

# Problems Faced by Adolescents due to Armed Conflict in Kashmir

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## ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out on 800 adolescents from rural and urban areas of Kashmir to observe the problems faced by adolescents due to armed conflict in Kashmir as per affect of conflict (intact and disrupted), dwelling and gender. The sample was selected through multi stage sampling technique. The sample was collected with the help of self constructed questionnaire. The study reveals that adolescents have faced problems due to armed conflict. Boys have been beaten; their identity cards were checked frequently. They have also faced abusive language, were stopped and kept aside and some of the boys have also experienced frisking. Adolescent girls have faced verbal harassment, harassment through gesture and physical harassment. On seeing men in uniform most intact-disrupted adolescent boys get angry; whereas most intact-disrupted adolescent girls get scared on seeing them.

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## 1. Introduction

The world as a whole has been getting incrementally less peaceful every year since 2007 and bucking a trend that had seen a global move away from conflict since the end of the Second World War (Withnall, 2014). The world spends over 839 billion dollars a year on conflicts, arms and equipping armies. Landmines and random explosions have resulted in the largest number of disabilities caused by wars and armed conflicts. 1/3 of the world spends more on their military budget than they do on medical services. Africa, Asia & Latin America spend more than 22 billion dollars a year on weapons. By the year 2020 more people are expected to die as a result of armed conflicts & war than from all other causes (Tunis, 2007). Adolescents face particular problems during periods of armed conflicts. They are at a time of life when they are undergoing many physical and emotional changes. During conflicts, adolescent girls are particularly at risk for gender-based violence and sexual exploitation. The extreme and often prolonged circumstances of armed conflict can interfere with identity development. As a result, many adolescents, especially those who have had severely distressing experiences, cannot foresee any future for themselves (UN, 1996).

## 2. Review of literature

Amone-P'olak et al (2007) assessed war experiences and the impact of physical abuse on formerly abducted boys in Northern Uganda. Cross sectional self report designs were used on 216 formerly abducted boys and it was found that all boys were exposed to war events, participated in violence, were bodily abused and manifested numerous signs and symptoms of post traumatic stress.

Lafta (2014) selected total sample of 1858 male students of Baghdad to assess traumatic symptoms like fear and or terror and painful recall of traumatic events. The most prominent finding from this study is that more than of the total sample had reported multiple experiences of trauma. Around 37 per cent reported traumatic-reaction symptoms like fear and or terror and the painful recall of traumatic events.

Suarez (2013) examined the resilience and post traumatic reaction of indigenous Quechua girls and adolescents in the after effects of the Peruvian armed conflict after two decades. The study devices were used on 75 participants who reported extreme exposure to violence i.e. sexual violence, torture, combat, death of family members and forced displacement. On the contrary, resilience and current stress contributed to the variance of trauma symptoms when measured by local idioms of distress.

## 3. Objectives of the study

- To study the problems of adolescents due to armed conflict in Kashmir.
- To assess the types of problems faced by adolescent boys and girls.

## 4. Material and Methods

The present study was conducted to study the problems of adolescents due to armed conflict in Kashmir as per affect of conflict (intact and disrupted), dwelling and gender. The information was gathered from adolescents in urban and rural areas of Kashmir region. The study was investigated through multi stage sampling technique. This type of sampling was taken because the size of population (i.e. Kashmir) was very large and was scattered as per socio-economic characteristics of adolescents. The sample selected by this method was more representative of population. It permitted the fieldwork to be concentrated and yet large area covered. Sample was selected from Kashmir region-800 adolescents were selected for the purpose, 400 adolescents from urban areas and 400 adolescents from rural areas. The tool used for the study includes a detailed questionnaire. The data obtained was carefully scrutinized, categorized and coded in order to fulfill the objectives. The data was analyzed applying appropriate statistical measures.

## 5. Results and Discussions

### Problems of Adolescents due to Armed Conflict

In armed conflict situations adolescent boys and girls at global level tend to face different forms of harassment. While boys are usually harassed for security purpose but girls can fall to the victimhood of physical violence.

