

# **IMPACT OF DISPLACEMENT ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF KASHMIRI PANDIT YOUTH**

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## **Abstract**

*The present paper is about Kashmiri Pandit youth who have been displaced from their homeland and are presently living in camps. Displacement of Kashmiri Pandits took place during 1989-1990. Due to displacement the displaced Pandits have settled in various places in and outside Jammu and Kashmir. A section of people of the community took accommodation in camps being provided by the government in Jammu district. The present camps in which the displaced Pandits are living currently are Muthi A, Muthi B, Purkhoo camp, Nagrota and Jagti camp. Most of the Pandits are living in Jagti camp because it is one of the biggest among all the camps. In the present paper an attempt has been made to look into the socio-economic condition of Pandit youth living in these migrant camps. In this paper the socio-economic profile of youth with emphasis on their age, education, occupation, family type, type of accommodation taken by their family after displacement and previous and present camp of living has been taken.*

**Keywords:** *Camps, Displacement, Kashmiri Pandits and Youth.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Displacement is a form of migration in which individuals are forced to move against their will. There are many kinds of displacement, it mainly occurs due to two factors- natural disasters and human intervention. Natural disasters include floods, landslides, earthquake etc. and human intervention includes wars, many development projects such as dams, mines and highways (Kalia, 2010). Advani (2009) describe various types of displacement i.e., displacement due to natural disasters such as earthquake, cyclone, floods and droughts force many people to leave their homeland. Displacement also results due to developmental projects, construction of dams. People are also displaced because of war, civil unrest and social conflicts.

The twentieth century perceived 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). The people who are displaced by either conflicts or natural disasters remain within the border of their country they are internally displaced people (Ferris, 2008). Hampton (Cited in Malhotra, 2007) stated that Internally Displaced Persons are people or groups of people “who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their home or places of habitual residence in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of, armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human made disasters, and who have not crossed in internationally recognized state border”. According to Sawhney and Mehrotra (2013) Kashmiri Pandits consider themselves displaced, they 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. Kaul (2005) also stated that 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.

Conflict and militancy created various categories of displaced people. Most of the Pandits left the valley and are living in camps in Jammu region. The Pandits claim that after the beginning of the militancy more than three lakh people left the valley. Many Kashmiri Muslim families also left the valley because of threat to their lives (Shekhawat, 2006). The Indian state not only fails to protect them but provided minimal humanitarian relief to them. The Pandits living in the camp suffer from economic and health problem. Insomnia, depression and hypertension have increased and significant decline in birth rate of the community took place. The causes for low birth rates were identified as pre mature menopause in women, hypo function of the reproductive system and lack of privacy (Gill, 2001).

## **2 STUDIES CONDUCTED ON KASHMIRI PANDITS AFTER DISPLACEMENT**

Bhat (2012) studies the reasons which led to the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits and the impact of this exodus on them and revealed that Kashmiri Pandits left their property unsafe in the valley with the hope of coming back shortly after their displacement but many Pandits house in the valley were looted and damaged. The author observed that in camps there were many unemployed youth which led to problems of deviance, delinquencies, crime and drug abuse and lack of privacy affected the psychological and sex behaviour of the migrants.

Kaul (2005) noted that migration of Kashmiri Pandits results in health trauma. The stress of migration and struggle to live in new place leads to emergence of many new diseases which were rare in the community before displacement. Raj, Sharma and Waris (2014) examined the problems faced by Kashmiri Migrant. The various problems studied by them are non-availability of health care centre and ambulance facility.

Sawhney and Mehrotra (2013) examined that migration of women from Kashmir to big cities lead to greater access to education and job opportunities. The displaced women who migrated from rural area and settled in camp area of Jammu rated low in educational achievement as compared to those who migrated from Srinagar city and settled in big cities.

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Shekhawat (2006) in her book explained the effect of displacement on Kashmiri Pandits. She examined a change in their life style, eating habits and dress patterns along with a dilution of traditional marriage patterns. The Koushur Vanavun (songs sung at weddings) has been replaced by the film music. Further the increasing trend of out of community marriages, discarding of the mother tongue by young generation, the pattern of celebration of festivals has been the cause of concern for the community.

Show (2007) in *Reshaping "Homes" in Kashmir* studied how the scattering of a group with a shared history and culture contribute to new identities away from a homeland. The study discussed the meaning of home for Kashmiri Pandit women in different moments of time due to ongoing conflict. The study also explores how the displacement of Kashmiri Pandits has led to creation of new identities in which individuals search for collective communality among the displaced Kashmiri Pandits in order to connect to the homeland.

