Psychological Aspects in Kashmir: Why Kashmiriyat Has Won Against Haivaniyat

Col **AS Chonker**, VSM, a Senior Fellow in CLAWS, is pursuing research on a very current and relevant topic "Perception Management in J&K". While doing so, he is exploring the complex interplay of human behaviour with internal and external factors in J&K through a net assessment and system analysis study in order to evolve relevant strategies for the future.

Introduction

When it comes to Kashmir, today, Kashmiriyat is the flavour of the day. Many a writer, statesman and politician has referred to this, as well as to Sufism, in discourses on Kashmir. Does it comprise, a way of life, a typical culture, a value system, a set of beliefs or an inherent attitude? This *Issue Brief* will analyse this connect and how Kashmiriyat has been the saviour of Kashmir over the last seven decades.

Kashmiriyat *per se*, comprises the ethno-national and social consciousness, and the cultural values of the Kashmiri people. Emerging around the 16th century, it is characterised by religious and cultural harmony, patriotism and pride for their mountainous homeland of Kashmir.

The most dominant influence on the Kashmiri Muslims, in terms of their Kashmiriyat, was that of the *Rishi* order of Sufis. While the Sufi orders like the Suharwardi, Kubravi, Naqshbandi and Quadri arrived in Kashmir from Persia, Central Asia, and Central and North India, the *Rishi* order evolved in the

Key Points

1. Kashmiriyat comprises the ethno-national and social consciousness, and the cultural values of the Kashmiri people.
2. The most dominant influence on the Kashmiri Muslims, in terms of their Kashmiriyat, is that of the *Rishi* order of Sufis.
3. To study Kashmiriyat, we must understand the basic tenets of human behaviour.
4. Pakistan has tried to target this invisible culture of Kashmir by proactively creating narratives which are also affecting the values, beliefs and attitudes of the people of Kashmir.
5. Militancy has dramatically transformed Sufism and Kashmiriyat and the people of Kashmir into a fractured and radically influenced society.
6. Culture is the sum total of many factors, developed over a long period of time, not easy to modify in a hurry, and that may be the main reason why Kashmiriyat is still a reckonable force in Kashmir, in spite of Pakistan's best efforts for the past seven decades to erode it**.**
7. Perceptions (an important link between beliefs and culture) are made in the mind and, therefore, it needs more than only brute force, to change them. Kashmir, today more than at any other time in history, is a mind game.

Psychological Aspects in Kashmir ...

Valley itself, indigenously, at the beginning of the 15th century. The Kashmir Valley was already permeated with the traditions of Hindu ascetism and Buddhist renunciation. The term `*Rishi*' itself is clearly a derivation from Sanskrit and Indian traditions, though some medieval Muslim scholars have tried to show that it is derived from the Persian word *raish* or *rish*, meaning the feathers or wings of a bird. The indigenous *Rishi* order of Sufis, however, does differ, not only from the establishmentarian and fundamentalist Muslims but also from other Sufi orders in its philosophy and way of life. An important chronicler of this period among many, Abul Fazl, for instance, is all praise for them. He writes: "The most respected class of people in this country (Kashmir) are the *Rishis*. They have not abandoned the traditional and customary forms of worship (*taqlid*), but they are true in their worship. They do not denounce men belonging to different faiths".

Personal Values, Belief and Attitudes

To study Kashmiriyat, we must understand the basic tenets of 'human behaviour'. As human beings, we all have our own values, beliefs and attitudes that we have developed through the course of our lives. Our family, friends and community, and the experiences we have had, all contribute to our sense of who we are and how we view the world. Values are principles, standards or qualities that an individual or group of people hold in high regard. These values guide the way we live our lives and the decisions we make. The word 'attitude' can refer to a lasting group of feelings, beliefs and behavioural tendencies directed towards specific people, groups, ideas or objects. Our attitudes develop over time and not only reflect where we have come from i.e. the influence that family, friends and experiences have had on our attitudes, but also how we will proceed with our lives in the future. Attitudes are, therefore, a powerful element in our lives, are long enduring, and hard to change—but not impossible!

