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Perceptions of Kashmiri Youth: Security Implications

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Perceptions of Kashmiri Youth: Security Implications

Vivek Chadha*

The year 2011 was characterised by relative peace in the Kashmir Valley, especially when compared with the previous three years. A study undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Home Affairs provides empirical indicators of the mood of the youth in six districts of the Valley. The study substantiates certain existing assessments based on environmental realities; however, it also raises other issues which come as a surprise to most. This article analyses five of these factors from a security perspective, based on the details that have emerged and other independent assessments. These are dovetailed to create a possible scenario which, along with the assessments, becomes the basis of policy recommendations. This is aimed at reinforcing previous successes and arresting disturbing trends in the state.

Introduction

A recent study commissioned by the Ministry of Home Affairs and conducted by the Delhi-based Institute for Research on India and International Studies (IRIIS), presents revealing details.[1] The report is indicative of the current mood in six districts in the Kashmir Valley. It also reflects the ability (or inability) of separatists and the government to mould the perception of youth in line with their own. Since this is the first study of its kind, it can potentially provide the basis for remodelling current strategies and initiatives, to enable greater realism and effectiveness to deal with the obvious challenges posed, as a result of this unique empirical exercise.

The report was presented to a select gathering.[2] This article aims to analyse the findings more from a security point of view rather than limiting itself to a media-centric focus, as this has already been assessed in detail in the study. As part of the analysis, the five facets considered critical have been highlighted. These are: (i) the nature and extent of radicalisation in the Valley; (ii) the local separatist demand of *azadi* and its connotations; (iii) shift in the pattern of protests; (iv) disillusionment with Pakistan; and (v) employment of new media as a tool of

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communication. On the basis of collective assessment of these factors, a possible scenario is outlined. The article finally recommends policy options for obviating the possibility of agitational anarchy accompanied by Pakistan-initiated rise in diplomatic and military temperatures, in what could possibly be yet another attempt at furthering its strategic objectives.

Are Increasing Ideological Influences a Shift to Radicalisation?

The report, in the absence of similar previous data, cannot facilitate comparisons; however, it indicates the extent of ideological influence amongst youth in the Valley. It also substantiates a degree of radicalisation on the basis of those in favour of establishing Islamist rule in the state. While it can be argued that religious influence is not necessarily a negative sign, however, it is the possible implications of the same which could have disturbing portends for the future. The report indicates that "61% of the Valley's youth is listening to religious sermons on their audio/MP3 players" and 25 per cent *jihadi* speeches.[3] As a corollary, of these, 52 per cent have qualified the senior/higher secondary or undergraduate examination and 32 per cent are graduates or postgraduates.[4] It is indicated that a large number from this segment also access this information from sermons and meetings at mosques, graveyards and television channels.[5] The study reveals that "6 percent of those who believe that Kashmir should get *azadi*, are beginning to identify it with promulgation of Islamic rule or, an Islamist government".[6] These percentages indicate the degree of influence religion and religious establishments have gained in the Kashmir Valley. Given the evolving nature of religious discourse and its leanings, it is not difficult to link it with a more hardline thought process propagated by the Jamaat-i-Islami Jammu and Kashmir (JIJK)[7] and Pakistan-based separatist groups and their operatives in the Valley.[8] The fact that 6 per cent amongst this group favour Islamic rule, accentuates this concern. It is also evident that this trend is not restricted to the uneducated and unaware amongst the youth. In fact, a very large percentage is well educated.

This raises certain possibilities. First, the education system in the Valley itself seems to have been destabilised to an extent, with growth of madrasas outpacing that of modern institutions of education.[9] Second, the influence of religion in education has enhanced. The possibility of this having been as a result of greater reliance on the madrasa system could be a distinct possibility.[10] It is probably for this reason that there has been a concerted attempt to make education imparted through this traditional system more scientific and in line with modern education in the country. Commissioner Secretary School Education, Naseema Lankar, indicated that:

> …over Rs 3 crore have been distributed among the Madrassas, while Rs 8 crore will be released by March, next year for the Madrassas that provide religious education to the Muslim youth across Jammu and Kashmir under the centrally sponsored scheme for providing quality education in Madrassas (SPQEM).[11]