### A) Ever Faced Problems

Table 4.1 shows that 49.8 per cent (f=199) intact adolescents were harassed, while 50.2 per cent (f=201) intact adolescents were not harassed. In the same manner, 47.8 per cent (f=191) disrupted adolescents were harassed, while 52.2 per cent (f=209) disrupted adolescents were not harassed. In difference to this, 52.25 per cent (f=209) rural adolescents faced harassment due to armed conflict; whereas 54.75 (f=219) urban adolescents never faced harassment. In general, 48.8 per cent (f=390) adolescents have faced harassment. Stalking faced by adolescents show insignificant differences among intact-disrupted adolescents  $\chi^2(1,800) = 0.32, p = 0.571$ . While as, significant differences among rural-urban adolescents  $\chi^2(1,800) = 3.92, p = 0.047$ . Positive insignificant correlation is observed among intact-disrupted adolescents  $r(800) = 0.020, p = 0.57$  and positive significant correlation among rural-urban adolescents  $r(800) = 0.070, p = 0.04$  in context to this.

Table 4.2 depicts that 54.5 per cent (f=109) intact rural adolescents have been harassed; whereas 55 per cent (f=110) intact urban adolescents have not been harassed. Similarly, 50 per cent (f=100) disrupted rural adolescents have been harassed; while 54.5 per cent (f=109) disrupted urban adolescents have not been harassed. Significant differences are found among intact rural-urban adolescents  $\chi^2(1,400) = 3.61, p = 0.057$  and insignificant differences among disrupted rural-urban adolescents  $\chi^2(1,400) = 0.81, p = 0.6$ . Significant positive correlation is found among intact rural-urban adolescents  $r(400) = 0.021, p = 0.004$ . While negative insignificant correlation is seen among disrupted rural-urban  $r(400) = -0.741, p = 0.412$ .

### B) Type of Problems Faced by Boys

Table 4.1 portrays that identity card of 37.5 per cent (f=42) intact boys was checked, 26.8 per cent (f=30) intact boys were beaten, 17.9 per cent (20) faced abusive language, 13.4 per cent (f=15) were stopped and kept aside and 4.5 per cent (f=5) were frisked. In contrary to this, 43.3 per cent (f=63) disrupted boys were beaten, identity card of 24.1 per cent (f=35) disrupted boys was checked, 17.2 per cent (f=25) disrupted boys tolerated abusive language, 10.3 per cent (f=15) were stopped and kept aside and 4.8 per cent (f=7) were frisked. In the same mode, identity card of 23.44 per cent (f=49) rural adolescents was checked, 21.05 per cent (f=44) were beaten and 12.91 per cent (f=27) face abusive language; while as 27.07 per cent (f=49) urban adolescents were beaten, identity card of 15.46 per cent (f=28) was checked and 10.49 per cent (f=19) were stopped and kept aside. On the whole, 36.2 per cent adolescents boys were beaten, identity card of 30 per cent (f=77) adolescent boys was checked, 17.5 per cent (f=45) boys faced abusive language, 11.7 per cent (f=30) were stopped and kept aside and 4.7 per cent (f=30) boys were frisked. Kinds of harassment that adolescent boys had gone through shows significant differences among intact-disrupted boys  $\chi^2(4,400) = 9.14, p = 0.05$ . Highly significant differences are seen among

rural and urban adolescent boys  $\chi^2(4,400) = 14.96, p = 0.00$ . Type of harassment show significant positive correlation between intact and disrupted boys  $r(400) = 0.69, p = 0.04$  and among rural-urban adolescent boys  $r(400) = 0.135, p = 0.03$

Table 4.2 describes that identity card of 50 per cent (f=28) intact rural boys have been checked, 26.8 per cent (f=15) intact rural boys have faced abusive language and 16.1 per cent (f=9) have been stopped and kept aside. In contrast to this 37.5 per cent (f=21) intact urban boys were beaten, identity card of 25 per cent (f=14) has been checked and 19.6 per cent (f=11) have been stopped and kept aside. In comparison to this, 45.5 per cent (f=35) disrupted rural and 41.2 per cent (f=28) disrupted urban boys have been beaten. However, identity cards of 27.3 per cent (f=21) disrupted rural boys and 20.6 per cent (f=14) disrupted urban adolescents have been checked. Form of harassment faced by boys show highly significant differences among intact rural-urban boys  $\chi^2(4,400) = 22.7, p = 0.00$ . Insignificant differences are viewed among disrupted rural-urban boys  $\chi^2(4,400) = 3.0, p = 0.55$ . Intact rural and urban boys show positive significant correlation  $r(400) = 0.084, p = 0.03$ ; while insignificant positive correlation is observed between disrupted rural and urban boys  $r(400) = 0.038, p = 0.281$  in terms of harassment.

