards, Kashmir has been a serious bone of contention between India and Pakistan. Also it remains as one of the most complex, volatile and intractable issues of the international interests between India and Pakistan. The disputed nature of the valley has pushed both the nations into large scale wars since 1947. Furthermore, the rigidity of the issue has added multiple parameters to its already complex historical aspect. In many ways, Kashmir is an ethnic, religious and territorial issue with the potential for strategic and economic gains to India and Pakistan. Both nations have strong legal and moral claims to Kashmir, which has virtually reconciled itself to accepting the status quo and even practically abandoned its insistence on the right of Kashmiris to self-determination. Since 1989, a

major uprising against Indian rule by the Kashmiri's has changed the fate of Kashmir and gun-culture has converted "Paradise" into a graveyard. (Hilali: 2011).

## 2. Insurgency

Over the last sixty years, despite a massive army presence and the imposition of draconian laws, Kashmiris have challenged Indian occupation with surprising regularity. Since the state's accession to India in 1947, successive generations of Kashmiri youth have mobilised to challenge Indian rule (Shibli: 2009).

Since the accession, Kashmir Valley has been under brutal military occupation and particularly since the popular insurgency erupted against the Indian Rule in 1989. The once serene and lovely Kashmir Valley with its gorgeous mountains and rivers, which inspired generations of poets to eulogize its beauty, has now become a Valley of Blood. At least 40,000 people have been killed since insurgency began in 1989, according to conservative official estimates. Unofficial estimates are well over 80,000 - half of them are civilians. Thousands of Indian soldiers have been killed and it costs billions of dollars to keep the security forces in Kashmir (Haq: 2010)

### 2.1 Failed Political processes of the democratic set up:

The political pendulum of Kashmir has witnessed turbulent oscillations since the time Kashmir was invaded by foreigners. The establishment of different political institutions by the rulers of the time have deeply influenced the timely politics of the valley. The contemporary scenario of the politics ranges from full monarchy, partly aristocratic to completely authoritarian and repressive regulatory instruments (laws and ordinances).

National conference - one of the oldest local political party, and strictly Indian in its character - has been in a major spot light from 1940's onwards. This party shaped the political sphere of Kashmir with other parties either emerging out of it or developing against its agenda in Kashmir.

The first two decades after the accessions saw a dormant phase in the political scenario of Kashmir with regional politics being strongly influenced by the Indian state. It can be said that during these two decades following the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war, Kashmir lay largely quiet. However, between 1965 and 1989, the process of political mobilization and the undermining of political institutions throughout India, but particularly in Kashmir, accelerated. The return of Sheikh Abdullah in 1970's raised expectations of the young Kashmiris. Even the then government had to review several legislations pertaining to Kashmir

Abdullah promptly assumed the chief ministership and the leadership of the National Conference, and his party won a comfortable majority of seats in the next election in 1977, one of Kashmir's few openly conducted and fairly contested elections. Yet this respite from Indira Gandhi's chicanery was brief. (Puri : 2003 )

After Sheikh's death in 1983, leadership passed to his son, Farooq, who lacked his father's standing and charisma but inherited popular support and legitimacy. He was succeeded first by his son, Farooq, a political neophyte who had none of the political survival skills required by the rough- and-tumble politics of the state and none of his father's charisma and political stature.

In the 1983 state assembly elections, which were also reasonably fair (by Indian standards), Farooq rebuffed Indira Gandhi's efforts to forge an electoral alliance with the National Conference in Kashmir, and contested the elections alone. The National Conference again triumphed. But determined to install a Congress regime in Kashmir, Gandhi dismissed Farooq Abdullah on tenuous grounds in July 1984, replacing him with G.M. Shah, a disaffected member of the National Conference who proved singularly inept at curbing the rising tide of violence.

The Congress party in New Delhi tried to deepen its roots and interests in the Kashmir valley and got involved in electoral fraud and subversive electoral processes in Kashmir. This unfolded a series of events including the dismissal of legitimately elected National conference government of Farooq Abdullah in the state of 1984.

In 1986, G. M Shah was dismissed on the grounds of corruption and failure to maintain public order in the state. The Rajiv- Farooq accord forms yet another critical turning point in precipitating the insurgency. This marriage of political convenience was fashioned between the ruling Congress Party and Farooq's National Conference. Whatever the advantages of the alliance were in Kashmiri eyes, Farooq became an adjunct of the Congress Party.

