



AN ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF MIGHTY RIVER "JHELUM" IN KASHMIR VALLEY (JAMMU AND KASHMIR)

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The current study points out the economic importance of river Jhelum in Kashmir valley. It also shows that Jhelum is known as life line of vast area of valley and also got historical importance.

Methodology /Approach/Design: The study contains primary and secondary source of data. The primary data is collected from personal interviews and experience. And the secondary data is collected from different books, journals, research papers.

Findings: The study shows that the river Jhelum done much for the wellbeing of the people of Kashmir valley. It increases the economic status of both the rural and urban population of Kashmir. Which means that much population is directly and indirectly depend of the river system of Jhelum. At the same time due to urbanization the river system has come under threat because, lot of garbage come through our homes and industries are thrown in the river Jhelum. Which become huge challenge before us.

Value/ Originality: The study shows that in this modern world the resource like water is one of the key resource because it is used in multiple things i.e. irrigation, drinking, hydropower, fishing, transport etc. The water resources in modern world increases the reaches of the country when it is utilized in good manner.

Keywords: River, Water, Jhelum, Hydropower, Irrigation, Economic, Kashmir, Valley.

Introduction:

The State of Jammu and Kashmir is bounded on the northeast by the Uygur Autonomous Region of Sinkiang and Tibet (Peoples Republic of China); it is surrounded by the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab on the South, on the northwest by Afghanistan and on the west by Pakistan.¹The Kashmir valley is predominantly mountainous region of the state with deep narrow valleys and high barren plateaus. The relatively low laying Jammu and Poonch plains in the south west are separated by the thickly forested Himalayan foothills and the pir panjal range of the lesser Himalayas from the larger, more fertile and more heavily populated valley of kashmir to the north. The valley is situated at an elevation of about 1829 meters constitutes the basin of the upper Jhelum river and contains the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir that is Srinagar.

Objectives:

- ❖ To study about the economic importance of river Jhelum
- ❖ To study about the historical importance of the river Jhelum
- ❖ To understand the impact of urbanization on the river Jhelum

Research methodology:

This analysis has based on the theoretical work, which covers several regions of inhabits on the both banks of river Jhelum. This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected from direct

communication with related persons who are totally depend directly or indirectly on river Jhelum. Secondary data has been collected from Government of Jammu and Kashmir digest of statistics, books, journals, newspapers, published and unpublished research work, various search engines, are also used.

Main idea:

Historical importance:

The valley of Kashmir is famous for its scenic beauty, flora and fauna in the whole world. The factors responsible for its beauty include among others, its rivers and snow fed streams. Water resource has fundamental economic importance to every region for sustainable development and poverty alleviation. It plays a developmental role in every aspect of life both in rural and urban areas. The state of Jammu and kashmir is drained by the mighty Indus, Jhelum, Chenab and many other rivers. The Indus and the Chenab rivers have their origins well to the north of the greater Himalayas, while as the Jhelum has its origin at the Verinag (Anantnag) in pir panjal range.

The river Jhelum by ancient Greeks and Romans called as Hydaspes, the Vedasta by the Hindus, the Jhelum is known to the Kashmiris as the Veth. When it leaves kashmir at Baramulla it is called the Kashur Darya and after joining the Kishnganga it is spoken as the Jhelum river. Though Verinag is considered as its source, the local people maintain that a spring, a little below Verinag known as Vethvatru, is source of Jhelum.² The river Jhelum is the main river of kashmir valley and the Anantnag, Srinagar, Sopore and Baramulla cities are situated on both sides of

the river. Its total length is 725 km, but its course within the valley of Kashmir is about 215km. The river Jhelum is navigable from Khanbal (Anantnag) to Khadanyar (Baramulla), as distance of about 170 km.

Economic importance:

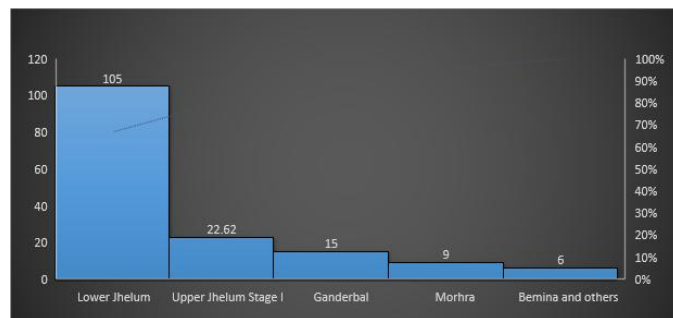
From the very beginning of the river Jhelum it got economic importance, the place Verinag origin of mighty river become much famous where water come out from earth naturally due to its clearness and coldness it become one of the main tourist place. Every year large number of tourists both international and domestic visit this place which become livelihood of many people there. Besides this after few yards there is also a center of fish rearing hatchery where the trout (a kind of fish) is going to be rear, which are to famous in district Anantnag. After that the river flows through many villages of Anantnag where it feeds a larger number of lands like orchids, rice fields and also many small vegetable fields. Few villages after the origin of this river got employment because this river produces the stones to somehow spherical which is used in making the beds of large number of houses in Anantnag and also used for the land conversion. This place is 20 km from the Anantnag city which is known as *Shankerpora*. After that the soling is also drag out from this river which is used in making the houses, RCC and many other construction works. This place is 5km from main city of Anantnag. Now this river flows down and touches western side of city Anantnag and flows through the Khanbal from where it become the big source of navigation and sand. There is a huge population depend on to drag out sand from this river, the source of sand spread at least 70km from Anantnag to Srinagar. Thousands of people depend on this river whether it is a dragging of sand or fishing. It is like a life line people of Kashmir, after leaving the Srinagar city it flows through biggest lake that is Wular lake. After that it keep its speed which make it much advantages for making of hydroelectricity. There are many hydropower projects on this river which generate our economy very sound and also do welfare of the people. There are some power projects below.

Table: 1.1

Name of power project	Installed capacity in (MW)
Lower Jhelum	105.0
Upper Jhelum Stage I	22.62
Ganderbal	15.0
Morhra	9.0
Bemina and others	6.0

Source: digest of statistics, Jammu and Kashmir state

Figure: 1.1



After flowing from these districts of Kashmir valley it goes through the Pakistan where the water is used for making power and irrigation and finally fall into the Arabian sea.

Challenges:

Due to increasing of an urbanization the natural resources are very widely exploited among them water resources are one of the key one. The utilization of soling, sand and other materials from river Jhelum the fish culture of this river come under the danger signal, and also due to dragging out these materials from this river there happened commonly known as soil erosion. And one of the main challenge for this river is that from Anantnag to Baramulla the water become much unhealthy for common people, because all the wastes which are coming from our homes are thrown into it. If we look back to those good old days this water is used for drinking and cooking food, which now is only used for irrigation and generating power.

Conclusion:

After discussing above all it may be seen that the river Jhelum is the life line of Kashmir valley, which provides hand to mouth for lot of people directly or indirectly. It provides employment not only one who is dragging the materials from it but also for those who carry this material from one place to another place e.g. trucks, tractors etc. apart from this it generates income through producing the electricity which Jammu and Kashmir sell to other states, and many people got job in those power houses. Thus it may be said that the mighty river Jhelum got much economic importance in the valley from very beginning.

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