Furthermore, trigger events like the Amarnath land controversy fuel conspiracy theories suggesting "Hindu India's religious domination over Kashmir".[12] This fear is reinforced by Arjimand Talib when he indicates the growing feeling of "insecurity" and "siege" on the basis of decreasing percentage of population of Muslims in the state from 1941 till 1981 (the 1991 Census was not held in the Valley and terrorism led to higher figures of 66.97 per cent Muslims in 2001)[13], from 72.41 per cent Muslims in 1941 to 64.19 per cent in 1981.[14] The influence of radical Wahhabi thought and its role in displacing a Sufi-oriented Hanafi orientation is also responsible for the hardening of attitudes, especially given the shift in controlling pattern of mosques as a result of this.[15] The shift from a traditional, secular and moderate Sufi influence[16] in the region towards radicalisation amongst the youth can, therefore, be gauged from growing radical influences.

These figures highlight the inability of the state to reach out to—what is undeniably the most influential segment of Kashmiri society—the youth. It also indicates failure to strengthen moderate and secular institutions in the state. It is apparent that radicalisation of society is a result of the void created by over two decades of violence and a sense of deprivation amongst a generation which has grown in this environment. In the absence of a moderate canvas, which could have allowed free flow of ideas and emotions, radical opinions have put forth fanatical solutions, which could impact the psyche of impressionable, and in some cases disillusioned, minds, to the detriment of the spirit of *Kashmiriyat*.[17]

Azadi and its Connotations

The second issue relates to the demand for *azadi* and more importantly, its connotations. Amongst the youth surveyed, 54 per cent indicated *azadi* as their choice in the Valley, while 31 per cent favoured enhanced political, social and economic rights.[18] There is evidently a degree of alienation, which is indicated by the figures. On the face of it, the percentage in favour of *azadi* outstrips those who demand improvement in their political, economic, and social status. However, what seems to be lost in media reports emanating from Pakistan is the implication of *azadi*, amongst the 54 per cent demanding it.[19] An assessment of this figure illustrates that it is the different forms and understanding of the term *azadi* which are being indicated by the youth of the state. Independence, as the

obvious direct co-relation to *azadi*, is one amongst them. The study suggests that of the 54 per cent, 44 per cent viewed *azadi* as enhanced political and civic rights as also the withdrawal of the army from the state. A further consolidated 11 per cent wanted greater economic, civil, and political rights in various combinations. It is only 29 per cent of this 54 per cent who demand independence, either in the form of existing geographical structure of the state or in combination with Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).[20] Thus, while alienation from the state does exist, it is the exaggerated extrapolation of the same which distorts the picture.

Illustrations of this argument are provided by keen observers of the state. Madhu Purnima Kishwar quotes a journalist, Wahidur Rehman, who explains:

> From our childhood we have been taught by our elders that the most effective tool of blackmailing the New Delhi establishment into waking up is to start demanding azadi. They come to the dialogue table, start talking of concessions only when we rend the air with slogans of azadi. Otherwise, our pleas fall on deaf ears.[21]

While this incident has not been quoted to trivialise the debate, it does, however, indicate the use of the word *azadi* as freedom from injustice, which is how it needs to be viewed. Ghaus Wani, a local, defines the sentiment:

> I believe that Azadi for a common man means freedom from the sufferings which have been unleashed on him by the political and "power" class. Sufferings encompass depriving a person of a life of dignity, honor and safety; depriving him of a way of life which he wants to live by; depriving him of the right to expression and of the right to choose and elect; depriving him of opportunities to grow and flourish based purely on capabilities; depriving him of rights guaranteed by law; depriving a mother of her son; depriving a child of his/her father.[22]

The demand for *azadi* also needs to be seen in the context of the complete state's perspective. While Kashmir Valley represents approximately 55 per cent of the population and 15 per cent of the land mass of the state, the balance represented by Jammu and Ladakh firmly supports integration with the country.[23] Therefore, often, the views of a section within the Valley, which has been identified in tangible terms in the article, does not represent a majority opinion.

Pattern of Protests

The third critical factor relates to the preferred means of expressing discontent. Seventy-five per cent of the people have indicated their preference for peaceful protests and 72 per cent rejected the option of employing the gun.[24] Two possibilities emerge from these numbers indicated by the study.