Fig 1
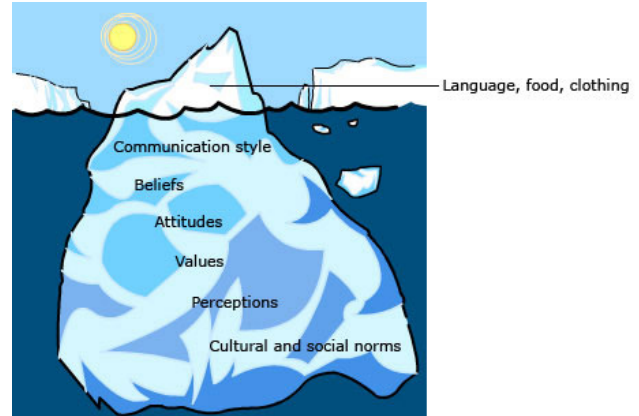
Box 1

WHAT IS CULTURE?

- Culture is the conceptual system developed by a community or society to structure the way people view the world. It involves a particular set of beliefs, norms, and values that influence ideas about relationships, how people live their lives, and the way people organise their world.

Culture

If we were to draw an iceberg, the deepest part as cultural and social norms, which get developed over centuries – Kashmiriyat is this "culture" of Kashmir.

Within this culture too, there is a small visible portion and a major unseen portion which is below the surface and is constantly evolving, and sometimes mutating through changes in attitudes, values, beliefs as well as feelings and perceptions.

Pakistan's "inner front strategy" as well as the "misperception strategy" has tried to target the invisible culture of Kashmir by proactively creating narrative after narrative which is also slowly affecting the values, beliefs and attitudes of the people of Kashmir.

Fig 2

Visible Culture

DRESS, WORDS, GESTURES, BODY LANGUAGE, OUTWARD BEHAVIOR

As with an iceberg, only a small portion of culture is visible.

Invisible Culture

BELIEFS AND VALUES such as worldview, religion, concept of past and future, nature of friendships, collectivism, individualism, and patterns of leadership

ATTITUDES AND BIASES such as respect for elders, treatment of minorities, time orientation, relationship to animals, and attitudes toward age, gender, occupation, and child rearing

FEELINGS AND FEARS controlling reactions to strangers, disease, death, personal space, cleanliness, and pain

UPBRINGING governing rules of conduct, courtship practices, touching, courtesy, facial expression, and more

Psychological Aspects: Kashmir

- **Kashmiriyat**

  - **Origin:** Kashmir has historically been an important centre for Hinduism and Buddhism. Islam was introduced in the medieval centuries, and Sikhism also spread to the region under the rule of the Sikh Empire in the early 19th century[2]. Kashmir has a significant place in the mythology and history of all four religions. The region is home to many legendary Hindu and Buddhist monuments and institutions. The Hazratbal shrine houses a relic that is believed to be the hair of Mohammad, the prophet of Islam. In his journeys seeking religious enlightenment, Guru Nanak travelled to Kashmir. Although the process was initiated by the likes of Bulleh Shah and Shah Hamadani in the 14th century, Kashmiriyat *per se*, is believed to have developed under the rule of Muslim Governor Zain-ul Abedin and the Mughal Emperor Akbar, both of whom gave equal protection, importance and patronage to Kashmir's different religious communities[3].

  - **Philosophy:** Kashmir's existence is characterised by its insular Himalayan geography, harsh winter climate and isolation in economic and political terms. The region has also seen political turmoil and foreign invasions. Kashmiriyat is believed to be an expression of solidarity, resilience and patriotism **regardless of religious differences**. It is believed to embody an ethos of harmony and a determination of survival of the people and their heritage. To many Kashmiris, **Kashmiriyat meant religious and social harmony and brotherhood[4]**. It has been strongly influenced by Shaivism, Buddhism and Sufism, carrying a long-standing conviction that any and every religion will lead to the same divine goal. However, the impact and importance of Kashmiriyat has been concentrated in the Vale of Kashmir only, which is the real historical Kashmir. The farther regions of Gilgit, Baltistan, Jammu and Ladakh have not been influenced by this philosophy, as these regions are not Kashmiri in terms of culture, language or ethnicity.

