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SOCIAL IDENTITY, LANGUAGE POLITICS AND EDUCATION POLICY IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

The core concept of this study is that Education should not be seen as a neutral and apolitical field. Rather, it should be understood as a political act that involves power dynamics in society. To achieve this, research in Education and about the conflicts arising out of power dynamics in society should be conducted actively. At the core of the political conflict is the Kashmiri social identity that has acquired salience in a temporally graded manner. An expression of the Kashmiri social identity has been in the form of dissent against the Indian State. Alternative expressions of the same through language politics form a link through which education policy in the state can be studied relationally. This link between social identity, language politics and their combined influence on education policy forms the core of this study.

The Adbee Markaz Kamraz (henceforth AMK), is a federation of literary and cultural organisations, located in North Kashmir, is being used here as a case study of a site where social identity, language politics and education policy intersect. It provides a framework for understanding how a group, the Kashmiris, utilise their social identity as Kashmiris, within an organisation that is engaged in providing salience to this group identity in a context of cultural diversity in the state. At least three methods of collection of case study data are used in here. Direct observations, Open-ended interviews and the study of archival records to achieve the required depth.

The first insight that this research provides is that Kashmir is not all about violence, stone-pelting, Azadi and conflict. The AMK represents one such constituency. A related finding is that dissent against education policy is at times expressed in an organised manner. This creates synergy with the state initiating a process by which education policy accommodates real and perceived inequalities, emerging from social identities. Thirdly, organisations like AMK face a lot of trouble and intimidation from vested interests, with whom they might share a common social identity.

Keywords: Kashmiri social identity, Language politics, Education policy, Activism, Constituency of peace

Introduction

This study is structured around the idea that Education be understood as a political act, rather than a neutral, apolitical field of study. Such an understanding would require research in Education to be conducted 'relationally'[1] , actively placed within conflicts arising out of power

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[1] Apple makes a compelling case for looking at Education, relationally. 'understanding education requires that we situate it back into both the unequal relations of power in the larger society and into the relations of dominance

dynamics in society. Such an understanding is used to study Jammu and Kashmir which is an area characterised by intense conflict. The most visible of these is political conflict. An area affected by violent internal political instability, it is also an international conflict zone. At the core of this political conflict is the Kashmiri social identity that has acquired relevance in a temporally graded manner. An expression of the Kashmiri social identity has been in the form of dissent against the Indian State. This dissent has taken various political forms, ranging from separatism to calls for Azadi all of which have been documented and researched. Alternative expressions of the Kashmiri social identity through language politics forms a link through which education policy in the state can be studied relationally. This link between Social identity, language politics and their combined influence on education policy forms the core of the present study.

The Adbee Markaz Kamraz (henceforth AMK), is a federation of literary and cultural organisations, located in North Kashmir. It is being used here as a case study of a site where social identity, language politics and education policy intersect. At the core of its activities lies the demand for greater inclusion of Kashmiri language in the school curriculum in Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmiri language activism placed this organisation right in the centre of a stormy language politics that is fought out between Urdu and Kashmiri in the state.

The use, promotion and dissemination of a language is not a neutral act; rather it is infused with an intense political dynamic. Education is a site where language politics acquires an even greater urgent social dimension. Jammu and Kashmir is an ethnically diverse state. The fact that Kashmiri is the largest spoken language in the state does not override the existence of other languages in this state. These other language groups are equally active through similar organisations in other parts of Jammu and Kashmir. This could be an expression of dissent against domination of Urdu and Kashmiri over other languages in the state. The AMK is being investigated in this study as a case illuminating an expression of social identity and its impact on education policy in the state.

Section 1

Education, Language and Identity in a context of political conflict in Jammu and Kashmir

Conflict has affected education in the state of Jammu and Kashmir in many ways. Firstly, there has been a considerable shortfall in the utilisation of funds for programmes like the SSA. The low expenditure in various components of the programme was mainly due to unrest in the state. Online Child Tracking System, social mapping exercise, and construction of civil works have been affected by unrest in the state.

