

Impact of Displacement on Education and Occupation of Kashmiri Pandits living in Camps

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Abstract

The present study is about displaced Kashmiri Pandit youths who are living in migrant camps. Jammu and Kashmir witnessed displacement of Kashmiri Pandit community 29 years ago. Research indicates that the displacement of Pandits from their home affects their social and economic life. The present paper attempts to study the impact of displacement on the education and occupation of Kashmiri Pandit youth living in camps in Jammu district. This paper tries to focus on the education and occupation of youth and with their help the education and occupation of their parents will also be studied. After construction of new TRT camps the displaced Pandits have been shifted to new TRT located at Muthi, Purkhoo, Nagrota and Jagti. This paper has also made an attempt to look into the effect of relocation on education of youth.

Keywords: *Camps, Displacement, Education, Kashmiri Pandits and Occupation.*

1Introduction

Displacement is a form of migration in which individuals are forced to move against their will. The twentieth century witnessed mass movement of people which are dislocated from their home by war, ethnic conflicts, natural calamities, industrial disasters and the implementation of various developmental projects (Biswas and Banerjee, 2012). Displacement and conflict are closely related. Civilians are forced to leave from their native place during conflict situations. Thus dislocation is an offshoot of the conflict situations (Shekhawat, 2006). The state of Jammu and Kashmir has also witnessed displacement due to conflict. Displacement is a visible effect of armed conflict in Jammu and Kashmir.

In Jammu and Kashmir displacement of Kashmiri Pandits took place 26 years back. Kashmiri Pandits cannot be classified as migrants because their final settlement is yet to be decided and they are also not classified as refugees because they have not crossed international border. IDP (internally displaced people) is suitable term to describe them (Kaul, 2005). The Kashmiri Pandits feel that they are not migrants who voluntarily left their home they were

forcibly displaced from the valley. The Kashmiri Pandits wish to be identified as Internally Displaced People (Sawhney and Mehrotra, 2013). Most of the Pandits migrated in 1989-1990. The reason for their migration was not economical but political (Sarkaria, 2009).

Kashmiri Pandits are part of minority community in the Muslim dominated valley. Many controversies regarding the movement of Kashmiri Pandits away from Kashmir have been emerged as most of the Kashmiri Pandits argue that they were forced to leave from the valley. Some of them blame the whole Muslim community while others blame it as the work of the militant groups supported by Pakistan. The community left due to environment of fear. The exodus has changed the lives of Pandits. The better off people have shifted to rented accommodation or constructed their own houses. Many of them moved out of state (Shekhawat, 2006).

1.2 Studies related to Effects of Displacement on Education and Occupation

Shekhawat (2006) examined that displacement disrupted the education of Pandit students as they could not complete their studies. Some of the displaced students lost their previous years of studies. They were not getting admission in the mainstream educational institutions and had to continue their education in the camp school. The displaced students had to suffer from delay of examination and declaration of results.

Raj, Sharma and Waris (2014) study on Pandits stated that the migrant students had to cover long distance to attend the school as there were no schooling arrangements for the students in the camp area.

Rajput (2013) revealed the issues and the challenges faced by the displaced Kashmiri Pandits family. During the early years of displacement the Kashmiri Pandits faced various hardships, these includes the problem of educating their children up to par to the children of locals. Language is another barrier faced by the Kashmiri Pandit elders.

As A.N Kaul (2001) in his article analysed "*we have wept long enough*" as Swami Vivekanda once said, "*No more weeping, but stand on your feet and be men*". It is now realized by the author that weeping would not serve any purpose as they lost their precious possessions, their homes and their nearest and dearest kith and kin. The instinct of survival helped them to rise again and build shelter for them, look for alternative sources of livelihood and provide their children high academic and professional training as it has always remain the top priority for them even when they could not afford two square meals a day. Their young boys and girls have settled in different part of India and many of them settled in other parts of world. Their talented doctors, engineers, scientists, business and computer professionals have proved themselves and made a name and brought glory to their country in general and their community in particular.

2 Methodology

The present study is descriptive in nature. The purpose of this research is to examine the consequences of displacement experienced by Kashmiri Pandit youth living in camps. For the purpose of this study Jammu district was taken as universe. The population is Kashmiri Pandit youth living in migrant camps. The Jammu and Kashmir government has allotted two rooms flats to Kashmiri migrants in five camps: Bootanagar, Purkhoo, Muthi, Nagrota and Jagti. Two camps i.e., Bootanagar and Muthi B are located in Jammu city and other three camps are in the outskirts of the city. Youth (between the age group 18 to 29) living in all these camps has been selected for the study. Simple random sampling technique is used to select 280 respondents in whole.