◯ **Challenges:** The culture and ethos of Kashmiriyat were greatly eroded with the onset of the Kashmir conflict, when the region was claimed and divided during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947. In the political debate on sovereignty over Kashmir, many interpret Kashmiriyat as nationalism and an expression for political independence from both Pakistan and India. The onset of militancy in Kashmir from 1989 has led to the exodus of almost all the Hindus from Kashmir, and violent attacks against the remaining communities of Hindus and Sikhs, further eroding the fabric of Kashmiriyat. Amidst the wider dispute between India and Pakistan, there are also political demands for the separation of the territories of Ladakh and Jammu from the Kashmir Valley. Conscious efforts to revive Kashmiriyat have been made by various communities of Muslims and Hindus through united opposition to violence in the state[5]. Efforts to promote Kashmiriyat through cultural activities, social programmes and literature have increased throughout Jammu and Kashmir and amongst expatriate Kashmiri communities. In a 2007 poll conducted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi, 84 percent of people in Srinagar wanted to see the return of the Kashmiri Pandits.[6]

● **Sufism:** The most remarkable aftermath of the partition in our history, however, is the fact that Kashmir's Muslims stayed secular in this hour of their gravest trial[7]. It was no small thing, for them, unlike even their brethren in Mirpur and Poonch, not to speak of other parts of the country, to hear horrendous stories of communal carnage involving millions of Hindus and Muslims, and remain utterly unaffected[8]. Instead of giving in to the deadly and rampant communal virus, the Kashmiri Muslims waited for, and welcomed, Indian troops, 70 years ago, to help them in their fight against the Pakistani Muslim tribal raiders. Kashmir has been in the grip of militant separatism for years now. A Muslim-majority region has been seeking to secede from a Hindu-majority country. This is bound to create the impression that communalism and obscurantism is rampant in that state. And yet, barring the misdeeds of isolated groups, largely funded from abroad, the masses of the people remain secular. Nothing could demonstrate this better than the fact that ordinary Kashmiri Muslims are even today eagerly awaiting the return of their Pandit brothers and sisters who had left the Valley at the height of the militancy. It has surprised many observers that, contrary to the general experience of communal rioting in most parts of the subcontinent, Kashmiri Muslims have been looking after the homes and hearths of their migrated Kashmiri Pandit brothers for years, in the fond hope that one day there would be peace and they would be able to return[9]. The demolition of the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya was followed by the demolition of numerous Hindu temples in the Muslim Bangladesh and Pakistan, but temples in Kashmir, as very dramatically demonstrated by *India Today's* video-magazine, remained safe from the effects of the Islamic frenzy seen elsewhere in the subcontinent[10], contrary to the claims made by vested interests. From where does this deep commitment to secularism, to a composite Hindu-Muslim culture emanate? What is the source of this deep connection with India? Why is Kashmiriyat so important to the Kashmiri Muslim? The answer lies in the eclectic and syncretic nature of the Kashmiri Muslim's philosophy of life[11], his spiritual beliefs[12]. It is the impact of the Sufi and *Rishi* visions of Islam that has helped him synthesise the teachings of Prophet Mohammad with the teachings of the earlier sages of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. While elsewhere in the subcontinent, too, Muslims had their pre-Islamic beliefs, it is in Kashmir alone that one finds them claiming their ancient Indian, particularly Vedic and Buddhist heritage consciously[13].

The explanation for the spread of Sufism perhaps lies in the history of the spread of Islam in this region.

Definite historical facts that would account for the extraordinarily large number of conversions that took place in Kashmir are not available, as Sir Thomas Arnold points out in his highly regarded book *Preaching of Islam*. But whatever scanty information is available leads us to attribute this surprising phenomenon to a long and continuous missionary movement carried out by Sufi saints, *pirs*, *faqirs*, *dervishes* and *ulema*. The Islamic missionary entered the Valley at a time when, in the words of W. R. Lawrence, it (the Valley of Kashmir) "was a country of drunkards and gamblers." Such an atmosphere was very much suited for the spread of a new philosophy or religion. The Mughal rule provided further impetus to the spread of Islam, as many learned *ulema* and mystics arrived in the Valley during this period. The process continued during the Afghan rule (1752-1819) as well. Thus, the process that had been started by a simple *faqir* called Bulbul Shah (1301-20 in Kashmir)[14] was continued by a volley of saints and mystics, *Rishis* and *faqirs*, *ulema* and learned men like Shah Hamdani[15] (1371-1383 in Kashmir). No Generals like Mohammadbin Qasim or warriors like Shahab-ud-Deen or conquerors like Mahmud were involved. No wonder, the colour of Islam in the Valley is still so deeply mystical and deeply respectful of other religions. It is extremely depressing to see people with such mystical traditions living in such violent times. It is difficult to see Kashmir living permanently in the grip of obscurantism and fundamentalism.[16]