The percentage of the population of J&K having access to a Primary Stage Schooling Facility within one kilometre decreased slightly from 92% in 1993 as counted by the 6th All India

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and subordination–and the conflicts--that are generated by these relations.' Apple, Michael W, 1996 ,*Cultural Politics and Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

School Education Survey (AISES) to 89% in 2002 as counted by the most recent 7th AISES.[2] A connection can be drawn to the protracted conflict in J&K[3]. During a significant time period of militancy in the state, between 1990 to 2007, in the Kashmir region, around 276 primary schools, 146 middle schools, 129 high schools and 45 higher secondary schools and, in the Jammu region, 119 primary schools, 62 middle schools, 43 high schools and eight higher secondary schools were damaged or destroyed. It is not immediately clear if the same schools were subsequently rebuilt. Kashmiri militants have set fire to many schools on the belief that the schools were not supporting their cause. There have also been reports of child soldier recruitment in schools by some Kashmiri rebel groups.[4]

The effects of conflict however become more severe when seen against the effects that it has on specific social groups, in this case internally displaced persons and teachers.

The constant state of insecurity and the displacement of communities have taken a toll on the population. Approximately 20,000 women have died due to the conflict in the state over the past 20 years, and as many as 40,000 children have been orphaned. Children who live in camps have limited access to school, and the enrolment rate is estimated at about 66%, but can be as low as 36% for specific camps.[5]

The conflict also clearly has a socio-economic class dimension. Studies by UNESCO analyse data on Kashmir according to wealth quintile. These studies define conflict as a state of explicit war between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.[6]

An analysis of top and bottom quintiles of two cohorts reveals that while both groups decreased in schooling attainment during the Second Kashmir war, in 1965 the richest and poorest populations displayed very different trends after this point. The richest cohorts show somewhat steady improvement after 1970, but the poorest cohorts fluctuate in average years of schooling, decreasing during the mid-1970s and during the conflict in the 1990s. The period near the 1999 war shows significant instability in average years of schooling attained for the poorest cohorts, which is not seen to the same extent for the richest cohorts of school-going age during that

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[2] See Hiba Arshad, 2008,,*Education in Kashmir: Historical Overview and Current Analysis.* Retrieved from http://www.kashmircorps.org/reports_files/%20Education%20in%20Kashmir%20%5BArshad%5D.pdf

[3] For a general background to the issue see Schofield V, 2003,*Conflict in Kashmir,India Pakistan and the Unending War* , I B Tauris,London ,New York.

[4] See the report, UNESCO, 2011, The *Quantitative Impact of Conflict on Education*, UNESCO.

[5] Sudan, Falendra Kumar, 2010, *Social and Economic costs of Armed conflict on children: Evidence from displaced camps in Jammu and Kashmir,* India, Oxford, UK.

[6] See iv above

period. Therefore wealth seems to be a major dimension which mediates the effects of conflict on the education of children in Jammu and Kashmir.

An analysis of literacy rates reveal similar disjunction; we see that males in Jammu and Kashmir who were of school-going age during the conflict in the late 1990s and early 2000s display a distinct decrease in literacy. There is no corresponding decline in literacy rates for the rest of India. Teachers and school administrators can be a target of violence in conflict affected areas . Both parents and children understand the advantage of supporting a government when it provides them with essential services on a reliable basis. Children and their families repeatedly ask for education in times of crisis. There are examples of this from situations as diverse as Kenya, Lebanon, Burundi and East Timor. Education provides children and their families with hope, and it is especially prized in the midst of a crisis when schools can offer children protection and dependable routines.[7]

Committed teachers and a balanced curriculum give children an alternative to confusion and conflict. Dedicated teachers also demonstrate positive values, such as acceptance of diversity, kindness and consideration for others' feelings. The simple habit of going to school and working with caring adults in a supportive and tolerant environment can help war-affected children recover from trauma. Teachers also need support. Teachers are often on the frontline between the conflicting forces, and are often the only people able to offer children an alternative vision of the troubles that they see.

