

# Unlawful Activities and Youth: A Sociological Study of Jammu District

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## Abstract

*The study will examine the smuggling of narcotics on border and its effect on the people particularly, the youth. Smuggling is a typical border activity in which the political and economic interest comes together. People indulge in smuggling for economic gain. With close proximity of J&K with Pakistan border it is easy for people of border area to smuggle. There is strict law and order provision but people still indulge in these kinds of activities because it is an easy way of making money. These illegal activities are also affecting the youth of border areas. Youth of border villages is largely unemployed and poor so they easily indulge in smuggling and drug addiction. Important reason for smuggling of intoxicants in border areas is ineffective implementation of government policies. Non implementation of law and order makes border areas more vulnerable. Study is confined to the rural border belt of Jammu district. Five villages are selected for the study and simple random sampling technique was used to select 280 households in whole.*

**Key-words:** 1. Border, 2. Corruption, 3. Effect, 4. Smuggling, and 5. Youth

## I. OBJECTIVE

In present study focus will be laid on the illegal activities carried out at the border and its impact on the residents. Therefore, the broad objective is to study the impact of smuggling on the lives of youth living in border area.

## II. METHODOLOGY

Present study is qualitative in nature. Both primary and secondary data is used in the study. It is confined to the Khour block of Jammu district (J&K). Five border villages (i.e., Garar, Sainth, MagialAbtara, HamirPurNawan and Gee Garial) were chosen randomly and those villages were selected which lies within the radius of one kilometer from the Line of Control (LoC). Simple random sampling technique was used to select 280 households in whole. Selected border villages are situated on the rural border area of Jammu district.

### III. INTRODUCTION

Border is a place which is always uncertain. The border areas are one of the first areas to feel the impact of a tense war situation. Smuggling is a typical border activity in which the political and economic interest comes together. Whenever a state applies restrictions on cross-border trade, it invites smuggling. Cross-border smuggling is an extension of existing trade that has been made illegal by legislation. However, it is just as often the direct result of restrictive state policies, which cause certain goods to become scarce, attractive, and expensive (Baud and Schendel, 1997). The geographical location of India between the two major producing regions is a factor responsible for the increasing use/abuse of drugs in India. India's close proximity to the poppy producing regions of the world, namely 'Golden triangle' comprising of Myanmar, Thailand and Laos and the 'Golden Crescent' comprising of Iran, Afganistan and Pakistan has made it a transit zone for international trafficking. These transit zone smuggled heroin, hashish and ganja in India. Smuggling of heroin, hashish and ganja from Golden Crescent, Golden Triangle and from Nepal through different routes into India has resulted in a spillover problem giving boost to drug abuse in our metropolitan cities, north-eastern states, and some areas of Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat. This transit traffic of drugs has also resulted in giving fillip to problem of drug abuse from casual intake to steady addiction in all sections of society whether rich and poor, rural and urban, students and employees, men and women and workers and businessmen (Singh, 2000: 2).

In 1977, a committee, appointed to study problem of drug abuse in India, had warned in its report that the situation in India was likely to worsen and it would get out of hand if adequate measures were not adopted to curb the evil. Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substance Act, 1985 was brought about to punish the offenders. The government of India has taken several steps through its various ministries to meet the challenges of drug abuse and drug trafficking (Sandhu: 2009).

Smuggling across the border is not a new thing, people have been smuggling since ages. With close proximity of J&K with Pakistan border it is easy for people of border area to smuggle. There is strict law and order provision but people still indulge in these kinds of activities because it is an easy way of making money. Whether it is smuggling of gold or drugs people never stop the practice. Now, smuggling of drugs is much more rampant because it has more money in it. It is reported by the respondents that earlier there was only the smuggling of gold at the border but after barbed wired fencing along Indo-Pak border, the smuggling trend has shifted from gold to intoxicant drugs.