Yusuf (2013) examined that people were frisked on pedestrians in Lal chowk area of Srinagar. Securities were demanding identity cards from the people, mainly youth and their belongings were thoroughly checked. A cordon was carried following intelligence inputs about combatants. Some other parts of the city witnessed frisking of vehicles, putting people to lot of inconvenience.

### C) Type of Problems Faced by Girls

Table 4.1 illustrates that 78.2 per cent (f=68) intact girls have faced verbal harassment, 14.9 per cent (f=13) have faced harassment through gesture and 6.9 per cent (f=5) have faced physical harassment. Similarly, 60.4 per cent (f=28) disrupted girls have faced verbal harassment, 21.7 per cent (f=10) have faced gesture harassment. However, 17.4 per cent (f=8) disrupted girls have faced physical harassment. Correspondingly, 31.57 per cent (f=66) rural girls and 16.57 per cent (f=30) urban girls have also been verbally harassed. In general, 72.2 per cent girls have been verbally harassed, 17.3 per cent (f=23) have faced harassment through gesture and 10.5 per cent (f=14) have faced physical harassment. Even teasing due to armed conflict shows significant differences among intact girls and disrupted girls  $\chi^2(2,400) = 6.19, p = 0.04$  and highly significant differences between rural and urban adolescent girls  $\chi^2(2,400) = 19.00, p = 0.00$ . Positive highly significant correlation is seen among intact and disrupted girls  $r(400) = 0.43, p = 0.00$  and among rural-urban adolescents  $r(400) = 0.375, p = 0.00$

Table 4.2 shows that 98.1 per cent (f=52) intact rural girls have faced verbal harassment; whereas 35.3 per cent intact urban girls have faced physical harassment and 17.6 per cent (f=6) have faced harassment through gesture. In difference to this, 60.9 per cent (f=14 each) disrupted rural and urban girls have faced verbal harassment. Even though, 21.7 per cent (f=5

each) disrupted rural and urban adolescents have faced harassment through gestures. Highly significant differences are viewed among intact rural girls-urban girls  $\chi^2 (2,400) = 31.7, p=0.00$ . On the other hand, no differences are found among disrupted rural girls and disrupted urban girls  $\chi^2 (2,400) = 0.00, p=1$ . Significant positive correlation is seen among intact rural-urban girls  $r(400)=0.075, p=0.004$ . However, no correlation is seen among disrupted rural-urban girls  $r(400)=0.00, p=1$ .

In the study of Prasad and Prasad, (2009) among the most severe problems which all women face during armed conflicts is a heightened risk of rape, sexual humiliation, prostitution and other forms of gender-based violence. Women of all ages are targets, but adolescent girls are especially vulnerable. Geelani (2016) observed that during turbulence of 2016 government made efforts to make educational institutions functional amid unrest but the female teachers complained of harassment by security deployed in schools.

**Table 4.1 Problems due to Armed Conflict**

Variable	Category (N=800)				Dwelling (N=800)				All adolescents (n=800)	
	Intact adolescents (n=400)		Disrupted adolescents (n=400)		Rural adolescents (n=400)		Urban adolescents (n=400)			
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Ever faced harassment										
Harassed	199	49.8	191	47.8	209	52.25	181	45.25	390	48.8
Not harassed	201	50.2	209	52.2	191	47.75	219	54.75	410	51.2
$\chi^2$	0.32, df=1, p=0.57				3.92, df=1, p=0.04					
r	0.020, p=0.572				0.070, p=0.048					
Type of harassment (boys)										
Abusive language	20	17.9	25	17.2	27	12.91	18	9.94	45	17.5
ID checked	42	37.5	35	24.1	49	23.44	28	15.46	77	30.0
Frisking	5	4.5	7	4.8	2	0.95	10	5.52	12	4.7
Stopped & kept aside	15	13.4	15	10.3	11	5.26	19	10.49	30	11.7
Beaten	30	26.8	63	43.4	44	21.05	49	27.07	93	36.2
$\chi^2$	9.14, df=4, p=0.05				14.96, df=4, p=0.00					
r	0.69, p=0.04				0.135, p=0.030					
Type of harassment (girls)										
Verbal	68	78.2	28	60.9	66	31.57	30	16.57	96	72.2
Physical	5	6.9	8	17.4	4	1.91	10	5.52	14	10.5
Gesture	13	14.9	10	21.7	6	2.87	17	9.39	23	17.3
$\chi^2$	6.19, df=2, p=0.04				19.00, df=2, p=0.00					
r	0.43, p=0.00				0.375, p=0.000					