Socio-Political analysts convey the view that things would not have come to the present situation had New Delhi had acted with greater restraint and political articulation.. Furthermore, the Politics of Kashmir during these decades was marked by gamesmanship, fleeting alliances of convenience, and personality politics. Means for aggregating collective Kashmiri political interests are found to be very elusive. This fragmentation has resulted partly from interference by New Delhi and Islamabad, as each has sought to secure its own strategic interests within Kashmir.

## 2.2 1987: A Turning point:

The manifestation of the elections of 1987 reciprocated with the growth of new movement in Kashmir against the parties controlling the political process. This divergence created a void that was filled by the armed movement across Kashmir. The experience of the 1987 Kashmir state elections alienated many Kashmiris from democratic politics. The horrors committed by the New Delhi-directed Governor during the early years of insurgency deepened that alienation. New Delhi's absolute intolerance for separatist political mobilization has resulted in questionable detentions, custodial executions, torture, and the use of brutal clandestine state and as well non-state actors as instruments of suppression.( Sami : 2006 )

Subsequently, the Congress Party led by Rajiv Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah's National Conference entered into an electoral alliance and blatantly rigged the state elections of 1987. This blatant electoral abuse encouraged by the Congress and Farooq's 'betrayal' led to widespread resentment among the Kashmiri Muslims against the Indian government and the National Conference.

This little political legitimacy Farooq possessed disintegrated in the 1987 state elections when the Congress-National Conference alliance was perceived to have engaged in electoral fraud. This apparent hijacking of the political process blocked off the last avenue of lawful political protest for dissatisfied residents of Kashmir Valley.

In the 1987 election, considered to be the most compromised in Kashmir's recent history, the Congress Party and the National Conference jointly contested the state assembly elections; they were opposed by the Muslim United Front (MUF), a conglomeration of political parties. Politically aroused but frustrated young men and women were increasingly drawn to incipient separatist and insurgent movements, ranging from the largely secular Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) to the more religiously oriented and pro-Pakistani Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HUM), which sent their recruits across the border to Pakistan where they were provided with training, organization, and weaponry. An earlier generation of Kashmiris might grudgingly have accepted the government's dismissal. The new generation, better educated and more conscious of its political rights, proved less malleable.

With no other institutional recourse open for expressing their disenchantment with the flawed political process, they resorted to violence. The insurgency has taken the lives of tens of thousands, forced hundreds of thousands from their homes, and shows no sign of abating. The extensive electoral malfeasances that they witnessed in 1987 convinced this younger generation of Kashmiris that the national government in New Delhi had scant regard for their political rights and reckless disregard for democratic procedures (Ganguly : 1996 )

So, from 1990's onward, there has been a remarkable transformation in the terms of discourse in which the Kashmiri liberation struggle against Indian rule has sought to express itself. The popular view that prevailed was people picked guns against the popular undemocratic political system and in no way was the movement fighting for greater democratic rights. History clearly demarcates that the Armed rebellion had its roots prior to the rigged Assembly elections of 1987. The cause was religiously and ideologically fuelled. In many ways, the ruling National Conference party had encouraged this atmosphere through a range of propaganda campaigns. Even as far back as the 1984 election, Farooq Abdullah and the National Conference deliberately tried to create revulsion against India for their own political gains. There is little evidence of Indian repression in this period, and it seems likely that the National Conference was trying to use this as a way to hide the poor and corrupt performance of the State Government. Indeed, perhaps if India had done more to intervene in State affairs, it could have abated the insurgency that followed.

## 3. Growth of Armed Insurgency:

The outbreak of militant violence that became commonplace in the Valley was a purely contemporary concept for Kashmiris. Kashmir has no history of resisting successive foreign rulers, and in fact Kashmir was shaped by principles of non-violence and pacifism as dictated by Kashmir's cultural heritage in the *Rishi* Order. ( Navnita : 2000). The eruption of militant violence was marked by several incidents.