Language and curriculum in Jammu and Kashmir

According to section 145 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, *The official language of the State shall be Urdu, but the English language shall, unless the Legislature by law otherwise provides, continue to be used for all the official purposes of the State for which it was being used immediately before the commencement of this Constitution.* Seen against the diversity of languages used in the state this becomes a policy decision with huge implications for provision of quality education in the state.

Kashmiri ranks first among the mother tongues of the State commanding the largest number of speakers, with Dogri in second and Gujari in third position, followed by Punjabi, Bodhi, Balti, Shina/Dardi in succession. Whereas Kashmiri and Dogri have been included in the VIII schedule of the Constitution of India, the demands of similar treatment for inclusion of Bodhi are yet to be conceded.[8]

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[7] A largely qualitative study of obstacles to education in Kashmir, by Save the Children, documents that 'Gurbat' is one of the main issues that parents and children face in education. Gurbat is a complex term implying not only economic deprivation but also social circumstances leading to exclusion in schools.

See Seshagiri K,2010, *Frozen Education, Report on Obstacle study in J&K,* Save the Children.

[8] See Warikoos analysis of census reports in Warikoo K N,1996, in Pushp &Warikoo Ed Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh - Linguistic Predicament Har-Anand Publications.

Teaching of Kashmiri has only recently been introduced at the primary school levels in the State. Not only that, inadequate textbooks are available in Kashmiri. Similar issues have been seen in Ladakh where an agitation led to the replacement of Urdu with English as a medium of instruction much to the disadvantage of Ladakhi. Overall, the usage of Urdu has received official patronage, it being the medium of instruction in primary and secondary levels. Kashmiri was later introduced as an optional subject in secondary schools and in 2009 as a compulsory subject in primary schools.

Specifically, in the context of the Kashmir valley both Urdu and Kashmiri can claim a position as the mother tongue (L1) though Urdu is officially the first language according to the three-language formula of the centre. The emergence of Urdu as a language of significance in the state of Jammu and Kashmir is interesting. Amongst other factors the development of political and religious discourses in Urdu as one of the primary causes for ascendency of Urdu in the state.[9]

Clearly language dynamics in the state of Jammu and Kashmir reflect complexities that are typical of societies having 'societal multilingualism' as characterised by the UNESCO and mostly found in developing post-colonial countries of Asia and Africa. The typical policy dialogue around the issue in UNESCO has crystallised around the advocacy of bilingual mother-tongue based education policies.

Section 2
Methodology of research in areas of Political conflict

Field research in conflict zones is challenging for both methodological and ethical reasons. In conflict zones, the usual essentials of empirical research (to gather and analyse accurate data to address a relevant theoretical question) are intensified by the absence of unbiased data from sources such as newspapers, the partisan nature of much data compiled by organisations operating in the conflict zone, the difficulty of establishing what a representative sample would be carrying out a study of that sample, and the obvious logistical challenges.

Similarly, the ethical imperative of research ("do no harm") is intensified in conflict zones by political polarisation, the presence of armed actors, the precarious security of most residents, the general unpredictability of events, and the traumatization through violence of combatants and civilians alike.

Jammu and Kashmir is variously described as civil strife, insurgency, cross-border terrorism. Further the nature of conflict in the three sub-regions is considerably different for instance; Jammu and Ladakh do not fall within the category of civil strife.
People are the core of any research effort in Kashmir, data collection is impacted by the conflict, variously defined. While it is expected that the research would cover a number of

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[9] See Bhat A M, 2011, *Emergence of the Urdu Discourses in Kashmir,* Language in India retrieved from www.languageinindia.com.

primary documents and databases and to observe many meetings of different organizations, the principal research method will be that of the semi-structured interview in which open-ended questions from a prepared list will be pursued and topics in depth as seemed appropriate and relevant will be discussed. It is expected that returning several times to interview many respondents will be essential to the quality of information eventually gathered.