Based on field survey  
 df denotes degree of freedom  
 $\chi^2$  denotes chi square  
 p denotes spearman's level of significance  
 r denotes spearman's correlation

**Table 4.2 Problems due to Armed Conflict as per Dwelling**

Variable	Intact adolescents (N=400)				Disrupted Adolescents (N=400)			
	Rural (n=200)		Urban (n=200)		Rural (n=200)		Urban (n=200)	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Ever faced harassment								
Harassed	109	54.5	90	45.0	100	50.0	91	45.5
Not harassed	91	45.5	110	55.0	100	50.0	109	54.5
$\chi^2$	3.61, df=1, p=0.05				0.81, df=1, p=0.36			
R	0.021, p=0.004				-0.741, p=0.412			
Type of harassment (boys)								
Abusive language	15	26.8	5	8.9	12	15.6	13	19.1
ID checked	28	50.0	14	25.0	21	27.3	14	20.6
Frisking	0	0.0	5	8.9	2	2.6	5	7.4

Stopped & kept aside	4	7.1	11	19.6	7	9.1	8	11.8
Beaten	9	16.1	21	37.5	35	45.5	28	41.2
$\chi^2$	22.7, df=4, p=0.00				3.0, df=4, p=0.55			
R	0.0841, p=0.034				0.038, p=0.281			
Type of harassment (girls)								
Verbal	52	98.1	16	47.1	14	60.9	14	60.9
Physical	0	0.0	6	17.6	4	17.4	4	17.4
Gesture	1	1.9	12	35.3	5	21.7	5	21.7
$\chi^2$	31.7, df=2, p=0.00				0.00, df=2, p=1			
R	0.075, p=0.004				0.00, p=1			

Based on field survey  
 df denotes degree of freedom  
 $\chi^2$  denotes chi square  
 p denotes spearman's level of significance  
 r denotes spearman's correlation

**Reactions on Seeing Men in Uniform**

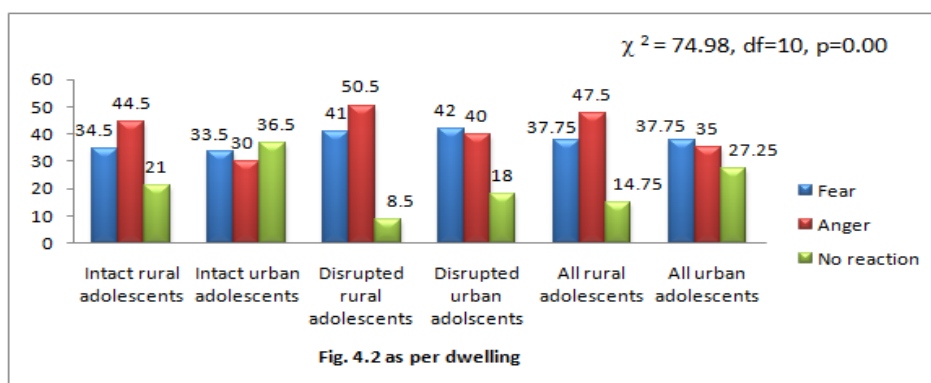
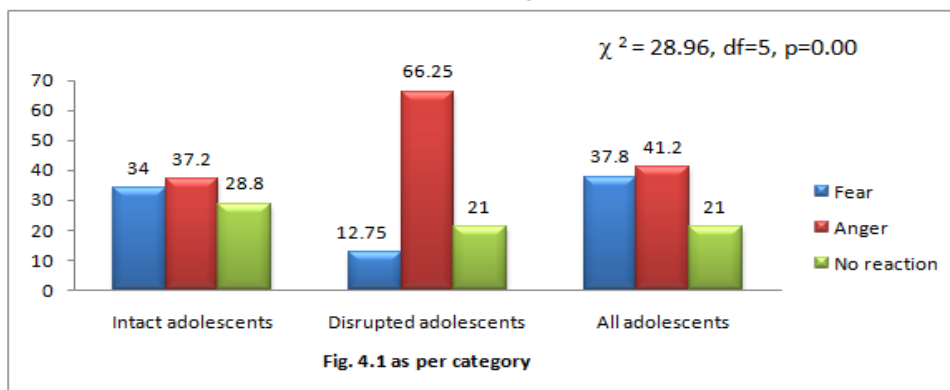
Fig 4.1 shows that 37.2 per cent (f=149) intact adolescents and 45.2 per cent (f=181) disrupted adolescents get angry while seeing men in uniform. However, 34 per cent (f=136) intact and 41.5 per cent (f=166) disrupted adolescents feel fear on seeing them. Similarly, 66.25 per cent (f=265) adolescent boys get angry, whereas 62.75 per cent (f=251) adolescent girls feel fear by seeing them. In the same way, 47.5 per cent (f=190) rural adolescents also get angry, though 37.75 per cent (f=151) urban girls feel fear when seeing men in uniform. Such results show highly significant differences among intact-disrupted adolescents  $\chi^2 (2,800) = 28.96, p=0.00$ , adolescent boys-girls  $\chi^2 (2,800) = 253.66, p=0.00$  and between rural-urban adolescents  $\chi^2 (3,800) = 22.45, p=0.00$ .