3 Education

When we look into the history of Kashmiri Pandits education it was observed that historically Pandits have high educational potentialities and as far as males are concerned most of them are always devoted to learn and acquire higher status among all rungs of society. For them educational values hold utmost importance (Kaul, 2005). Before knowing the education of youth living in camps, it is important to know their parents education because parent's education plays an important role in the life of children. They are the first educator of the child.

3.1 Parent's Education

The information regarding their parent's education was collected from the youth. Data shows that the least received education according to respondents was up to middle and maximum respondent's fathers have received education up to matric. In terms of their mothers, it was found out that 9.64 per cent of respondent's mothers were illiterate as they have not received any education. Most of the women were educated up to middle as they are not educated much so their main priority is their home. As stated by one of the respondent that after displacement men used to work outside where as women keep on looking for their children and family. And when somebody takes the charge of a housewife she cannot come out of it and starts liking that life.

3.2 Respondent's Education

In the study there was only one respondent who received education up to matriculate level. In the higher secondary level there are 33.57 per cent respondents, among these 9.28 per cent have dropped their education after completing their 12th. These respondents dropped their education in order to earn and also due to unfavourable academic atmosphere in the camp. In the next category that is graduate level, there are total 46.43 per cent respondents. It comprises of both undergraduate (29.28%) and graduate (17.14%). In the post graduate level there are total 9.28 per cent respondents. There are also respondents who fall in the category of professional courses they constitute 10.36



per cent. Thus, it was observed in the study that most of the respondents fall in the category of graduation. To see the association between sex and education a table is constructed

Gender and Education of the Respondents

Education	Gender		Total
	Males	Females	
Matric	-	1(100) (0.71)	1 (0.36)
Higher secondary	59 (62.76) (42.14)	35 (37.23) (25)	94 (33.57)
Graduate	58 (43.94) (41.43)	72 (54.54) (51.43)	130 (47.14)
Post graduate	15 (57.69) (10.71)	11 (42.31) (7.86)	26 (9.28)
Professional course	8 (27.59) (5.71)	21 (72.41) (15)	29 (10.36)
Total	140 (50)	140 (50)	280(100)

As per table there was no male who had studied up to matriculation only. Out of the total males about 42.14 per cent fall in the category of higher secondary followed by 41.43 per cent at graduate level. There is slight difference of male respondents at higher secondary and graduate level. As shown in the table, the level of education of males is decreasing as we move on to higher education. In term of female respondents, most of them i.e., 51.43 per cent fall in the category of graduate. Education of women is progressively increasing as we move on to higher studies except at the post graduate level. In comparison there were more male than female in the higher secondary level but female lead male in graduate level. Thus, the study reveals that most of the male were educated up to higher secondary and when we talk about female most of them were in graduate level. As we move on towards higher studies number of male decreases while the number of female is progressively increasing. Hence it was observed that the maximum fathers of the respondents living in camps have passed their matriculation and in terms of respondent's mother, most of them were educated up to middle. There were also some women who are illiterate but none of the respondent father was found to be illiterate. It is interesting to note that in comparison to elder generation, the present generation is more educated.

3.3 Effect of Resettlement on Education of Displaced Youth

The ORT (One Room Tenement) camps in Jammu that was set up to be temporary place for the displaced Pandits demolished after some years and the population were shifted to new TRT (Two Room Tenement) in Muthi, Purkhoo, Nagrota and Jagti. It is not only displacement which affects the education of youths sometimes relocation of people from one place to another also affects them. The displaced have to adjust with their studies in a new place. In the present study it was observed that more than half of the respondents i.e., 53.93 per cent said their education has been suffered because of their relocation. Every time they have to shift from one place to another. While relocation their education suffered because they had to change school and adjust in new place. The various problems faced by them after relocation were problem of transport, problem of changing address, distance factors etc. Although relocation effect the education of youth but there were also respondents who said relocation benefits them in terms of education these constitute 46.07 per cent. These are respondents who got TRT near their previous ORT camp and those who are relocated from rural area that is from Batarwalia camp (Udhampur) to Jammu. Those who are relocated from Batarwalia camp said they got more exposure and better opportunities after relocation to Jammu. There are also respondents who said they got more space to study in TRT because they have one room more than their previous camp.

4 Occupation

Occupation is a social role determined by the general division of labour within a society (Sharma, 1992). It is an important variable which determines the lifestyles and status of an individual.