- **Spread of Fundamentalism:** Militancy has dramatically transformed the Sufism and Kashmiriyat influenced people of Kashmir into a fractured and radically influenced society which, in turn, has given rise to religious fundamentalism. This has affected all aspects of the society, including Kashmiri institutions such as political parties, government and non-government organisations, militant groups, educational institutions, self-help groups and many other such organisations within and outside the Kashmir Valley[17]. The rise of fundamentalism also signifies a transformation in the mindset of the Kashmiri people from being

an accommodative and tolerant society to a more static, traditional and conservative one which is not averse to the use of violence, and advocates an extremist outlook.

A fundamentalist mindset has brought to the fore many terrorist institutions such as the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Harkat-ul-Ansar, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Tayebba, etc (fully conceptualised and supported by Pakistan) and secessionist groups such as Mutahida Jehad Council(a conglomerate of Pakistani *jehadi* groups), Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, All Party Hurriyat Conference (propped and supported by Pakistan), Dukhtaran-e-Millat (a soft terrorist group supported by Pakistan), etc. A critical area, expected to be exploited by such fundamentalist organisations, is leveraging of the institution of *madrasas* to their advantage.

In spite of the progress with respect to education and literacy, Islamic education in Kashmir remains in focus. Islamic education in Jammu and Kashmir encompasses various *madrasas* and Islamic institutions. The curriculum involves 80 percent of the time being spent on religious studies, while 20 percent is devoted to other subjects. This includes schools which are run by religious trusts like the Salafia Trust, Falhan-e-Alam (Jamaat-e-Islami), but are affiliated to the state board of education.

Fig. 3: Madrasas Supported by the Government in J&K[18]
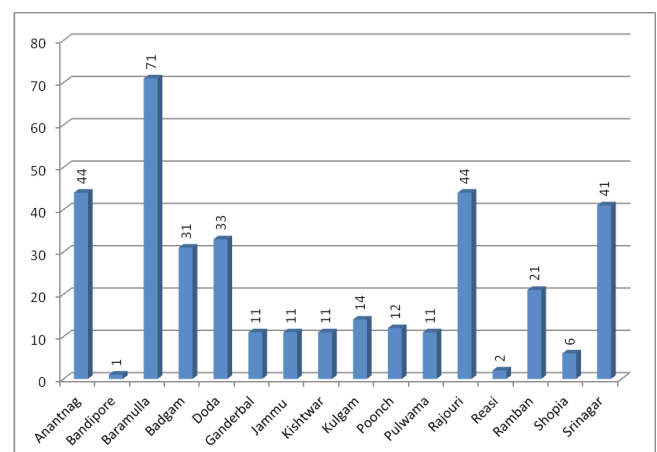
... Why Kashmiriyat Has Won Against Haivaniyat

Slowly but steadily, Islamic schools and *madrasas* have gained importance amongst the Valley's population. As *madrasas* focus on the Islamic identity, they weaken the concept of Kashmiriyat. Many of the *madrasas*, which are affiliated to the Salafia Trust, Jamaat-e-Islami and Deobandi School of thought, are focussing on establishing orthodox Islam thought and practices which, in turn, erode the core values of Sufism. *Shariah* traditions, as advocated by orthodox Islam, advocate shunning of local traditions such as shrine worship, and advocate strict *purdah* by women. Reducing the influence of Shia *maulvis* is another motivating factor for the fundamentalists. There is no direct evidence of the involvement of *madrasas* in anti-national militancy. However, the products of these institutions do nurture anti-establishment feelings. Some of the *maulvis* have been investigated by the state police for alleged links with terrorist organisations. Since *maulvis* are held in high esteem, it may be possible for them to indoctrinate the students of *madrasas* into the ways of militancy. If influenced by the communal and anti-national forces, the institution of *madrasas* can be exploited by the hardliners for leveraging the cause of fundamentalism.