First, this is a positive reflection of popular mood, which has usually been associated with employing violence as a means of achieving political goals in the past. The very selection of protest as an option indicates the desire to give democratic means a chance, which could possibly become the basis for any future settlement.[25] The pattern indicates disillusionment and frustration with violence amongst a section which has been effected the most by it during the last two decades. A study by Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), based on a survey of Kashmiris in 2005, indicated that one-third of those interviewed had thought of ending their lives. It also found psychological distress levels at over 71 per cent.[26] These figures indicate the growing impact of violence in society, and this could very well have resulted in the desire to look at alternate means of protest. This, when coupled with the declining trends in violence, further reinforces the finding. With 2001 as the base year, violent incidents had reduced by 82.5 per cent by 2011 and infiltration by 80 per cent by 2010.[27]

Second, there is growing realisation that the gun has failed to achieve desired objectives.[28] In the absence of the same, and success of mass protests elsewhere in the world, this form of civil unrest could not only focus attention of the world on Kashmir, as it did in 2010, but could also present challenges for security forces which are beyond traditional military means. This, when seen as means of creating a popular upheaval, also synchronises with previous trends, wherein Pakistan took advantage of local unrest and simultaneously employed external means to seize the initiative. History indicates that as a prelude to the 1965 infiltrations and war, the theft of *moe-e-moeqqdas* relic from Hazratbal (though it was subsequently found and restored) was perceived as a triggering event in December 1963, which led to the resultant unrest.[29] However, this ploy failed due to Pakistan's misreading of the situation. The decision to employ proxy war in Jammu and Kashmir was also an amalgamation of a number of international and domestic events. In 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall, establishment of the first free labour union in Poland, opening of Hungry's iron curtain to Austria, withdrawal of Soviet Union from Afghanistan and, finally, the latter's disintegration in 1991, all acted as catalysts for unrest in Jammu and Kashmir.[30] S. Paul Kapur writes,

quoting former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto: "There was a proposal to send 1,00,000 battle hardened...mujahideen to Kashmir" in context of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.[31] Pakistan used this opportunity, along with prevailing winds of political change across the world, and suitably intertwined it with an external stimulus in the form of experienced and by now unemployed fighters from Afghanistan to launch a proxy war.

After more than 20 years of perpetuating the proxy war, limited political as well as military success, domestic spread of the terror contagion[32] and discrediting of terror as an instrument of state policy could force Pakistan to go back to basics. This could involve reigniting popular sentiments in Jammu and Kashmir, exploiting the United States' (US) withdrawal of forces by 2014 to partly sidestep the terror network from Afghanistan towards Kashmir and use the trained pool of terrorists ready for induction from existing launch pads in Pakistan.[33]

Disillusionment with Pakistan

The reliance of the youth on Pakistan-centric news media and their faith in the country as an understanding benefactor has also undergone a perceptible shift. The study indicates a mere "16 % of the youth listening to news on Pakistan from Pakistani channels", and it further indicates that "only 20 % think that it understands Kashmir".[34] This is a clear indicator of disillusionment amongst the Kashmiris, who now see themselves as pawns in the hands of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), only to be used for a larger Pakistani strategic aim. A disillusioned Yasin Malik addressing the PoK assembly said that "PoK leaders had to take the maximum blame for the deaths of 80,000 Kashmiris" and he added, "You call yourself elected representatives of Kashmir. Tell me if any of you have been taken into confidence on the India–Pakistan peace process and the efforts for resolution of Kashmir."[35]

For a minority section of Kashmiri society, which was fighting for territorial independence, led by the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), the metamorphosis of the dispute from being about "them" to an Indo-Pak territorial one was frustrating. Their frustration was especially reserved for Pakistan, which entered as a benefactor and ended up becoming the self-proclaimed master of Kashmiri wishes. And according to them, these wishes led them on an imaginary road from Srinagar to Islamabad in Pakistan. "Pakistan's support for the right to self determination had come with a rider—*Kashmir had to support accession to Pakistan*."[36] Highlighting this trend, the Kashmiri leader, Azam Inqilabi, warned Pakistan to "bear in mind that Kashmiris cannot be subjugated by a system which failed to keep the sovereignty and identity of Pakistan intact in 1971".[37]

The trend indicates that the diverging aims of Pakistan, its inability to force an acceptable solution and international rejection for terror as a means of achieving political ends will further widen the perceptional, ideological, and political gap between mainstream Kashmiri youth and Pakistan. This is also reinforced by the inherent instability and radicalisation of the country, which is not indicative of a stable and trustworthy partner.