### UNDERSTANDING THE BORDER BELT

The emergence of the border belt was the result of the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. J&K is among the 17 border states of India and share two types of border (i.e., IB and LoC) with Pakistan. Present study is based on LoC and nearly, 778 km LoC extending from Akhnoor to Siachen Glacier is a de facto border (Sangra, 2014). The

present definition of border belt is all the villages, towns and cities that are situated within the 16 km of radius from zero line comprise the border belt (Sekhon, 2014). Earlier the radius of border belt is 8 km from the border. Both India and Pakistan fought four wars ever since they got independence but now there is continuous ceasefire violation by Pakistan. An article published in Economic Times (July 13, 2018) stated that there has been a sharp increase in ceasefire violations by Pakistan in recent times. Its troops have opened fire on Indian territories more than 600 times till 2018 and the recorded highest number of ceasefire violation in nearly a decade. There were nearly 450 ceasefire violations in 2016. It results into disturbance among the border residents or it can be said that there occurs an emergency situation. Border residents always remain disturbed and disappointed as they have to shift to safer places during firing and shelling. The disturbance on border is uncertain and people do not know when they have to leave their home unwillingly. The tensions always remain in border area and these villages get affected due to the firing and shelling. People get displaced due to disturbance and the whole social structure gets divided into parts. This paper is focusing on the illegal activities carried out at the border and its impact on the residents. As the present study is based on the sample drawn from five villages (i.e., Garar, Sainth, MagialAbtara, HamirPurNawan and Gee Garial) thus, in this study an attempt is made to represent smuggling scenario on border area and its impact on youth.

#### IV. SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

In this part focus is laid on socio-economic profile of the respondents. The socio-economic profile of the respondents is an important indicator to be considered before making analysis of any problem under study. This study focuses on exclusion experienced by the people of border area. It is impossible to conduct research without knowing the basic features of the respondents. Exclusion has deep rooted connection with the social and economic characteristic of the individuals. The whole population of the selected villages belongs to Hindu religion and so are the respondents. Thus, we may say that present study is based on the experiences and views of the Hindu respondents of border area.

##### 4.1. CASTE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 1

Caste	Number	Percentage
Rajput	70	25
Brahmin	66	23.57
Barwala	35	12.50
Tarkhan	24	8.57

Megh	24	8.57
Chamar	22	7.86
Jher	15	5.36
Choudhary	11	3.93
Lohar	8	2.86
Nai	4	1.43
Kumhar	1	0.36
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Data in table 1 highlight the caste composition in selected villages. Above table 1 shows that majority of respondents i.e., 48.57 per cent belong to Rajput and Brahmin caste and these castes are termed as higher castes in Hindu society. Both Barwala and Megh are considered as lower castes by upper caste people and the government has brought these castes in schedule caste status under reserved category, 27.07 per cent respondents belongs to these castes. About 8.57 per cent respondents belong to Tarkhan caste followed by Chamar caste (i.e., 7.86 per cent). Exactly, 5.36 per cent respondents belong to Jher caste and nearly 4 per cent respondents are from Choudhary. Respondents who belong to Lohar caste are 2.86 per cent. Nearly, 2 per cent respondents are from Nai caste and Kumhar caste. Whereas, Tarkhan, Chamar, Jher, Choudhary, Lohar, Nai and Kumhar all are artisan castes which comes under OBC (Other Backward Classes) status and these artisan castes plays important role in village life. Thus, study shows that respondents from Rajput and Brahmin castes are in majority.