- **History of Turmoil:** Power equations have changed over a period of time and it is always the human trait of wanting to be at the centre of power which has been the main reason for the neglect of the aspirations of the state. Almost all the important leaders have played with the emotions of the people to achieve their objectives. Maharaja Hari Singh initially signed the Standstill Agreement with both India and Pakistan because he wanted to retain power himself. **History is not very clear if the whole state seemed to have accepted its transition towards India**. Pandit Nehru, in his exuberance and idealistic philosophy, agreed to a plebiscite[19]. However, the Sher-e-Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah whose ideas swayed between independence and amalgamation with India or Pakistan, had a hidden agenda himself. So much so, that Pandit Nehru, his one-time best friend and later foe, began to distrust the Sheikh on realising that the man himself nurtured aspirations of

ruling Kashmir, if it became independent. This put Nehru in a precarious situation. The person who was given the onus of steering the plebiscite had himself tasted the blood of power. There was no doubt that the Sheikh, with his enormous clout and iconic image, had coxswained the people of Kashmir into dreaming for *azadi*. The seeds of separatism were, thus, sown during this period[20]. The propping up of parallel leaders to reduce the followings of the Sheikh added to the confusion[21]. The people were, thus, confused as to what they actually wanted and were generally influenced by the perceptions of the leaders. Most of the political leaders, barring a few, had myopic views, had visions to suit their own political agendas, and were amenable to manipulation. The alleged blatant rigging of the elections in 1987[22] was yet another classical example of the political parties trying all means to come to power. Finally, to add to the woes, Pakistan jumped into the fray yet again with a well laid out proxy war to manipulate the situation created by ourselves for our own undoing.

Thus, over the period of the last 70 years, no state of the Indian Union has seen such a huge shift in the aspirations of the people, from *azadi* to becoming part of Pakistan, to being part of India. Three totally different scenarios, with the *awam* of Kashmir also swaying with the wind. **The dust seems to have finally settled, with a past which is full of distrust and perplexing aspirations, which are difficult to fathom**. Thus, dealing with a Kashmiri in the Valley definitely needs a '**Kashmiri outlook**' and cannot be compared with any other state. There is a need to gradually mould the Kashmiris into our mainstream, rather than force them to accept a particular thought. As Peter Senge brings out, **the harder you push, the harder the system pushes back.**

- **Kashmiri Psyche:** This historical baggage of turmoil has given rise to a specific "character" in the psyche of the Kashmiri populace. A few of its facets are highlighted as under:

A Kashmiri does not know whom to trust viz state / central government, security forces/ terrorists/police or even his neighbour.

He does not know what he wants: *azadi*, or to be with India or Pakistan, or a better life.

He has, over a period of time, developed a dual personality. He speaks his mind and feelings differently in a group/mob, and individually. He sings the song based on the audience.

He feels oppressed because he feels that he has always been ruled by others over the years.

A history of turmoil and continued oppression has made the Kashmiri adapt himself to his perceived owner. In such circumstances, he is forced to survive by quickly adjusting himself to the changing environment.

A normal Kashmiri feels that it is the responsibility of the government to take care of him, and freebies over a period of time have made him lazy.

He has a lot of free time and indulges in group discussions, which results in hardening of attitudes. An average Kashmiri is politically aware of the environment.

The Kashmiri youth gas been the victim of violence and has developed a hatred for authority due to the perceived violence and humiliation of his parents and relatives. Thus, he has developed the traits of a rebel over a period of time which is presently manifesting in the aggressiveness which he portrays to the environment.

System Analysis of Psychological Aspects through Causal Loop Diagrams (CLD)

Defining the End Game and Major Factors:

The desired end state in the Valley is achieving 'Integration with India'. This can be achieved only when the centre of gravity. i.e., the *awam* or the common people desire to be part of India. The state of 'peace and prosperity' will then fall into place, as it is more a function of good governance. 'Peace and prosperity' will encompass a safe and peaceful environment devoid of threats of violence from militancy, communal clashes and external forces; a prosperous and well governed society in which the social, economic and political aspirations of the *awam* are fulfilled; and a secular society well integrated with India. This desired end state of '*Awam* Support for National Integration' is driven by two key factors/ elements:

Militant activities.