If Pakistan wants to reverse this trend, it will need to re-establish its credentials by undertaking a strategic shift in its position on Jammu and Kashmir. The desire to see Kashmir merge with Pakistan would have to be replaced by independence of Kashmir as the declared goal, even if it is a ploy to gain manoeuvre space lost in the recent past. This will have to be enlarged with a credible proxy terror network, which can provide hope to sections which see Pakistan as an untrustworthy and unreliable partner.

New Media as a Tool

The nature, spread, and impact of new media as a toll for disseminating information provides revealing details. The Valley boasts of 31 per cent access to the Internet.[38] A large section of this group includes the youth, who have taken to cyberspace as their medium of choice. Amongst the use that Internet access is put to, news about Kashmir is the most common, with social networking coming up next. However, the most frequented Kashmir-centric sites are hosted in the US, the United Kingdom or Pakistan, which, in some cases, is also a reflection of the propagandist nature of content.

The shift to political protests links the trend of new media and mass mobilisation. This is based on 26 per cent use of social media and 28 per cent of web-based information by the youth.[39] It remains open to analysis whether the increasing usage of social media is a trend emanating from the recent cases of social upheaval and how much was its influence during the mobilisation of crowds during the protests in 2010.[40] Preliminary reports indicate that social media did play a role in influencing the debate, however, their numbers on sites leading the protest remained limited.[41] It also remains to be assessed as a tool for similar mass protests in future. While the effects of social media usage may not immediately be known, there is already a debate that is attempting to answer this very question, thereby putting the power of this medium in perspective. Leo Mirani of *The Guardian* feels that the Indian middle class, traditionally disinterested in events in Kashmir, "was for the first time able to see and hear the other side of the story".[42]

The power of social media sites is also indicated by the fast-growing user base across the world and in India. From a mere 0.7 million in mid-2008,[43] the figure stood at 43,498,280 in India (2012 figure), which is the second highest in the world and reflects 53.70 per cent of the Indian online population.[44] In consonance with the IRIIS survey, the total users also reflect a youthful profile, with 49 per cent forming a part of the 18–24 year and 27 per cent 25–34 year age bracket.[45] In a similar assessment of these, 73 per cent are males, clearly indicating their orientation towards social networks.[46] Yet another indicator of the increasing ability of social media to facilitate exchange of information was its explosive growth of 132 per cent over the last year.[47] Mirani concludes his article on the role of social media by saying: "…if activism extends to changing the minds of people, to making populations aware of what their governments are doing in their name, to influencing opinion across the world, then the revolution will be indeed be tweeted."[48]

The figures indicate an increasing reliance on cyberspace for information as well as free and open exchange of ideas. It raises questions about the ability of various stakeholders to participate in these forums and thereby provide a platform for interaction as well as to seek opinions and views on the affairs within the state. A blog quotes a Facebook user, Zamir Tajammul Qadri:

> The young generation of online rebels should be an eye-opener for the tech-savvy young chief minister. He should be, and I am sure he is, reading all this. He was supposed to connect with the constituency of youngsters and this shows he has failed utterly.[49]

Their absence from such forums has led to the space being occupied by radical and sponsored points of view.

Security Implications

The five factors discussed in the article have a limited security impact in isolation. However, when assessed as pieces of a large evolving picture, these present the possibility of a completely different security condition. The focus of this emerging threat is based on the youth of the Valley, who are increasingly being radicalised, having been provided with an alternate avenue of carrying forward their struggle in the form of agitational anarchy and possessing the power of new media. On the contrary, disillusionment with Pakistan and minority support for independence emerge as limitations of the ongoing struggle. The evolutionary

trend of these conditions will provide a pointer to any future security scenario. The article extrapolates these five factors through a worst-case scenario as related to a proxy threat that nurtures and thereafter exploits internal disturbance in Jammu and Kashmir. While there can be other scenarios, and possibly more likely ones, however, the orientation of the article towards security is best served by looking at a worst case, to enable suitable preparatory measures. This is achieved through Pakistan's attempt at regaining support amongst locals, as also simultaneously shifting their stand on the status of Kashmir from merger to independence. This could possibly enable reigniting of the flagging movement in a manner which, unless proactively dealt with, could create worse internal conditions than those witnessed in 2010, and simultaneously create an international dimension to the conflict.[50]