4.1 Father's Occupation

In the present study for the purpose of knowing if any change in occupation of their parents took place after their displacement, the respondents were asked the occupation of their parents before and after displacement. Table below shows their responses:



Father’s Occupation before and after Displacement

Father’s occupation (Before)	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Father’s occupation (After)	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Farming	90	32.85	Private sector	103	37.73
Government sector	82	29.93	Government sector	83	30.40
Own business	63	22.99	Relief based	42	15.39
Private sector	38	13.87	Own business/Self employment	24	8.79
Migrated before	1	0.36	Retired	21	7.69
Total	274*	100	Total	273#	100

*Before displacement 6 were studying according to their children

#After displacement 7 respondent’s father are expired

Looking at the table it was observed that large numbers of respondent fathers i.e., 32.85 per cent were involved in agricultural activities before their displacement. In the second place there are those who were involved in government sector, they comprises of 29.93 per cent. Those who were having their own business constitute of 22.99 per cent. Only a handful of them were involved in private sector, they represent 13.86 per cent and were private school teacher, cashier in hotel, workers in factory, printing press etc. One respondent’s father had migrated before the mass migration of Kashmiri Pandits. He had done B. Tech and was doing private job. Thus, most of the respondent’s fathers were involved in agriculture followed by government Job before their migration. Very less number were involved in private sector.

After displacement, change in occupation of respondent’s father took place as most of them have started working in private sector. Out of total 273, most of the respondent’s fathers i.e., 37.73 per cent were involved in private job. There is sharp increase in private sector after their displacement. Some of the respondent’s father do not have any source of income and are dependent upon government relief only for their survival, they comprise of 15.39 per cent. They are barely able to meet their basic needs and are also uncertain about their children future. Those who are having their own business of any kind were 8.79 per cent.



Thus, it was observed that the whole scenario has drastically changed after their displacement. Those who were engaged in Government job continued with their job where as other took up low paid Jobs. There is sharp increase in private jobs. Those who were engaged in agricultural and allied activities are working in factories or doing private work. Some are also dependent upon relief received by the government, they are not doing anything. This kind of dependence leads to helplessness and frustration. Thus the agricultural intensive job changed into a labour one because large numbers of Pandits are involved in private sector. Displacement not only affects their change in habitat but also their occupational activities. This results in loss of status leading to marginalisation that is downward mobility and loss of status after their displacement.

4.2 Mother's occupation

After getting information about respondent's father occupation, their mother occupation was also taken into consideration. When asked the respondents about their mother occupation, it was observed that before displacement majority i.e., 98.92 per cent respondent mothers were housewives. They remain confined to their home only and therefore were not involved in any kind of occupation. Remaining 1.07 per cent women were working. The study brings out that majority of respondents mother were involved in household works and were not working outside their home. After displacement also majority i.e., 95.36 per cent respondent's mother were housewives. They remain busy with their household activities. Those who are working constitute 4.64 per cent. Two women were self-employed. One is principal running her own school and another is involved in stitching.

One of the respondents states the reason behind Pandit women not working outside home. She said, Kashmiri women are not working outside it is because of Kashmiri culture. In Kashmir women used to work in field, they kept themselves busy with cattle or any other work. They did not work outside the home. After displacement, she heard from many women that they are happy while living in camp because they do not have to do all those things which they used to do in Kashmir like working in field, grazing cattle etc. They are now living with their family doing household work only.

Another respondent states that new generation women are interested to work outside home. They are doing job but if we talk about elder generation they were not educated that much. At that time girl education were not given importance. Boys were involved in jobs and girls education was not preferred that much. Now the things have changed, girls are more educated than boys in the camp. She said, we find 10 boys roaming here and there in camp but not girls. Boys after doing 10th-12th are involved in some work, girls are studying well.

Thus, the study reveals that Kashmiri Pandit women were mostly involved in household work. Very few respondents' mothers are working outside. Women's lack of education makes it difficult for them to get Job. There is slight reduction in housewives after displacement.

4.3 Respondents Occupation

As the present study is on the youth between the age of 18 to 29 so most of them i.e., 70.35 per cent out of total were students and therefore they are not working. Another category which is not working is of housewives and consists of 4.28 per cent. Since they were not working outside and stayed at home taking care of their family, therefore they tend to be categorised as homemaker. Thus it was observed that majority of the respondents were not earning. Only 25.71 per cent respondents out of the total sample were working in which males lead females in number. Most of them were doing job in private sector. Thus, the data shows that majority of working respondents were engaged in private sector. They are involved in private sector because of less availability of government jobs and their will to support the family.

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