Sense of alienation and resentment.

CLD: Overall Internal Security Situation in Kashmir Valley

Factors Considered
- *Awam* support for national integration.
- Militant activities.
- Sense of alienation and resentment.

Cause and Effect Table

Ser	Cause	Effect	Type of Relationship
(i)	Sense of alienation and resentment	*Awam* support for national integration	Opposite
		Militant activities	Similar
(ii)	Militant activities	*Awam* support for national integration	Opposite
(iii)	*Awam* support for national integration	Sense of alienation and resentment	Opposite
		Militant activities	Opposite

CLD: Overall Internal Security Situation in Valley
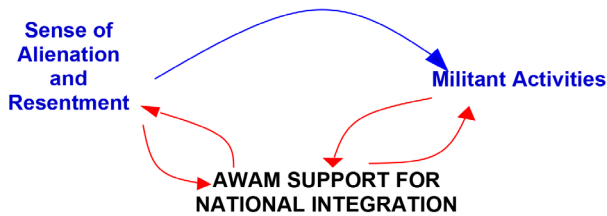
- **Feedback Loops:** As the alienation and resentment of the *awam* increase, the support for national integration decreases, and vice versa. As support for national integration increases, the alienation and resentment decrease. This is a mutually reinforcing loop. As militant activities increase, the support for national integration decreases, and vice versa. As support for national integration increases, the support for militancy decreases. This is also a reinforcing loop. The sense of alienation also has a similar effect on the militant activities, in that as the alienation increases, there is increase support for militant activities. This is a 'success to successful' archetype. With increase in alienation and resentment, *awam* support for national integration decreases, which, in turn, gives a boost to militancy, which further decreases national integration.

- **Leverage Points:** Two leverage points are of sense of alienation and resentment, and militant activities. The alienation needs to be reduced and, at the same time, the militant activities need to be controlled. A start needs to be devised to ensure a disconnect between alienation and militant activities.

- **CLD 1: Sense of Alienation and Resentment:** This would include:

Factors

- ○ Religious values and beliefs.

- ○ Perception of people.

- ○ Aspirations of people.

- ○ Grey population.

- ○ Central forces operations.

Cause and Effect Table

Ser	Cause	Effect	Type of Relationship
(i)	Religious values and beliefs	Perception of people	Opposite
		Sense of alienation and resentment	Similar
(ii)	Perception of People	Sense of alienation and resentment	Opposite
(iii)	Grey Population	Perception of people	Opposite
		Sense of alienation and resentment	Similar
(iv)	Central forces ops	Sense of alienation and resentment	Similar
(v)	Sense of alienation and resentment	Grey population	Similar
		Religious values and beliefs	Similar
		Central forces operations	Opposite
(vi)	Social media	Perception of people	Similar/ Opposite
(vii)	Historical grievances	Perception of people	Similar

CLD 1- Sense of Alienation and Resentment
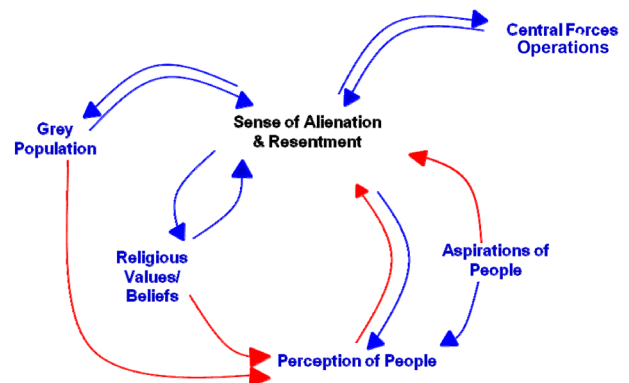
- **Feedback Loops:** There are basically two reinforcing loops, as under:

- ○ As the sense of alienation increases, the support for the grey population (separatists and overground workers) increases, who, in turn, are able to influence the perception

of people more adversely; the adverse perception further alienates the people and vice versa. This is a mutually reinforcing loop.