One of the significant problems in conducting research in Kashmir was the breakdown of prepared, open-ended research questionnaires and conventional forms of data collection. This was due to two main reasons. While education is a central core of the research, due to the nature of the conflict affected field, a number of related concerns cross over. From the preliminary field work in Kashmir, the following concerns have been identified:

● While concerns relating to education are quite significant, these are framed within questions relating to the political conflict.

● Responses related to issues of Education are also framed within a larger problem of legitimacy and governance which is a constantly occurring theme in Kashmir.

Secondly, structured, even semi structured open ended questionnaires break down. Many residents of contested areas talk about their personal and community histories at length with the researcher. Most interview sessions turn into stories they narrate as histories of injustice, violence, suffering, and loss—of land occupied and defended, of new organizations founded, and of new identities asserted. Personally experienced violence is at the core of any data collection exercise in Kashmir.

A researcher going into the field with preparations for objective data collection is constantly challenged. Spaces for data collection had to be found and consciously cultivated within such conflict affected fields of research. In societies rent asunder by political conflict of the kind in former Yugoslavia, spaces for dialogue between former citizens of Yugoslavia were severely compromised due to intense personal violence experienced by citizens. Muabet, a form of dialogue, was used to rebuild spaces where dialogue could be restored. This format was also used as a method of data collection by researchers.Similar modes had to be discovered in data collection in Kashmir. The researcher is not a neutral objective observer in Kashmir. Rather she is very much a being with a socio-political identity. This identity does not get obscured by objectivity.Before data collection was carried out spaces for dialogue had to be created, by laying down certain ground rules. These included non interference, respect for culturally and politically divergent views, respect for sustained questioning and 'turn the tables', which was essentially an assurance that the researcher would also be available for intense cross questioning if desired by the respondents. Data collection happened in a relaxed unstructured context.

Section 3

The Adabee Markaz Kamraz : Social identity in areas of political conflict

Its vision documents state that the AMK has, since 1971 contested language issues in the state and has acted as an effective pressure group for the promotion of Kashmiri language in the

state. Not only this, it has also been active in campaigning for the introduction of Kashmiri language in schools in Kashmir.

Social Identity Theory (henceforth SIT) is an analytical tool that embeds specificity of group processes in a context of cultural differences. In this study it provides a framework for understanding the ways in which a group, the Kashmiris, utilise their social identity as Kashmiris, within an organisation that is engaged in providing salience to this group identity in a context of cultural diversity in the state.

One of the Key themes investigated in this study was how the AMK identified with the Kashmiri social identity. Are members of the organisation aware of the complexities in taking a Kashmiri centric position in a state where ethnic diversity is a socio-political reality?

Kashmiriyat, the overarching social identity that is frequently mentioned by people in Kashmir, is involved in every activity in the AMK. It defines its aims, activities and vision. What exactly is Kashmiriyat has not really been significantly answered by literature. In defining Kashmiriyat, extremely ornamental language is employed. Research dialogues with members of the AMK reflect this ornamentality. Three things are however common in responses to questions about what is Kashmiriyat. Coexistence of Hindus and Muslims in the valley, the predominance of Sufi variants of Islam rather than more stringent practice and the centrality of the Kashmiri language are common themes. Apart from these common themes, responses to Kashmiriyat are varying and at times totally contrasting. However the AMK distances itself from any controversy over Kashmiriyat and declares itself an apolitical organisation. What is common is the understanding that Kashmiri language is at the core of Kashmiriyat. Most of the activities of the AMK are focused around Kashmiri language and literature. Its vision document clearly employs the idiom of language imperialism stating that 'Revival and renaissance of our rich cultural heritage and decolonizing our mother tongue from imperialist impact of non-Kashmiri languages is its focal area of activities'.