The years 2011 and 2012 could serve as years for rebuilding the proxy war in the state. The forthcoming years till the elections in 2014 are likely to become the decisive years for either regaining the tempo of proxy war or its neutralisation to a degree that will simultaneously facilitate a political settlement. Decreasing trends in violence could continue and be replaced by a recalibrated popular movement in light of declining support levels for the gun culture. The most likely medium for these will remain "triggers", which will be fanned by fanatic elements in society and grassroots networks to inspire civil disobedience. General Hasnain says:

> A clear nexus between stone pelting and terrorism had emerged since 2008, when the agitations started. The main instigators and crowd controllers were all known militants. And, the stone pelters were doing it for money. Near Zinakote is a boatman's colony comprising all poor people, they were paid Rs 300 per day to throw stones. In Baramulla, the cart pushers, who earn Rs 200 per day, were willing to throw stones for Rs 300.[51]

These incidents could further be exploited to rally people and create conditions of anarchy. Given the political sensitivity to such conditions, each incident will function as a centripetal force, drawing in substantial security force deployment with a terminal aim of forcing exaggerated reactions to prevailing conditions. Under such a situation of artificial anarchy, the possibility of breakdown of principles of minimum and calibrated force could lead to a snowball effect of the kind witnessed in 2010. This could enable a repeat of 2010, which gave terrorists the "ability to call the shots without being in direct confrontation with the security forces".[52]

These incidents are likely to be simultaneously accompanied by upscaling the bilateral shrill, both on the diplomatic level and the Line of Control (LoC). This will create an atmosphere of uncertainly and instability, and focus international attention

on the region. These conditions could provide the necessary support for internal instability in the state, furthering the terminal aim. The presence of trained cadre in their launch pads and diverted Afghan veterans could also raise temperatures on the LoC. Given volatility on the LoC, the Pakistan Army would facilitate their infiltration under the cover of fire, which was largely absent since 2003.

The power and reach of media in general, and new media in particular, will be exploited by Pakistan-based elements and those supporting it to orchestrate resurgence of insurgency in the state. The presence of a large number of websites actively spreading misinformation as part of a propaganda machinery, as also social media, will become the communication tool in the hands of the youth. It will not only help raise the resultant frenzy but also act as a mobilisational tool.

The resultant international character of the "incidents" could lead to more intrusive reporting, scrutiny and questioning of actions.

Recommendations

The article recommends the following to obviate conditions visualised in the scenario:

1. The most important task for the government remains addressing existing alienation levels in the state. While violence levels can be brought down, as also infiltration, the ability of the ruling elite to feel the pulse of disillusionment, and work at the immediate and root causes of the same, will remain the most important factor in the overall improvement of political as well as the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir. This can only be achieved through a political resolution of the existing problems in a manner which is not only perceived as fair by the government but also, more importantly, by the population at large. Thus, even as security remains in place, political measures need to be enhanced for an early settlement of what is essentially a political problem.

2. Investment in education remains one amongst the most important initiatives that needs to be pursued. The absence of the same will create space for external funded and radically inclined education. Even as sensitivities regarding madrasa education are borne in mind, the need to moderise it and provide alternate scientific alternatives should be encouraged.

3. One of the most celebrated traditions of Kashmir has been its secular and tolerant social fabric. Based on Sufi traditions of Islam, the legacy remains a beacon not only for the state but also for the world to follow in times of

increasing polarisation. A concerted effort to encourage this tradition and thereby create a peace constituency amongst the society should be the second-most prominent initiative of the government.

4. The presence and participation of elected and administrative representatives in all activities of the youth needs no emphasis. The increasing penetration of new media is bound to influence the future discourse in general, and of regions like Jammu and Kashmir in particular. However, the presence of public representatives across mediums considered reliable, like cyberspace, needs to be enhanced. This is necessitated by the freedom of choice and expression, and participative discourse of a variety of subjects influenced by it. The absence of the government, political leaders, and administrators from this forum not only limits the scope of the debate but also makes it a one-sided discourse, which often tends to degenerate into diatribe and an vituperative expression of frustrations. The suggestion in the study to provide easily accessible detailed information on policies, activities and initiatives in the state is endorsed.