○ More fundamental and non-accommodative religious values/ beliefs colour the perception of people, thereby, increasing the sense of alienation, further affecting the religious beliefs. This also is a mutually reinforcing loop.

○ A sense of alienation increases by the operations conducted by the central security forces i.e, the Army and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

○ The perception is also affected by the social media/media, including local media, and historical grievances.

○ The aspirations of people, if met, will decrease the sense of alienation and also improve their perception.

● **Archetypes:** 'Success to successful'. The two reinforcing loops work in tandem and further increase/ decrease the sense of alienation and resentment.

● **Leverage Points:** The perception of people, if managed, will make these loops positive, reinforcing loops.

● **CLD 1 (a) Religious Values/ Beliefs** This would include:

○ Factors

■ Kashmiriyat.

■ Radicalisation.

○ **Cause and Effect Table**

Ser	Cause	Effect	Type of Relationship
(i)	Kashmiriyat	Religious beliefs/ values	Opposite
		Communal harmony	Similar
(ii)	Radicalisation	Kashmiriyat	Opposite
(iii)	Religious values/ beliefs	Radicalisation	Similar
(iv)	Sufism	Kashmiriyat	Similar
(v)	External Influences	Radicalisation	Similar
(vi)	Pakistan's support	External influences	Similar
(vii)	Pan Islamic movement	External influences	Similar
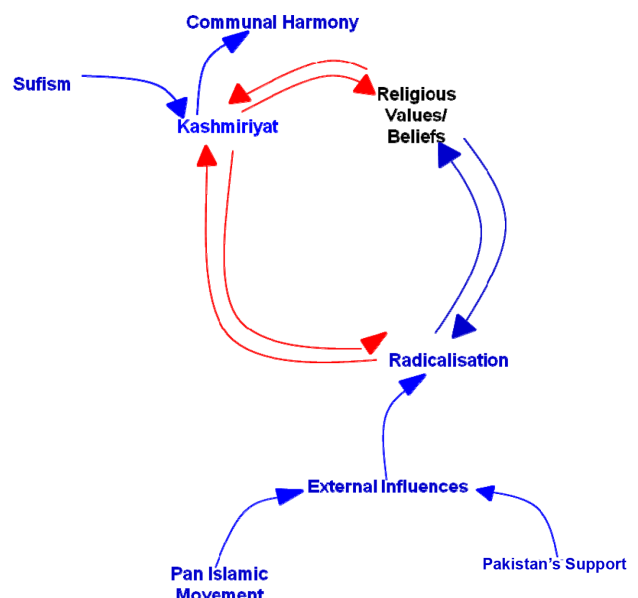
CLD 1 (a) Religious Values/ Beliefs

● **Feedback Loops**

○ As a sense of Kashmiriyat increases, the religious values/ beliefs become more accommodative and moderate. As the religious values/ beliefs improve, the radicalisation of the society reduces, which, in turn, further

improves the Kashmiriyat. This is a reinforcing loop.

○ Kashmiriyat affects communal harmony. As Kashmiriyat improves, communal harmony improves.

○ Radicalisation is fostered by external influences comprising Pakistan's and the Pan Islamic movement's support.

○ **Leverage Points:** Fostering of Kashmiriyat and controlling the external influences on radicalisation.

○ **Archetypes:** The two reinforcing loops act in tandem to create a 'success to successful' archetype.

● **CLD 1(b) Perception of People**

○ **Factors**

■ Social media/media.
■ State capacity for governance.
■ Aspirations of people.

○ **Cause and Effect Table**

| Ser	Cause	Effect	Type of Relationship
(i)	Social media/media	Perception of people	Similar/Opposite
(ii)	State capacity for governance	Aspirations of people	Similar
		Social media	Similar
(iii)	Aspirations of people	Perception of people	Similar
(iv)	Historical grievances	Perception of people	Opposite

○ **Feedback Loop:** It has two reinforcing loops:

■ Good governance ensures that the aspirations of the people are met which,

in turn, realises in better perception of the people, further giving support to governance.

■ Good governance also ensures positive feedback on the social media and other forms of media, including the local press, which improves the perception.