Clearly Kashmiriyat and the Kashmiri language are signifiers that characterise the in group-outgroup dynamics within the AMK. Both are significant 'as a part of an individual's self concept' derived 'from his or her knowledge of membership to a social group'.

Conversations on Kashmiriyat and Kashmiri language activism within the AMK are apolitical within a frame of reference that looks at Kashmiriyat as a valley specific phenomena and Kashmiri Language activism as a contestation against state policies that suppressed a language, mother tongue to almost 2/3 population of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. However, Kashmiriyat itself has been the medium for defining in-group and out-group in Kashmir.

The cognitive component of SIT asserts the position 'This is my group'; the evaluative component that suggests 'This is the best group' and the emotional component that suggests 'I love this group'/I hate the other group. SIT thus, holds that the purpose of ingroup identification is the achievement of a positive social identity (i.e. of a group-based positive distinctiveness in a relation to an out group).

The AMK operates on the primacy of Kashmiriat and Kashmiri language. How are these in-group characteristics evaluated against diversity in the state? How does Kashmiriat operate on the cognitive axis of the SIT? In varying degrees activists of the AMK agreed that Kashmiriyat is for Kashmir, limited to the valley of Kashmir. While the overall territorial scope of Kashmiriat extends to all parts of Kashmir, including those under Pakistani control, this is merely lip service to the idea of a united Jammu and Kashmir. As far as language activism is concerned there is no programme to expand the scope to other regional languages in the state. Kashmiri language speakers in Jammu are included within the scope of its activities. Neither does the organisation aim to reach out to Ladakh and organisations there which are active in language activism in Leh.

How does the AMK operate on the evaluative and emotional axis of the SIT?

In this theory it is stated that one of the most important dimensions of social identity, the coexistence of `we' and `they' components (or in another words `sameness' and `distinctiveness') is a parameter varying in regard to membership of individual groups .These three components cleanly organise groups into in-group, where group members have same qualities and out group, which are different. This kind of categorisation is said to lead to stereotyping and discrimination.[10]Tajfel basically maintains that one's social identity strongly influences self-perception and consequently should be the central locus of evaluation. The strength and weakness of the self is largely determined from our status with our reference groups and how we assess outgroup members. When ethnicity and race form the nexus of an in-group, then self-identity will be correspondingly influenced. One's distinctive ethnic characteristics, however, can be restrictive as one may reject external judgments and opinions of their own ethnic group and in turn establish their own criterion to challenge and refute those of the outgroup.

Members of the AMK view themselves first as Kashmiris imbibed with a uniqueness that Kashmiriat grants them. While this leads them to value Kashmiris as a part of their in-group, a corresponding negative stereotypical assessment of others in the state is not evident. While there is stated support for other mother tongues in the state there is no evident programme for advocacy for other mother tongue groups.

What is the nature of language politics in the state of Jammu and Kashmir? This is an important theme given that the AMK is primarily a forum for the promotion of Kashmiri language.

Arguments against Urdu are framed in the language of imperialism. Along with this sense of being under assault there is also a sense of being boxed into a corner. Kashmiris speak about their mother tongue with a distinct discomfort about the sense of inferiority characteristic of colonised, subordinate populations.

School is the place where this inferiority complex is said to originate and crystallise. This happens due to practice that discourages children to converse in Kashmiri. Parallels are drawn

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[10] Tajfel H,Turner J,1986,The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behaviour ,in *Psychology of Intergroup relations* ed..S Worchel,W G Austin, Chicago:Nelson

between discouragements given to Hindi over English in 'Indian 'schools. A distinction made between Kashmiri and other 'Indian' languages.The sense of alienation is also connected with the script for Kashmiri language.A distinct sense of history develops around language. This sense of history differs along religious axis. There is greater acceptance of Urdu amongst internally displaced communities who are members of the AMK.There is an awareness that English is essential for engaging with a globalised world. Due to its focus on Kashmiri and opposition to Urdu the AMK finds itself in the crosshairs of Kashmiri politics in the state. The easy acceptance of Urdu as a link language in the state in the early years and even in the rule of the Dogras is seen as a strategic mistake by the Kashmiris. The idiom of being under oppression remerges. After the rise of political conflict in Kashmir, the dominance of Urdu has come to represent Pakistani strategic influence in the state. Somehow, Pakistan led Pan-Islamism needs Urdu. There is a perceptible clash between Kashmiri nationalism and Pan-Islamism. AMK finds it tough to negotiate between Kashmiri nationalism and pan-Islamism in the state.