5. The psychological use of *azadi* by separatist elements within the country and by Pakistan needs to be countered with relevant data made available by the study. It also needs to be shared through popular media and websites to ensure wider dissemination than is presently the case. The value of the study cannot remain limited to the narrow confines of the intelligentsia because popular discourse, as much we may desire, is not influenced by select gatherings and seminar circuits. Shifts in majority opinion can only be created by popular and mass media.

6. The study is an indicator of evolving trends in perception management. The ability of the state to gauge indicators of popular sentiment, purely based on its local interaction, is questionable. This brings forth the need to institutionalise the mechanism for assessment of public mood and understanding. What is perceived as reality at the grassroots level is often in stark contrast with it. Few analysts and area specialists could have predicted the onset of the Arab Spring. Fewer still the collapse of the erstwhile Soviet Union. Public perception has an uncanny ability of throwing up challenges at times and places where these are least expected. Scientific methods of assessment in Jammu and Kashmir and other regions like Manipur, Nagaland, Assam and Naxal areas would go a long way in applying real remedies for real ailments. In the absence of both, speculative policy will only address a speculative problem.

7. The disillusionment with Pakistan, though expected, raises questions regarding the ability of Indian strategic planners to reinforce this reality. Insurgencies are often driven by a small minority, even as the majority follows the side

that perceptibly steers the discourse. Given the weakening of pro-Pakistan sentiment, this is an opportune stage to reinforce the disillusionment and show it for what it really is—a ploy to exploit Kashmiri sentimentality for parochial strategic gains. If this effort fails, the possibility of a cyclic return of Pakistan as a major influence in future cannot be ruled out, as assessed in the scenario.

8. The use of triggers to exploit popular sentiments is a reflection of trends in the past. The possibility of the same being repeated has to be neutralised at the initial stages to avoid a snowballing effect. The early presence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah after the Boniyar firing incident on January 1, 2012,[53] and Corps Commander 15 Corps at Rafiabad[54], were positive steps in this direction. Indicating the change in stance and approach, General Hasnain says:

> Besides preventing a trigger, there is also a need to alter the context so that a stray incident would be understood as such. Senior officers always knew that soft power makes the ultimate difference in an insurgency....Now, they too [junior officers] are focusing on employing soft power.[55]

9. The policy of special training of police to ensure minimal casualties during violent protests that has commenced in the state needs to be enhanced to ensure humane policing.[56] Pre-emptive arrests of miscreants involved in motivating and organising violent protests could ensure preventive policing, thereby keeping the situation under control during critical periods in the state.

Note:

1   Iftikhar Gilani, "DNA Exclusive: GenNext in Valley Largely Uninterested in Politics", *DNA*, January 26, 2012, available at http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_dna-exclusive-gennext-in-valley-largely-uninterested-in-politics_1642241, accessed January 27, 2012; and Anil Anand, "Kashmir Youth Indifferent to Mainstream Politics: Study", *Greater Kashmir*, available at http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Jan/27/kashmiri-youth-indifferent-to-mainstream-politics-study-36.asp, accessed January 27, 2012.

2   Navnita Chadha Behera, *A Perception Survey of Media Impact on Kashmiri Youth*, Institute for Research on India and International Studies, available at http://iriis.in/research-publication.pdf, accessed March 5, 2012. The hard copy of the report was made available to a select group of scholars on January 27, 2012. The study "aimed at understanding the relative popularity and efficacy of various channels of information availed by the Kashmiri youth in order to assess the factors, which are influencing their mindsets" (p. 1). The study is an authoritative assessment in Kashmir Valley, given the sampling from six districts and a sample size of 1,321. For a detailed methodology, see pp. 52–60.

3   Ibid., p. 29.

4   Ibid., p. 30.

5   Ibid., p. 30. Amongst the channels, Peace TV, Press TV, Al Jazeera and PTV lead the list.

6   Ibid., p. 30. The choice of *azadi* has been indicated by 54 per cent of the youth, though the connotation of the same varies, as will be assessed in the next section.

7   Jamaat-i-Islami of Jammu and Kashmir is led by Syed Ali Shah Geelani. There is no linkage of this group with Jamaat-i-Islami Hind. While the latter is a secular organisation committed to the upliftment and improvement in the lives of Muslims, the former "rejects secularism and socialism". It opposes the state's merger with India and has been working for merger with Pakistan. See Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, New Delhi: Allied Publishers Limited, 1993, pp. 177–78.