The outbreak of secessionist sentiments in Kashmir in 1989 provided Pakistan with a golden opportunity to loosen India's hold over the region by providing military and financial help to the various insurgent groups that sprang up. (Ganguly : 2006 )

The armed insurgency grew with many factors contributing to its growth. The primary factors include the increasing Indian dominance, Pakistan's claim over the territory and the third factor of asserting its Independence. Along with fighting occasional wars, Pakistani leaders have admitted arming and training groups to fight against Indian rule in Kashmir. The insurgency that erupted in 1989 was triggered by local factors, but Pakistan's backing made it more formidable. Although India largely defeated the armed separatists by the late 1990s, a formidable level of insurgency continues to this day.

### **3.1 Cause of Insurgency:**

The Kashmir conflict keeps flaring up and is not only spurred by the chronic rivalry between India and Pakistan, but also because of the strong feeling among Kashmiris of their marginalisation in Hindu-majority India. Also, the frequently ruthless Indian response to Kashmiri demands has accentuated these feelings, ultimately provoking an insurgency in 1988. Since late 1989, Kashmir problem has become intimately linked to the larger question of war and peace in South Asia. A virtual insurrection among Kashmiri Muslims in the valley created a serious crisis between New Delhi and Islamabad. (Shibli : 2009)

The growing political dissidence is difficult to correlate with a lessening of political or religious rights of Kashmiris. Ever since the Kashmiri insurgency began in mid-1988, it has been variously described by outside observers as an Islamic insurgency, an instance of Islamic militancy or more recently as a manifestation of Islamic terrorism or jihad. One justification offered for such characterizations is that the insurgents—themselves defined their project in this fashion. (Swami : 2007).

What explains the abrupt rise of violent ethno-religious fervour in 1989 in India's only Muslim-majority state? Apologists for the Indian position have contended that the insurgency is the result of Pakistani propaganda and logistical support and training for the insurgents. (Subramaniam: 1990). Pakistani apologists, in turn, argue that the insurgency represents the spontaneous rise of ethno-religious sentiment amongst the oppressed Muslim community of Jammu and Kashmir. ( Akhtar :1991)

More scholarly explanations have sought to locate the origins of the insurgency in the clash of competing nationalist visions, rampant electoral malfeasances, the rise of a frustrated middle class, or the breakdown of a composite Kashmiri cultural identity. These explanations, though not without merit, are at best partial. Some do provide useful insights into the origins of the insurgency. Others offer explanations for the timing of the insurgency. None of them, however, adequately explains both components

The interlinking forces of political mobilization and institutional decay best explain the origins of the insurgency in Kashmir. On the one hand, the developmental activities of the Indian government gave rise to accelerated political mobilization in Kashmir, making a younger generation of Kashmiris more conscious of their political rights. Simultaneously, on the other hand, the government was also responsible for the deinstitutionalization of politics in the state," which drove the expression of political discontent into extra-institutional contexts. Eventually, with the last institutional avenues for the expression of dissent blocked, pent-up discontent culminated in violence. (Ganguly : 2006)

This combination of institutional decline and political mobilization can contribute to political instability. Much of the violent political turmoil that exists throughout India is attributable to these processes. The crisis in Kashmir is the manifestation of an extreme version of political deinstitutionalization and accelerating political mobilization. The early decay of political institutions in Kashmir, which the government in New Delhi did little to stem (and in some cases encouraged), and the dramatic pace of political mobilization proved to be a combustible mix. ( Thomas : 1996 )

Kashmiri insurgency arose out of a process of political mobilization that was juxtaposed with steady institutional decay. The political mobilization of Kashmiris started later than in the rest of the Indian state, but it accelerated dramatically after the 1970s. Institutional decay in Kashmir began as early as the 1950s, much earlier than in the rest of India. These two trends intersected as a new generation of Kashmiris emerged on the political scene. (Ganguly : 2006)

The growth of political mobilization in Kashmir occurred at a slower pace than in the rest of India. The reasons lie in Kashmir's peculiar political history. In the closing days of the nationalist struggle in India, Kashmir was under the tutelage of Maharaja Hari Singh, not the most enlightened of princely rulers. (Ibid: 2006)

Within Kashmir, the National Conference spearheaded efforts to bring about political and economic reform. The platform announced by the National Conference in September 1944 proposed a new constitution that would lead to representative government based on universal adult franchise and that would guarantee civil and political rights to all Kashmiris. The platform also called for extensive state intervention in the economic arena to bring about equity and social justice. (Gupta)