Another related theme was to understand the efficacy of organisations like AMK. Are such organisations effective in engaging the state and effecting changes in Education Policy?

Do individuals and organisations affect Education Policy? In order to examine this question the policy cycle approach has been utilised. This theoretical perspective centres on the work of Stephen Ball and colleagues who highlight the complex and contested nature of education policy as a process rather than an end product. Ball (1990) traces "policy formulation, struggle and response from within the state itself through to the various recipients of policy"[11]. **His emphasis has been on micro-political processes and the agency of individual practitioners in constructing policy at the local level**. However, it is important to note at the outset that Ball's theoretical framework has not been static, but dynamic and unfolding, as briefly overviewed below.

Ball claimed to offer a resolution of the theoretical gap between a neo-Marxist, statist perspective with its "tidy generalities" and a pluralist perspective with its "messy realities of influence, pressure, dogma, expediency, conflict, compromise intransigence, resistance, error, opposition and pragmatism" .His theoretical approaches have drawn heavily on the work of Michel Foucault. Ball (1990a)[12], identified key Foucauldian concepts which he saw as applicable to education. Discourse was central: Discourses are about what can be said and thought, but also about who can speak, when, and with what authority. Discourses embody meaning and social relationships, they constitute both subjectivity and power relations. Discourses are 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' ... In so far

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[11] Ball, S. J. 1990, *Politics and policy making in education*. London: Routledge.

[12] Ball, S. J. 1990,. Introducing Monsieur Foucault. In S. J. Ball (Ed.), *Foucault and education,* (pp. 1-8). London: Routledge.

as discourses are constituted by exclusions as well as inclusions, by what cannot as well as what can be said, they stand in antagonistic relationship to other discourses. (Ball, 1990a, P 2).

Bowe, Ball and Gold, (1992)[13] propose that models of education policy which separate the generation and implementation phases be rejected because they ignore the struggles over policy and reinforce a managerialist rationality. There has not been a total exclusion of practitioners from either policy generation or policy implementation, and they used Barthes' notion of 'readerly' and 'writerly' texts to distinguish the extent to which practitioners are actively involved. 'Readerly' texts limit practitioner involvement, whereas 'writerly' texts invite the practitioner to co-author the text, thereby encouraging 'ownership'. emphasis on policy as discourse, or knowledge and practices which are contested.

Thus the focus should be on both the formation of policy discourses and the active interpretation which occurs to link policy text to practise. This involves identifying "resistance, accommodations, subterfuge and conformity within and between arenas of practice and the plotting of clashes and mismatches between contending discourses at work in these arenas".

What occurs in policy making is a continuous policy cycle to allow for the re-contextualisation of policy throughout the policy process and distinguished three primary policy contexts: the context of influence (where interest groups struggle over construction of policy discourses); the context of policy text production (where texts represent policy, although they may contain inconsistencies and contradictions); and the context of practice (where policy is subject to interpretation and recreation). Each of these three contexts has multiple arenas of action (both public and private) and each involves struggles.

Ball (1993)[14] further developed the toolbox of concepts for analysing policy by drawing a more explicit distinction between 'policy as text' and 'policy as discourse'. The conceptualization of 'policy as text' is based on literary theory which sees policies as representations which are coded and decoded in complex ways. Any particular text will have a plurality of readings by a plurality of readers. However, Ball emphasized that this is not to deny that policy authors *attempt* to assert control over the reading of a text. With texts viewed as the products of struggles and compromises, policy effects cannot be predicted and solutions will be localized. Thus, there is a strong element of agency in this conception of policy. By contrast, 'policy as discourse' pays greater attention to constraint, but that constraint is still within a moving discursive frame. Policies can become 'regimes of truth' (after Foucault) in which only certain voices (dominant discourses) are heard as authoritative.