#### 4.2. EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 2

Education	Number	Percentage
Illiterate	37	13.21
Primary	31	11.07
Middle	91	32.50
Matriculation	88	31.43

Higher secondary	26	9.29
Graduation	7	2.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Education is a key that opens that door in life which is essentially social in character and plays a very important role to determine one's socio-economic status. Education is of such nature which control external behavior of man as well as internal motives, impulses and attitudes. Data in table 2 depict that out of total, 37 respondents which constitute 13.21 per cent are illiterate whereas 43.57 per cent respondents are studied up to primary and middle level. About 31.43 per cent respondents studied up to matriculation and 9.29 per cent respondents studied up to higher secondary level. Very few respondents (i.e., 2.50 per cent) were there who studied up to graduation level. Education has been often tied to the development goals of maternity health, literacy, greater awareness of rights and upliftment of weaker sections of the society. India considers education in rural areas as necessary for individual and community development. Location does have impact on asses to the basic education. No doubt border areas are emerging to be one of those locations which have direct impact on asses to education. Thus, it is observed that majority of respondents fall in middle and matriculation level and higher education percentage is very low in selected villages of border area.

#### 4.3. OCCUPATION

**Table 3**

<b>Present occupation</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Farming	138	49.29
Factory Worker/Labourer	45	16.07
Mason/Carpentry/Electrician/Tailor	28	10.00
Watchman/Peon/Driver	24	8.57
Chemist shop/Shopkeeper	15	5.36
GramSewak/Anganwari Worker/Clerk	9	3.21
Army Soldier/Police man	9	3.21
School Teacher	7	2.50
Veterinary Doctor	2	0.71
Medical Representative (MR)/LIC Agent	2	0.71

Pandit	1	0.36
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Data in table 3 highlight that nearly half of the respondents' present occupation was farming. About 16.07 per cent respondents' present occupation was factory worker/labourer. Thus, 10 per cent respondents were engaged in skilled work i.e., mason/carpenter/electrician/tailor. Only one respondent was there who continuing his hereditary occupation i.e., pandit. Table 3 clearly shows that very few respondents are in government jobs. Thus, most of respondents' present occupation is farming because village economy is based on agriculture. It has been observed that there are marked changes in the occupation of the respondents and the percentage of other occupations instead of agriculture has increased. But respondents still are dependent upon agriculture but as a secondary occupation or we can say that because of agriculture they are living in border area. Majority of respondents have agricultural land beyond the fence and due to firing and shelling they cannot go to their field. Those who are aged and illiterate, now find it difficult to engage themselves in alternative work. It is generally observed that those who are devoid work as labour mainly for house construction.

#### 4.4. INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 4

Monthly Income (in rupees)	Number	Percentage
1,000-10,000	167	59.64
10,001-20,000	69	24.64
20,001-30,000	34	12.14
30,001-40,000	8	2.86
40,001-50,000	2	0.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents were not comfortable informing about their earnings and their financial status was assumed by the researcher. Income is referred to as earnings and it helps to understand the economic status of any individual. Data in table 4 highlight the information about respondents' income which shows that 84.28 per cent respondents which constitute majority earn between 1,000- 20,000 per month. Very few respondents had been earning between 30,000-50,000 monthly. Thus, majority of respondents were earning very low as their livelihood is completely dependent upon agriculture. These people have to face various problems due to unpredictable situations at the border.

#### 4.5. FAMILY STRUCTURE

Table 5

Nature of Family	Number	Percentage
Nuclear	234	83.57
Joint	46	16.43
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

As we know nuclear family is an urban phenomenon but present study depicts the opposite. Joint family has found to be predominant family form in rural areas. But the data in table 5 shows that nuclear families are higher in number than joint families. Data in the table 3 it clearly indicates that majority of respondents live in nuclear families i.e., 83.57 per cent, reason is government compensation. Government give compensation according to household that's why people show that they live in nuclear family but reality is different. Actually they have their own ration cards and they live in joint family but they show that they live in nuclear family to get more compensation from government.