○ **Archetypes:** 'Limits to growth,' in case the social media/media has an opposite effect. The reinforcing loop is offset by the action of the balancing loop. The best strategy is good governance. In this case, it is better to mitigate or control the effect of the social media/media before it can create a substantial impact on results.

○ **Leverage Points:** State capacity for governance and social media/media.
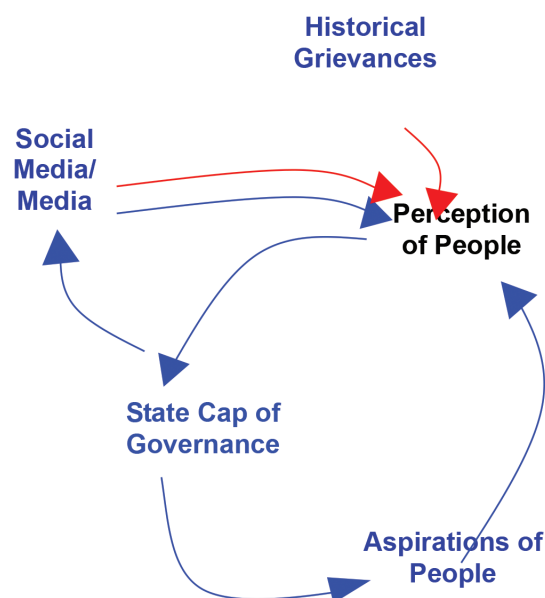
CLD 1 (b) Perception of People

Conclusion

Culture is the sum total of many factors and is developed over a long period of time. It is not easy to

modify in a hurry, and that may be the main reason why Kashmiriyat is still a reckonable force in Kashmir, in spite of Pakistan's best efforts for the past seven decades to erode it.
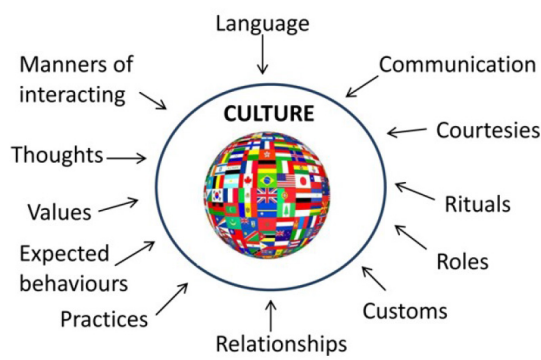
Kashmiriyat, the inherent culture, is still alive, deep within every Kashmiri, albeit eroded by external negative influences over the decades. It is only due to this that Kashmiriyat, though wounded, is still fighting Haivaniyat/Terrorism. There is a strong need to revive and strengthen this culture by reinforcing positive attitudes, values and beliefs which, in turn, will positively strengthen the lowest strata of the culture iceberg. There is no gainsaying that control and, finally, eradication of militant activity is very important, but, at the same time, work has to be continuously done to mitigate the perceived sense of alienation of the Kashmiris, thereby bringing them into the fold of national integration (as is evident by the above system analysis through CLDs). The appointment of an interlocutor is a positive step in this direction which will negate the sense of alienation.

There is a need to involve social science experts to understand the deep Kashmiri pschye, to scientifically work out the constantly evolving aspirations of the upcoming generation, who they confide in, who they are influenced by, what are the important social structures that need to be revived/strengthened, all of which will assist us in fostering of Kashmiriyat, an important leverage point, as shown in the system analysis through causal loop diagrams. The recent case of Majid Khan[23] the 20-year-old Kashmiri football player who had taken to the gun and joined the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT), but was convinced later by his mother to surrender, should show us a way.

The other relevant leverage points of controlling the external influences on radicalisation, state capacity for governance and social media/media are also extremely important in order to keep the basic culture alive, and work needs to be done in this regard on a war-footing, otherwise the system will push back harder, which could lead to the relative success of Pakistan's "misperception and inner front" strategy.

Perceptions (an important link between beliefs and culture) are made in the mind and, therefore, it needs more than brute force, to change them. Kashmir today, more than any other time in history, is a mind game. The faster we understand it, the faster we will be able to integrate the minds of the Kashmiris with the rest of the nation.

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