8   See Suba Chandran, "Is Pakistan Repositioning Itself in Kashmir? Islamabad's Five Likely Strategies", *IPCS Issue Brief*, No. 156, October 2010, available at www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/IB156-Suba-PakKashmir.pdf, accessed March 13, 2012.

9   It was the author's experience during a tenure in the Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir, in 1995, that terrorists burnt down most of the schools in the area, other than madrasas. It was revealed that this was done to provide an impetus to madrasas, and also to exploit the uneducated or those who could no longer go to schools by coercing them into terrorism.

10   Arjimand Hussain Talib, "Understanding Religious Radicalization: Issues, Threats and Early Warnings in Kashmir Valley", *IPCS Issue Brief*, No. 149, May 2010, available at http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/IB149-BPCR-Arjimand.pdf, accessed March 7, 2012.

11   Salman Nizami, "Govt Breaks Silence over Madrassas Funding Row", *Kashmir Watch*, December 11, 2011, available at http://kashmirwatch.com/news.php/2011/12/11/govt-breaks-silence-over-madrassas-funding-row.html, accessed February 15, 2012.

12   Talib, n. 10. The author indicates an increase in madrasas, however, he rules out increase in radicalisation as a result of the same.

13   Government of India, *Census of India*, 2001, available at http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_data_finder/C_Series/Population_by_religious_communities.htm, accessed March 7, 2012.

14   Talib, n. 10.

15   Ibid.; and Asit Jolly, "The Wahhabi Invasion", *India Today*, December 23, 2011, available at http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/saudi-charities-pump-in-funds-through-hawala-channels-to-radicalise-kashmir-valley/1/165660.html, accessed March 13, 2012.

16   Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, New Delhi: Allied Publishers Limited, 1993, pp. 169–70.

17   Farooq Abdullah, former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, defined *Kashmiriyat* as, "The principle of harmony; a principle that is the essence of the pluralistic culture of Jammu and Kashmir and one that should become the operating principle in the rest of the country". See *The Hindu*, March 24, 2009, available at http://www.hindu.com/2009/03/24/stories/2009032459041000.htm, accessed February 15, 2012.

18   Behera, n. 2, p. 33.

19   "Majority of Kashmiris Want Freedom: Indian Ministry", *One Pakistan*, available at http://pakistan.onepakistan.com/news/kashmir/44242-majority-of-kashmiris-want-freedom-indian-ministry.html, accessed February 15, 2012.

20   Behera, n. 2, p. 33.

21   Madhu Purnima Kishwar, "The Many Meanings of Azadi", *The Times of India*, September 20, 2010, available at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2010-09-20/edit-page/28228629_1_azadi-kashmiris-deaths-in-police-custody, accessed February 15, 2012. The author also quotes the incident narrated to her by the former Chief Minister of the state, Mehbooba Mufti, who says that her absence from her office led a delegation to shout for *azadi*, despite their intended meeting being scheduled to discuss more jobs and better civic amenities.

22   Ghaus Wani, "You Want Freedom", *Greater Kashmir*, December 9, 2011, available at http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Dec/9/you-want-freedom-7.asp, accessed February 15, 2012.

23   Compiled from Census of India, 2001, Ministry of Home Affairs, http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Tables_Published/Basic_Data_Sheet.aspx, accessed on March 30, 2012.

24   See Behera, n. 2, pp. 38–39.

25   There are a large number of erstwhile leaders of the militant struggle who have given up on arms and are willing to negotiate a peaceful settlement with the government. Prominent amongst them includes Yasin Malik, the leader of Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF).

26   "Psychological Impact of Violence on Kashmiris in India", November 15, 2008, available at http://www.modernghana.com/news/190807/1/psychological-impact-of-violence-on-kashmiris-in-i.html, accessed February 16, 2012.

27   Ministry of Home Affairs, "Ministry of Home Affairs Annual Report 2006–07 and 2010–2011", available at http://mha.nic.in/uniquepage.asp?Id_Pk=288. Also, see http://mha.nic.in/uniquepage.asp?id_pk=306, accessed January 25, 2012.

28   "Youth Rejected Gun Culture Azadi: Omar", *Only Kashmir*, February 2, 2012, available at http://www.onlykashmir.com/2012/02/youth-rejected-gun-culture-azadi-omar.html, accessed February 16, 2012.