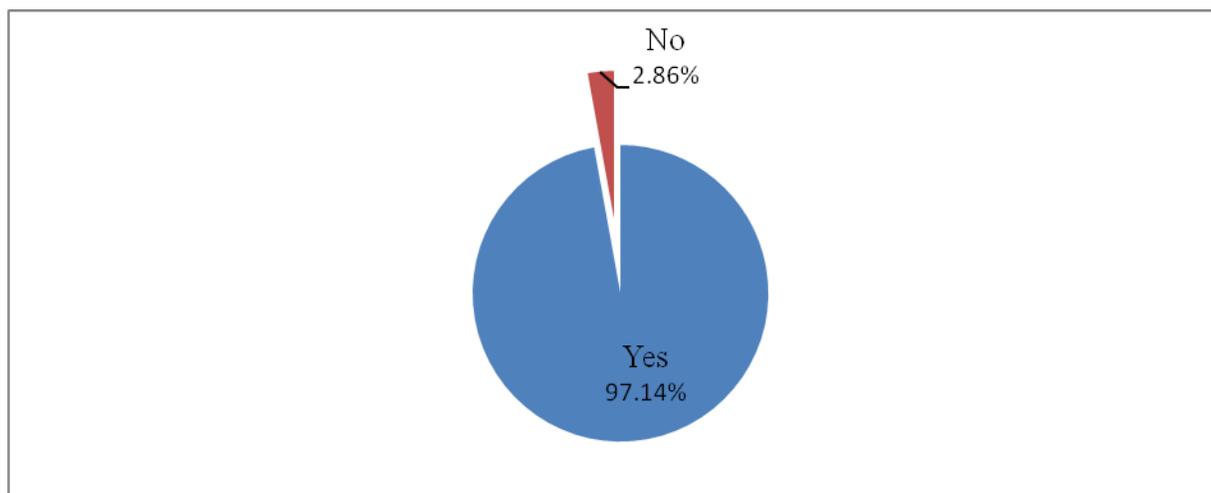
#### V. KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Before liberalization gold was smuggled from Pakistan into Indian territories. Till late 1980's opium was also smuggled along with gold. But after wired fencing along India-Pakistan border and along with reduction in import duty on gold there has been a drastic decline in the smuggling of gold and people then started smuggling of different varieties of intoxicant drugs along with opium (Singh, 2018). Intoxicants like capsules, poppy straw, cannabis, opium and other substances are less prevalent nowadays. Now, drugs like heroin are smuggled from across the border. Not a single month passes when police and other investigation agencies do not recover major consignments of heroin from Jammu region. Every year so many drug peddlers and smugglers are arrested by the police under the NDPS act in the state. There is a nexus where not only young boys but women, police and paramilitary personnel are also involved (Mathur, 2018). Smuggling is the most burning issue of border areas of Jammu district. People

indulge in smuggling for economic gain. In this regard respondents were questioned to learn about the smuggling on border and how it was affecting the people particularly the youth.

### 5.1. VULNERABILITY OF BORDER AREAS TO ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

Figure 1



Majority i.e., 97.14 per cent of respondents believe that border areas are more vulnerable to illegal activities and drugs are smuggled across the border because of their easy availability in border areas. Respondents told that earlier gold was smuggled across the border but after late 1999's and also due to fencing along the border it shifted from smuggling of gold to varieties of intoxicant drugs. They further revealed that other important reason for smuggling of intoxicants in border areas is ineffective implementation of government policies. Non implementation of law and order makes border areas more vulnerable. Thus, there were very few respondents who did not report border areas as vulnerable. They believe that various intelligence agencies are working and they keep check against the smuggling of intoxicants in these areas. They also think that people of these areas are poor and they cannot afford these intoxicants which are very expensive.

*After meeting respondents personally, one of the respondents shared that there were people in these border areas who encourage youth for smuggling drugs. Respondent told that he was also offered handsome money by smuggler when he was young. The smugglers convinced young boys of border villages that smuggling would make them rich. Some people were tempted and accepted their proposal in the hope that they would make good money. The youth of border villages are poor and unemployed and easily get attracted towards this. But the result of smuggling is disastrous as these people lose*

*everything. He further added that both male and female take to smuggling. Earlier, there was no lady officer posted on the border for checking women, but due to increase in smuggling army found that women were also involved in illegal activities. Now army has appointed special lady official to check each and every woman who go beyond the fence even for agricultural activities and women too have to undergo hard checking.*

Drug peddlers target young boys because they are at a vulnerable age and are an easy prey. It was observed by the researcher that youth of border villages is largely unemployed and poor so they easily indulge in smuggling and drug addiction. It was seen that the ladies who were involved in smuggling were middle age ladies and no girls were involved in drug addiction/ smuggling.