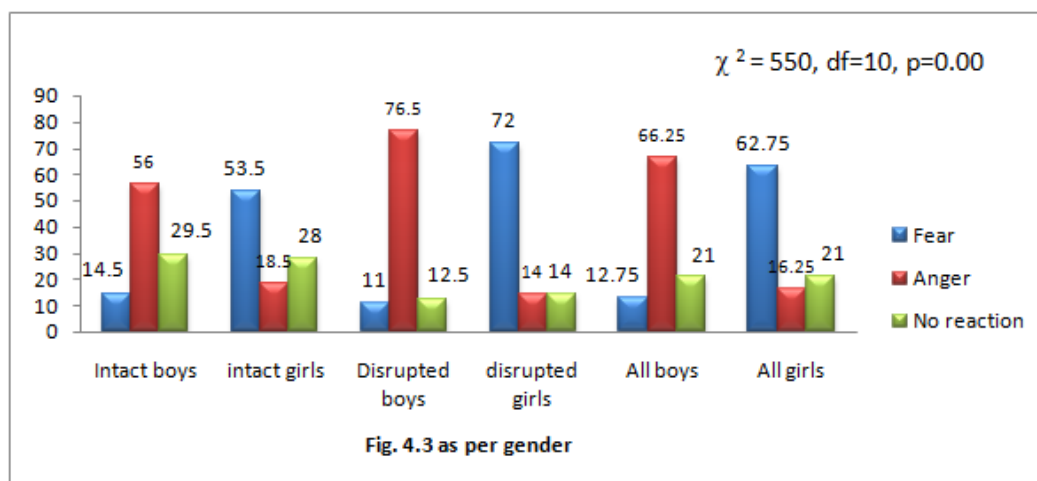
Fig.4.2 reveals that while seeing men in uniform, 44.5 per cent (f=89) intact rural adolescents get angry but reaction of 36.5 per cent (f=73) intact urban adolescents remain neutral.

Similarly, 50.5 per cent (f=101) disrupted rural adolescents get angry; whereas 42 per cent (f=84) disrupted urban adolescents feel fear. Such results observe highly significant differences among intact rural-urban adolescents  $\chi^2 (2,400) = 14.03, p=0.00$  and disrupted rural-urban adolescents  $\chi^2 (2,400) = 9.27, p=0.00$ .

Fig.4.3 describes that while seeing men in uniform, 56 per cent (f=112) intact boys and 76.5 per cent (f=153) disrupted boys get angry; whereas 53.5 per cent (f=107) intact girls and 72 per cent (f=144) disrupted girls get scared on seeing them. Response on seeing men in uniform presents highly significant differences among intact boys and girls  $\chi^2 (2,400) = 82.56, p=0.00$  and disrupted boys and girls  $\chi^2 (2,400) = 176.1, p=0.00$ .

**Reactions on Seeing Men in Uniform**





## 6. Conclusion

More intact adolescents have faced problems. Similarly, more intact rural and disrupted rural adolescents have faced problems. Identity card of majority intact boys is often being checked. Whereas, most disrupted boys are being beaten. Majority intact-disrupted girls have faced verbal harassment. Moreover, rural intact girls have faced verbal harassment.

Most intact and disrupted adolescents get angry on seeing men in uniform. Whereas, most intact urban adolescents remain neutral on seeing them. While as, most disrupted rural adolescents feel fear by seeing them. Similarly, more intact-disrupted boys get angry and most intact-disrupted girls feel fear.

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