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[13] Bowe, R., Ball, S. J., & Gold, A. 1992, *Reforming education and changing schools*. London: Routledge.

[14] Ball, S. J. 1993, What is policy? Texts, trajectories and toolboxes. *Discourse,* 13(2), 10-17.

Further, Ball (1994)[15] broadened the scope from within the educational state to the whole social body of education. He chose the multiple theoretical tools of critical policy analysis, post-structural analysis (with an emphasis on discourses and texts) and critical ethnography on the logic that single theory explanations are not sufficient to deal with the complexities and scope of policy analysis**. In particular, he believed that critical ethnography has certain methodological affinities with Foucault's genealogy as they are both 'disruptive' in the sense of "giving voice to the unheard"**. The conceptual framework for policy trajectory studies , was also extended to include a 'context of outcomes', which is concerned with the impact of policies on existing social inequalities, as well as a 'context of political strategy', which is concerned with identifying strategies to tackle the inequalities.

The Adbee Markaz Kamraz is seen as significant in all three contexts identified by Ball: the context of influence, of policy text production and the context of practice, in expressing dissent against an education policy that privileges Urdu instead of Kashmiri in schools in Jammu and Kashmir.

In the context of influence it has acted as a pressure group on the government of Jammu and Kashmir.

During the tenure of Farooq Abdullah as Chief Minister, the members of this organisation moved the government to induct Kashmiri language in this syllabus at the primary level. With the support of other organizations and individuals AMK made a history as government was forced to introduce the language in school. It is now being taught as a compulsory subjWith the promotion of Kashmiri language as the focus the AMK has an established support unit which draws membership from teachers. This is the AMK Teachers support Unit. Members are spread across schools in Kashmir. The efforts for introduction of Kashmiri language as an evaluative subject in classes 9 and 10 is being undertaken with the AMK Civil Society Unit meeting government functionaries regularly for this purpose.

Conclusion

What is significant about the Adbee Markaz Kamraz? At least two features signify the uniqueness of this case. The AMK is an organisation that is giving voice to the Kashmiri social identity. While there are nuances even within the Kashmiri social identity largely, the AMK confirms the position that Kashmiris are a unique in-group. However, having identified strongly as an in-group, the AMK expresses itself in a remarkably positive manner, totally bypassing conflict with out-groups. Secondly the AMK, has utilised its position as a cultural organisation to routinely express dissent against Education policy in the state and has employed language activism, a potentially volatile tool for expression of dissent.

The first insight that this research provides is that Kashmir is not all about violence, stone-pelting, Azadi and conflict. Even amongst organisations where the Kashmiri social identity is rigidly defined, there is a large constituency of peace that exists in the state. The AMK represents one such constituency.

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[15] Ball, S. J. 1994, *Education reform: A critical and post-structural approach.* Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press.

A related finding is that dissent against education policy is at times expressed in an organised manner. This creates synergy with the state initiating a process by which education policy accommodates real and perceived inequalities, emerging from social identities.

Thirdly, organisations like AMK face a lot of trouble and intimidation from vested interests, with whom they might share a common social identity. For instance the AMK faces charges of being anti-Urdu in J&K where Urdu is a lingua franca.

Further, narratives of education in areas of conflict like Jammu and Kashmir cannot be studied unless researched relationally. Jammu and Kashmir is a state where the Indian state suffers a crisis of legitimacy. Narratives of education are enmeshed with this primary question in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Another significant conclusion of the study is that research in Education, in areas of conflict like Jammu and Kashmir requires modification of traditional research methods and data collection tools.

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