The previous studies focuses on effect of displacement on health of Pandits, the problems faced by them after displacement, loss of their property, changing culture and creating new identity outside their home. The present study focuses on youth, the aim of the study is to show the socio-economic conditions of displaced youth living in camp.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The present study is descriptive in nature. For the present study Jammu district was taken as universe and population is Kashmiri Pandit youth living in camps. Presently there are five camps in which the Pandits are living. These are Muthi A, Muthi B, Purkhoo, Nagrota and Jagti. Youth living in all these camps have been selected for the study. A total of 280 respondents were selected from all these camps. The purpose of this research is to examine the socio and demographic profile of second generation Kashmiri Pandit youth. The sampling technique used for data collection was simple random technique.

### 4 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Data collected from the field is simplified in the form of tables. The tables below show the socio-economic profile of the respondents living in camps.

#### 4.1 Age

Age is an important variable, it is the first and foremost variable to be considered regarding socio economic profile. In the study age is important because the researcher have deliberately selected the respondents who fall in the age group of 18 to 29 in order to understand youth perception regarding displacement. The age distribution of the respondents is shown in the table below

**Table 1**

## Age distribution of respondents

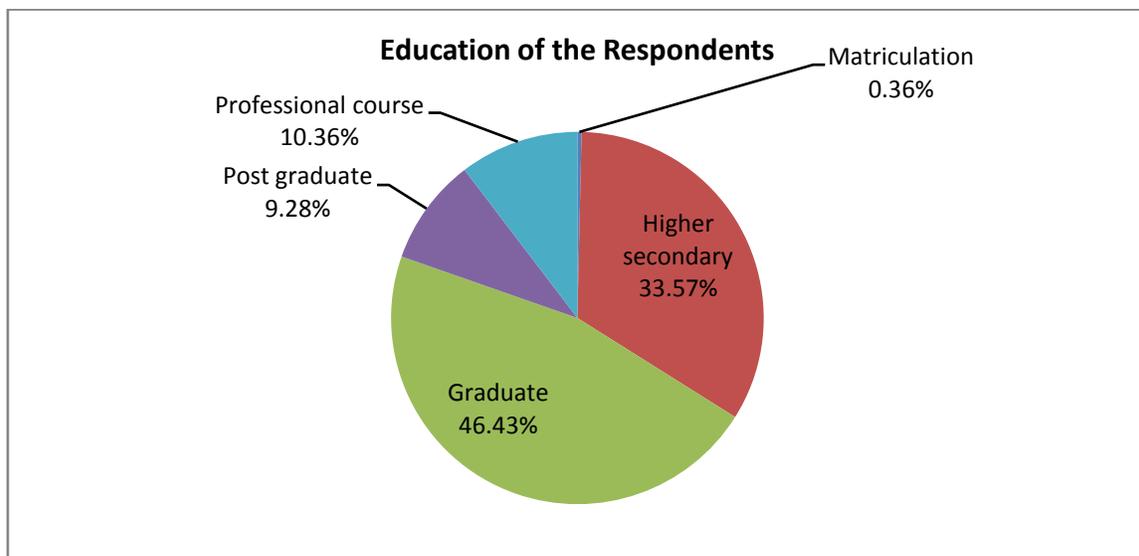
Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage
18-20	95	33.93
21-23	84	30.00
24-26	44	15.71
27-29	57	20.36
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Data in the table clearly shows that large number of respondents that is 33.93 percent are in the age group of 18-20 years. This age group consists of most of the respondents. After that exactly 30 percent of the respondents are in the age group of 21-23 years. Between 24-26 years the number of respondents are 15.71 per cent. Remaining 20.36 percent are in the age group of 27-29. Thus, the study reveals that nearly two third respondents fall between the age group of 18 to 23 years.