29   Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India–Pakistan Tensions Since 1947*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 43.

30   Benazir Bhutto, quoted in S. Paul Kapur, *Dangerous Deterrent: Nuclear Weapons Proliferation and Conflict in South Asia*, California: Stanford University Press, 2007, p. 104.

31   Ibid.

32   Pakistan lost 2,580 civilians and 765 security forces personnel as a result of terrorism in 2011 alone. *South Asia Terrorism Portal*, available at http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/casualties.htm, accessed February 15, 2012.

33   The withdrawal of Soviet Union from Afghanistan led to a similar possibility being explored and executed by Pakistan. Refer to Kapur, n. 30, p. 104.

34   See Behera, n. 2, p. 28.

35   Yasin Malik, quoted by B. Murlidhar Reddy, "We Will Stay the Course say Hurriyat Leaders", *The Hindu*, June 4, 2005, available at http://www.hindu.com/2005/06/04/stories/2005060406040100.htm, accessed February 15, 2012.

36   Navnita Chadha Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir*, New Delhi: Pearson Longman, 2007, p. 164.

37   Ibid., p. 165.

38   Behera, n. 2, p. 10.

39   Ibid.

40   See Fahad Shah, "Kashmir's e-protest", *openIndia*, August 6, 2010, available at http://www.opendemocracy.net/fahad-shah/kashmirs-e-protest, accessed February 15, 2012; Arshad Samir, "Online Protestors 'Hurl' Tweets, Spew Vitriol", *The Times of India*, available at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2010-08-04/india/28288951_1_social-networking-sites-kashmiri-youth-protest, accessed February 15, 2012; Robert Mackay, "Phone Cameras Fuel Kashmir's 'Intifada'", *The New York Times*, available at http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/08/13/phone-cameras-fuel-kashmirs-intifada/, accessed February 15, 2012.

41   Praveen Swami, "The Ugly World of Kashmir's Online Rebels", *The Hindu*, July 24, 2010, available at http://www.thehindu.com/news/states/other-states/article530306.ece?homepage=true, accessed February 15, 2012). Praveen indicates 810 members for the page "I Protest Against the Atrocities on Kashmiris" and 675 for "We Hate Omar Abdullah" as examples.

42   Leo Mirani, "Sorry Malcom Gladwell, the Revolution May Well be Tweeted", *The Guardian*, October 2, 2010, available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/oct/02/malcolm-gladwell-social-networking-kashmir, accessed February 15, 2012.

43   Ibid.

44   *Social Bakers*, available at http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/india, accessed February 15, 2012.

45   Ibid.

46   Ibid.

47   "Facebook Users in India have Doubled in Last One Year", *NDTV*, February 3, 2012, available at http://www.ndtv.com/article/technology/facebook-users-in-india-have-doubled-173084, accessed February 15, 2012.

48   Mirani, n. 42.

49   *Kashmir Online News*, August 6, 2010, available at http://kashmironlinenews.blogspot.in/2010/08/kashmiri-youths-use-internet-to-express.html, accessed February 15, 2012.

50   The protests in 2010 witnessed the death of 120 people. See Showkat Motta, "A Chancy Survival", *Outlook*, October 24, 2011, available at http://www.outlookindia.com/printarticle.aspx?278629, accessed February 16, 2012.

51   General Syed Ata Hasnain, "The Heart is My Weapon: Kashmir Revisited", *War College Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 1, Summer 2011, p. 3.

52   Ibid., p. 1.

53   Ishfaq-ul-Hassan, "Protest for Power Supply Claims Boy's Life in J&K", *DNA*, available at http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_protest-for-power-supply-claims-boys-life-in-j-and-k_1632409, accessed February 13, 2012.

54   Altaf Baba, "Youth's Killing Triggers Protest in Rafiabad", *Greater Kashmir*, February 12, 2012, available at http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Feb/12/youth-s-killing-triggers-protest-in-rafiabad-53.asp, accessed February 14, 2012.

55   Hasnain, , n. 51 p. 3. Text in parenthesis by the author.

56   "Special Training for J&K Police to Deal with Stone Throwers", *NDTV*, February 27, 2011, available at http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/special-training-for-j-k-police-to-deal-with-stone-throwers-88257, accessed February 13, 2012.