Abdullah's policies significantly limited the growth and development of political institutions within Jammu and Kashmir. Consequently, even though a Constituent Assembly was convened in October 1951 and the state adopted its own constitution, the mechanisms of political representation were stunted from the outset. Unlike elections in the rest of India, elections in Jammu and Kashmir were largely farcical. The National Conference and its operatives dominated the politics of the state." Furthermore, the central government in New Delhi did little to stay the hand of the National Conference as long as it did not question the accession of Jammu and Kashmir into the Indian Union (Ibid : 2006).

### **3.2 Insurgency and identity:**

Ever since the Kashmiri insurgency began in mid-1988, it has been variously described by outside observers as an Islamic insurgency, an instance of Islamic militancy or more recently as a manifestation of Islamic terrorism or jihad. One justification offered for such characterizations is that the insurgents themselves defined their project in this fashion. (Swami: 2007)

The failed political situation provided a breeding ground for the armed groups to operate. The inception of gun across the valley saw more and more people joining armed ranks. With ideological machinery of Islamists backing the process, this period saw a growth of many groups carrying incidents that wreaked havoc across the local communities-including Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits and adding to the anti-India fury that is exploding on the streets daily.

Despite official Indian claims that the insurgency is a product of outside jihadi forces working in tandem with Pakistan, the local Kashmiris remain deeply committed to the cause of Azadi or freedom and in their support of the rebellion.

Since December 1989, the strength of the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir fluctuated. The insurgent groups grew mitotically and soon the Indian forces were battling against a dozen insurgent groups of varying size and ideological orientation, as well as dozens more minor operations. The more prominent of the insurgent groups include the nominally secular, pro-independence Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) and the radical Islamic and pro-Pakistani groups Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HUM), Hezbollah, Harkat-ul-Ansar, and Ikhwanul Muslimeen (Ibid : 2007) .This prompted Indian authorities to deploy more troops across the valley bordering borders and dealing with the civil war.

After 90's uprising, the valley has been turned into a garrison with one million Indian armed troops deployed across the length and breadth of the state. It makes Kashmir as the most militarized zone on planet with one armed personal available for every ten persons. The initial years of armed rebellion showed a steep high with more and younger Kashmiris joining the armed ranks.

### **3.3 Pakistan and its active involvement in Insurgency:**

Kashmiri activists claim that India and Pakistan have historically treated Kashmir conflict as a mere land dispute completely ignoring their legitimate grievances. Pakistan has always desired greater international and western involvement in the issue. Such involvement is important as it keeps the issue alive and at centre stage. When the international community began to stress that the Kashmiri people had become alienated, Pakistan was labelled as a country backing the proxy war in Kashmir. This has helped to create an impression in the international community that the people of Kashmir indeed wanted to accede from India. This was extremely detrimental to Pakistan.

Pakistan has long held the resentment that Kashmir, which rightfully belonged to it as a Muslim majority State, was snatched from right under its nose by a clever India. Pakistan had hoped that Kashmiris would rise against the Indian Rule in 1965 following Operation Gibraltar, but that did not happen. Thus, when a full-blown indigenous insurgency erupted in 1989, Pakistan was only too happy to take advantage of the golden opportunity and would fuel the insurgency enormously by supplying arms and training to both indigenous and foreign militants in Kashmir, thus adding fuel to the smouldering fire of discontent in the valley.

The foreign policy of Pakistan has projected Kashmir as a major humanitarian disaster with gross human rights abuses and illegal occupation over the resources of the land. It claimed that the people of Kashmir had been completely alienated by the rest of the country.

So during this period, attacks against innocent civilians were stepped up and India was projected as performing gross civil rights abuses in Kashmir.

As the protests are persisting with each passing day, the Indian union government partially and half-heartedly acknowledges the spontaneous nature of protests and attributes this turmoil to a lack of “governance deficit” in Kashmir. Furthermore, Pakistani state and Islamist organizations are blamed for the popular anti-India sentiment in Kashmir. India strictly blames Pakistan espionage for inciting a series of anti-India protests in Valley. However, Pakistan maintains its stance of providing moral support to Kashmiri’s by calling it as indigenous struggle of Kashmir.