## 5.2. AWARENESS ABOUT SMUGGLING/HUMAN TRAFFICKING ON LOC

Table 6

Awareness about Smuggling	Number	Percentage
Yes it happens	256	91.43
No knowledge	24	8.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Table highlights that majority of respondents (i.e., 91.43 per cent) were aware of illegal smuggling being carried out on border. Drug trafficking, they know is illegal activity but it is increasing due to government's inaction both at national and international level. There is an ineffective implementation of law on account of corruption at various levels. Various government agencies like Police, Army, Intelligence Bureau (IB) are deputed in rooting out these problems. Role of police is more important as compared to other investigation agencies in the state. Same as Singh (2018) in his study on borderland of Punjab has discussed that the role of police is more significant but not satisfactory in rooting out drug menace from the border areas. The reason assigned is corrupt police personnel who accept bribe from the smugglers and let them go free. About 8.57 per cent of the respondents were unaware about illegal smuggling. During data collection it was observed that these respondents were hesitant to speak about smuggling on border and hence they pretended ignorance about these activities. It might be sensitive issue for them and they are not ready to say anything regarding illegal smuggling.

As mentioned above, corruption is endemic at all levels in the administration. Sandhu (2009) in his study on drug addiction in Punjab stated that the level of corruption in our country is very high and we are among the few highly corrupt nations of the world. The drug problem in the country is intimately linked with the corruption in the society because it involves millions of dollars in trade. Further, political protection to smugglers and political interference in the working of police is a major barrier in acting against drug smugglers.

*One of the respondents narrated a case of a young boy from the village who was allured to smuggling to overcome the poverty in the family. There was a boy named Pawan from Garar village. He came from a very poor family. He got married at a very early age (20 years) as his mother had died and there was none who could take care of the family. So his father forced him for marriage. That boy was a tractor driver and sometimes army personnel took his help. He used to carry things from one place to another for army personnel and they never checked his tractor as he had gained the confidence of army personnel and was on good terms with them. After knowing and watching the scenario on border, one day his wife suggested him to do smuggling. Firstly he refused but later he yielded. His wife also helped him in smuggling many a times. One day he was caught by the police and was put behind the bars. It was a stigma for his father and he died due to heart attack. His wife also left him and got married to another guy. While in prison for so many years, he lost everything and now is turned drug addict. This case clearly depicts the vulnerability of the youth.*

Verma (2017) in his study stated that the younger persons have been the worst sufferers of the illicit drug trade in Punjab. He discussed the factors responsible for the growth of drugs in Punjab to state's proximity with poppy and heroin producing region, cross border trafficking, corruption, irregularities in pharmaceutical trade, easy availability of synthetic drugs at counters, good paying capacity of the people of Punjab, non-availability of rehabilitation centres, lack of employment, etc. Illicit drugs have threatened the precious lives of the people and it has also taken centre stage during elections in the state. Many times people have questioned political parties about the steps taken to tackle the menace. But political parties without taking vital steps to control the drugs, blame the opposition parties and the matter ends there.