## 4.2 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). In order to get the information regarding education of the respondents, they were asked about their present education which is shown in the diagram below:

Figure: 1

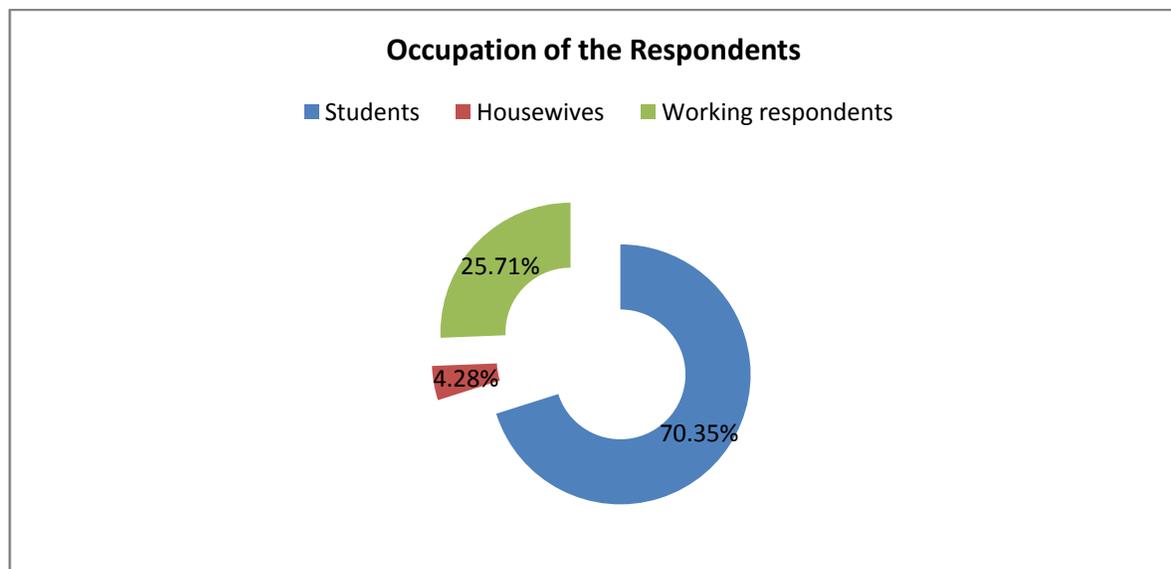


The above figure shows that in the matriculation level there was only one respondent. She left her studies after completing her matriculation. In the higher secondary level there are 33.57 per cent respondents, among these 9.28 per cent have dropped their education after completing their 12<sup>th</sup>. 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. Most of the males in the study are educated up to higher secondary and when we talk about females most of them are in graduate level. As we move on towards higher studies number of male decreases while the number of female is progressively increasing. Thus, it was observed that most of the respondents fall in the category of graduation.

### 4.3 Occupation

Occupation is an important variable which determine the lifestyles, status and outlook of the individuals (Sernau, 2011). In the present study in order to know the current occupational status of the respondents, they were asked question about their present occupation.

Figure: 2



The above figure depicts that most of the respondents i.e., 70.35 per cent out of total were students and therefore they are not working. Another category which is not working was 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 categorized as homemakers. 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

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job in private sector. The type of work in which they were involved are private teacher, nursing, sale taxation officer as contractor and working in private company like green tea, cable networking, coca cola, army canteen, LIC etc. Those who were working in government sector are engaged in PHE department, revenue department, teacher etc. Only one respondent is self-employed, she provides home tuition in order to earn. 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.

#### 4.4 Family Type

Family is an important social group. In India joint family system exists and it is found not only among agriculturist but also among traders and businessmen (Shah and Shah, 1998). Data collected regarding displaced youth families shows that nuclear families are the dominant family type in the camp. Exactly 88.57 per cent respondents are living in nuclear families. Space was a big constraint and it was considered as something that broke up the joint family system. The displaced families living in camps prefer to live separately and are more concerned about its survival. About 11.43 per cent respondents are living in joint family. Thus, preference for large family size was found to be on decline and nuclear families exist in the camp.

#### 4.5 Place of Origin

In order to get insight about respondent's place of origin, question was asked from them. It was observed that respondents mainly belong to two categories i.e., rural and urban. Most of the respondents i.e., 88.57 per cent belong to rural area. Hardly 10.71 per cent respondents were having urban origin. There are also respondents who do not know their place of origin they constitute of 0.71 per cent. The respondents recognize their place of origin through their family, they themselves have not experienced living in their original place.