#### **4. Post 2000 Scenario:**

The graph of armed insurgency during the national conference regime witnessed a shift towards dynastic power in the general elections of 2002 and 2008. India wanted an end to the growing sentiments in Kashmir by curbing the armed movement started in 90’s. Regular local and national elections have taken place, notably in 2002 and 2008, with increased voter turnout. While the mainstream political parties – particularly the Indian National Congress, the National Conference and the People’s Democratic Party - shared the electoral support, there was also support for those who rejected the electoral process. One such political group is the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) – a conglomeration of 27 political, social and religious groups that was formed in 1993 as a joint. The dormant phase of the militancy began with the arrival of new governments in Kashmir after Assembly elections of 2002 and 2008. This saw a shift in political discourse of Kashmir.

The transfer of land to Amarnath Shrine board in Kashmir by Government order in 2008 injected a new spirit in the Kashmiris struggle for self-determination. The sea of Kashmiri protestors thronging to the roads, participating in large agitational rallies raising pro-independence, pro-Pakistan slogans and carrying green Pakistani flags, has sent shivers down the Indian spine. Never had the valley after 1989 seen such a massive protest and determination by the common Kashmiris which taken the Indian government by surprise. (Shah : 2008 )

This popular movement of Kashmir intifada is being quelled by imposing round the clock curfews and other unconditional restrictions by the Indian government. Also, Thousands of locals- children, men and women have been killed and maimed by the armed personals who enjoy impunity under special provisions of different Acts.

More ever, thousands of protestors have been arrested .The military crackdown spawned a more defiant mood among the angry Kashmiri populace, resulting in more pro-independence protests and killing of more and more protestors by Indian paramilitary. Many burial processions of dead protestors have been shot at resulting in a cycle of deaths and protests

#### **Conclusion:**

From a theoretical perspective, the Kashmir conflict is a classic case of a distinct ethnic and religious community (Muslims) feeling socially and politically deprived. (Ahmar: 2006 ). The J&K conflict may be classified as a “protracted social conflict” because of feelings among Kashmiris of “economic and technological underdevelopment, and unintegrated social and political systems, including distributive injustice, economic, social and extreme disparities in levels of political privilege and opportunity. (Edward:

The fragmented nature of the core issue of Kashmir has made this as one of the most contested and complex issues of the world. This political dispute needs to be understood and resorted in its historical context. The failed promises, military dominance and undemocratic set up of authoritarian state have pushed Kashmir into a sphere of unchallenged paralysis. All the related factors. i.e. disputed accession of the state, failed political set-up of the valley, unfulfilled promises have contributed to the already complex history of Kashmir.

This has generated a never ending cycle of violence where Kashmir’s are subjected to the highest level of subjugation. In the 1980s, it is difficult to distinguish whether the generation of youth that spear-headed the insurgency were motivated by a genuine dissatisfaction with the democratic processes of the state, or whether this generation was simply the product of the deliberate propaganda campaign and fundamentalist indoctrination. It is likely that it was a combination of both forces. At another level, the failure of institutional mechanisms for resolving political problems lead to the adoption of coercive military strategies by the dominant India Nation State, with visible adverse consequences as are evident today. Even the higher echelons of the Indian army have warned about the dangers of excessive reliance on the army to deal with civil violence.



Signifying the validity or invalidity of instrument of accession, the dominating that has been overlooked throughout the history of Kashmir is its people. The will of the people has never been consulted as was pledged by India itself and under the auspices of third party (UN).

Abdullah's policies significantly limited the growth and development of political institutions within Jammu and Kashmir. Consequently, even though a Constituent Assembly was convened in October 1951 and the state adopted its own constitution, the mechanisms of political representation were stunted from the outset. Unlike elections in the rest of India, elections in Jammu and Kashmir were largely farcical. The National Conference and its operatives dominated the politics of the state." Furthermore, the central government in New Delhi did little to stay the hand of the National Conference as long as it did not question the accession of Jammu and Kashmir into the Indian Union

Kashmir will continue to affect Indian and Pakistani international relations. Further the core issue of Kashmir needs to be understood in its historical perspective. The genesis of this disputed land lies in its history and the other undemocratic political system that has evolved over the period of time.

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