### 5.3. EFFECTS OF SMUGGLING ON DAY TO DAY LIFE

Table 7

Effects of Smuggling	Number	Percentage
Cannot continue agricultural activity	259	50.884
Level of security increases	241	47.348
No effect on our daily life	9	1.768
<b>Total</b>	<b>509*</b>	<b>100</b>

**\*Multiple Responses**

A question was asked to the respondents whether incident of smuggling on border affect their day to day life. Table 7 clearly shows that their life is affected due to smuggling. Almost all the responses show that people of border area do face problems due to smuggling and they fail to devote time to agriculture as the land lies beyond the fence. Army personnel close the gate when such incidents of smuggling are reported on border whether it happens in one village or another. Hence, the level of security increases on border and the whole border belt of Khor block face its consequences. During that time people cannot feed their cattle and take care of their agricultural land. After opening of the gates, people have to face lots of problem of hard checking. These incidents make them feel excluded and psychologically pressurised.

*One of the respondents said that due to border some incident or the other is very frequent. Sometimes due to firing and shelling and other are due to smuggling, army closes the gate and they do not let these people go to their own land which is across the fence. These border area people are very poor and cannot afford things but due to continuous closing of gate they have to buy grass for the cattle behind the fence. He further added that he was a big landlord and he had acres of land. He said, "so many people were working under us but now we are working on others' land because most of our land is under mines and government did not give us a single penny for our land which is under mines." And the land which is fertile is across the fence, due to some or the other reasons army does not allow them to go to their fields. It affects their day to day life and makes them economically backward.*

## VI. ROLE OF ARMY AND POLICE

Table 8

Role of Army and Police	Number	Percentage
Yes	270	96.43
No idea we didn't experience	10	3.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

While collecting data for this study it was found that people were not ready to accept the fact that border areas are vulnerable to illegal smuggling. When I started meeting them personally and informally, they gradually started accepting that due to proximity of the border these prohibited substances are smuggled across the border. Even some respondents (i.e., 3.57 per cent) told that they have never experienced investigation or maybe they are not ready to say anything regarding smuggling. An attempt has been made to study the behaviour of Army/Police personnel during investigation after smugglers are caught by these agencies. It was found that majority (i.e., 96.43 per cent) of the respondents believe that the behaviour of Army/Police is good and they do not bother the other people of the village except the one who is caught by the police. As discussed in previous table 6, the role of police is more important as compare to that of other investigating agencies of the state but on the other hand it was also told by some respondents that police is also involved in such activities because without the help of police no one can dare to involve in smuggling activities. They told that when these prohibited substances are caught by the police, police reports these substances in lesser amount to the authorities and takes the benefit out of it.

*One of the respondents revealed that if the security on border is very tight and even the local people have to go through hard checking then how this smuggling takes place on border in the presence of Army. He further added that we know police is a corrupt department and they are also involved in these activities. But why the role of army is negative in uprooting these problems. Thus, it can be said that army is also involved in smuggling.*

Smuggling has deep roots in our country especially in border areas. It is important to get our country free from drugs and its smuggling. In order to stop smuggling government should take some preventive steps. Police should give extra care towards smuggling to ensure zero tolerance. Strict action shall be taken against corrupt police officials who encourage smuggling. Night patrolling should be done by the army/police at border. Government should

organize awareness programmes to encourage the youth to take part in games and sports so that their energy can be channelized in maintaining good health in spite of indulging in smuggling. Tournaments should be organized to encourage the youth. Unemployment and poverty are the main reasons behind smuggling. Youth indulges in smuggling due to unemployment and poverty and smuggling fulfills their financial needs. In this case government can play a vital role by creating employment opportunities for youth. Employment schemes should be implemented by the government and awareness camps should be organized for youth in connection with employment so that the youth may stay away from smuggling.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Border areas are more vulnerable to illegal smuggling and these activities are also affecting the youth of these areas. If someone is caught by the police, it also affects the life of border area people in general as army closes the gate for many days due to which these local people cannot carry their agricultural activities which makes them economically backward. Therefore, an interplay of unemployed youth, poverty and drug trafficking/drug abuse in border areas is going on unabatedly. People continue to be poor, youth easily tempted to take to drugs, police is ineffective and corrupt. Life is difficult for women in the houses. Governments' apathy is reported as a major hindrance in improving the fate of these people.

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