#### 4.6 Place of stay after Displacement

After displacement Pandits were scattered to various places, some went out of state whereas some remain in the state. For the purpose of knowing the places where respondents family stayed after their displacement, the respondents were asked question if they know the place where their parents lived after displacement. The responses given by the respondents is given below in the table below

**Table: 2 Place of Stay**

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Jammu	209	74.91
Udhampur	64	22.94
Kathua	3	1.07
Delhi	2	0.72
Reasi	1	0.36
<b>Total</b>	<b>279*</b>	<b>100</b>

1\* respondent is ignorant about the place

Table indicates that out of 279 respondents, most of them i.e., 74.91 per cent said their family lived in Jammu district after their displacement. The places where they stayed were Jhidi, Jewel chowk, J D complex, Vikram chowk, Muthi, Mishriwala, Patolietc. Some respondent's family choose to live in Udhampur district they constitute 22.94 percent. In Udhampur the places where they lived were Stadium and Garhi. There were also families who choose to live in Kathua district, they constitute 1.07 per cent. Thus, the study shows that majority of respondents choose Jammu district as their temporary place of residence. The reason behind choosing Jammu district is their familiarity with the place. Moreover they consider Jammu a safe place because of having majority Hindu population. According to the respondents their parents thought displacement temporary and believed that they would soon return back to their home therefore they choose places which were nearer from their home. Kaul (2005) talked about the factors that attracted most of the Pandits to Jammu. These were familiarity of Jammu city, nearest place, being a Hindu dominated area and having relatives already there.

#### **4.7 Type of Accommodation after Displacement**

Studies on Pandits takes into account the types of accommodation they had after displacement. Shekhawat (2012) stated that in the initial aftermath of the displacement, Pandits lived in big halls portioned by bed sheet or cardboards. While some Pandits were sharing common public buildings, many others were placed in tents. After few years they were provided with one room accommodation with common bathrooms and other facilities. The camps were set up at Muthi, Purkhoo, Mishriwala and Nagrota on the outskirts of Jammu city. In the study in order to get information about the type of accommodation respondent family had after their displacement, they were asked question about the type of accommodation. Data reveal that most of the respondent's family i.e., 68.21 per cent had no place to live after displacement and consequently they lived in tent/buildings provided by the government in the beginning of their displacement. They were helpless and dependent upon government for their survival. They lived in tents because they did not have any other place of living except the tents provided by the government. About 24.64 per cent of the respondents replied that their families preferred to live in rented room. They did not choose to live in tents so they took rented accommodation. Remaining 7.14 per cent respondents have no idea about the type of accommodation their family had taken after displacement. Thus, the study shows that most of the respondent's family initially lived in tents or buildings being provided by the government for some years. They took shelter in tent because they did not have any other place of living except the tents provided by the government.

#### **4.8 Camp from which relocated/Previous camp**

With the objective of knowing the camps from which the respondents were relocated, they were asked question about their previous camps. The various ORT camps from which the respondents were relocated are shown in the table below:

**Table: 3 Camp from which relocated**

Name of the camp	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Purkhoo camp	76	27.14
Muthi camp	53	18.93
Batarwalia camp	50	17.86
Nagrota camp	42	15
Rent	30	10.71
Mishriwala camp	27	9.64
Kathua	1	0.36
Other	1	0.36
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table it is clear that most of the respondents i.e. 27.14 per cent were relocated from Purkhoo camp followed by Muthi camp 18.93 per cent and Batarwalia camp 17.86 per cent. After that exactly 15 per cent respondents were relocated from Nagrota camp. There were also respondents who were having rented accommodation they constitute of 10.71 per cent. They were living in rented room and moved toward camp when TRT were provided. About 9.64 per cent respondents were relocated from Mishriwala camp followed by Kathua 0.36 per cent. One respondent said she has not experienced living in camp. She got married to a boy living in camp before that she lived in her own parental house. Thus, the study concludes that maximum numbers of respondents were relocated from Purkhoo camp the reason might be that Purkhoo ORT camp was the biggest in comparison to other migrant camps.

## 5 Conclusion

It was found that most of the displaced youth in the study were from the age group 18 to 23 years. All the respondents in the study are literate and most of the respondents fall in the category of graduation followed by higher secondary. Majority of the respondents belongs to non-earning category because most of them are students. In the earning category most of the respondents are involved in private job. In terms of family type majority of the respondents are living in nuclear families. Space was a big constraint and it was considered as something that broke up the joint family system. Most of the respondents are basically from rural areas. After migration those who lived in tents provided by the government are more in number followed by rented room. The temporary place of residence for most of the respondents was Jammu. Most of the respondents were relocated from Purkhoo camp and are presently living in Jagti camp.

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