

## **Understanding the Literacy and Educational Profile of Nomadic Populations in Jammu & Kashmir**

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### **Abstract**

*India has largest number of tribal groups in the world next to Africa. The total tribal population in our country is 69 million with 533 tribes. The Tribes, is the most socially, economically and educationally disadvantaged, marginalized and excluded groups in our country. In Jammu and Kashmir the Scheduled Tribes mostly resides on hill and mountainous region of the state and are still leading the nomadic life. They face a number of problems and one such problem is the education of their children. It is in this context an effort has been made to study the literacy and educational level of scheduled tribes especially Gujjars and Bakerwals. Few recommendations have also been made for improving the level of literacy and education for Gujjar and Bakerwals.*

**Keywords:** *Tribes • Tribal Population • Tribal Development • Scheduled Tribes • Jammu And Kashmir*

### **Introduction**

India has largest number of tribal groups in the world next to Africa. The total tribal population in the country is sixty nine million (around 8.6%) distributed over 94000 tribal villages. Tribals are mainly concentrated in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, west Bengal, North eastern states, North western Himalayan states. The tribals are dependent mainly on agriculture, forests and livestock. According to the Anthropological survey of India, there are 750 tribes in the country (Singh, 1998). The Ministry of Tribal Affairs ( Govt. of India has identified 698 scheduled tribes, spread over the country, out of which 75 groups have been classified as primitive tribal groups

### **Tribes in Jammu & Kashmir State**

Jammu and Kashmir, a border state of India is inhabited by a number of tribal communities who have settled down in all parts of this Himalayan state. For many years, Jammu and Kashmir had no Scheduled Tribe (ST) population. It was only in 1989 that eight communities vide the Constitution (Jammu & Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order, 1989 and four communities were notified as the Scheduled Tribes vide the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Act, 1991. These twelve hill tribes of Jammu and Kashmir which were granted ST status are:

Balti, Beda, Bot (Boto), Brokpa (Drokpa, Dard, Shin), Changpa, Garra, Mon, Purigpa, Gujjar, Bakkarwal, Gaddi and Sippis

As per Census 2011 figures on the individual population of 12 ST communities of J&K are not yet available, however as per Census 2001, Gujjar is the most populous tribe having a population of 763,806, thus forming 69.1 percent of the total ST population. Bot is the second major tribe having a population of 96,698, followed by Bakkarwal (60,724) and Brokpa (51,957). Gujjar along with the three tribes constitute 88 per cent of the total tribal population (Census 2001) whereas Balti, Purigpa and Gaddi having population ranging from 38,188 down to 35,765 form 10.2 per cent of the total ST population. Remaining five tribes, Sippi, Changpa, Mon, Garra and Beda along with generic tribes constitute the residual proportion (1.9 per cent). Among all the tribes, Beda is the smallest group with a population of 128.

All the twelve Scheduled Tribes (STs) were enumerated officially for the first time during the 2001 census recording a population of 1,105,979.

The Scheduled Tribes account for 11.9 per cent of the total population of the State as per Census 2011. The total population of the state, as per Census 2011, is 1,25,41302 including male population of 66,40662 and female population of 59,00640. The Census 2011 shows the entire ST population of the state at 14,93,299 in comparison to 11,0,5979 of Census 2001. Thus, there is an increase of 3,87,320 in schedule tribe population of the state.

#### **Tribal Development Policies and Programmes in J&K**

Both central and state governments have launched various programmes for the welfare and empowerment of the weaker sections of the society including STs. In J&K, schemes for educational, economic and social development have been launched. The Department of Social Justice, Empowerment and Welfare is a nodal agency which looks after the affairs of tribal in Jammu and Kashmir. The Department performs following functions:

1. All matters connected with the welfare of STs, Economic betterment schemes, Educational development schemes, Facilities for vocational training and voluntary organisations connected with the welfare of STs.
2. Pre-Matric scholarship scheme for ST/SC/OBC.
3. Post-Matric scholarship scheme for ST/SC.
4. Up-gradation of Merit Scholarship for ST/SC students.
5. Tribal sub-plan for STs.
6. ST, SC and OBC Welfare Boards.
7. Monitoring and evaluation of schemes for STs.
8. Implementation of ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989.

**Integrated Tribal Development Area Programme (ITDAP)** This programme is launched by the central government and implemented in all the states where the tribal population exceeds 50 per cent of the local population. More than 55 per cent of the tribal populations are residing outside the ITDAP

areas. With the view to cover more tribal population, the Welfare Officers of each district acts as the drawing and disbursing office for the implementation of the programme.

**Tribal Sub Plan (TSP)** The TSP as a strategy for tribal development was evolved in the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) on the recommendation of an expert committee headed by Prof. S.C. Dube. The committee was constituted by the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare in 1972. The TSP covers all scheduled areas and Teshils/Block, with more than 60 per cent tribal population is living. The two main objectives of the TSP are: socio-economic development of STs and protection of tribes against exploitation. But for the present study, only literacy and educational programmes have been studied which stand launched by the state & the central Government.

#### **Literacy & educational level of nomadic populations in Jammu and Kashmir**

The literacy rate in Jammu and Kashmir is 68.74 per cent as per census 2011. The male literacy is 78.26 percent, and the female literacy is 58.01 per cent. The district Rajouri has a literacy rate of 68.54%, which comprises 78.13% male literates and 56.57% female literates As per census 2001 the literacy rate of tribal population in J&K is 37.5 per cent which is far lower than the average literacy 47.1 per cent of tribal at national level. The literacy rate of male tribals of J&K (48.2 percent) is much lower than the tribals at national level (59.2 per cent). Also the literacy rate of female tribals (25.5 per cent) of J&K is low in comparison to female tribals at national level (34.8 per cent). (Andrabi 2013)

Among the larger tribes, Balti, Bot, Purigpa and Brokpa have registered higher literacy rate whereas Gujjar, Gaddi and Bakerwal have a low literacy rate than that of the national average. Similar trends are discerned in these tribes in respect of female literacy also. The literacy rate of major tribes of J&K state is given in table

**Table1: Literacy Rate of Major Scheduled Tribes of J&K**

Literacy Rate	All STs	Balti	Bot	Purigpa	Brokpa	Gaddi	Gujjar	Bakerwal
Persons	37.5	62.1	61.3	60.9	55.5	37.3	31.7	22.5
Females	25.5	45.4	50.3	44.2	38.6	19.6	20.4	12.8

#### **Source: Census 2001**

Beside the literacy rate of different scheduled tribes of Jammu and Kashmir state effort has been made to know the educational level of the tribes so that the weaker section could be identified and should attract the attention of the authorities for their educational development. The level of education of different scheduled tribes in J&K state is given in the table 2.

**Table2: Levels of Education among the major scheduled Tribes of J&K**

Name of STs	Literate without educational level	Below primary	Educational levels attained				
			Primary	Middle	Matric/Secondary H. Secondary/ Intermediate etc.	Technical & Non-Technical Diploma etc.	Graduate and above
All STs	8.4	26.5	26.2	22.1	14.7	0.1	2
Gujjar	9.9	28.6	27.6	22.1	10.3	Nil	1.5

<b>Bot</b>	6.6	19.7	25	20.6	23.9	0.1	3.9
<b>Bakerwa 1</b>	18.3	30	26	16.8	7.8	Nil	1
<b>Brokpa</b>	3.8	24.6	22.5	26	20.2	0.1	2.8
<b>Balti</b>	3.1	23.2	22.8	24.7	23.9	0.1	2.2
<b>Purigpa</b>	3.2	25.2	22.7	24	22.6	0.1	2
<b>Gaddi</b>	6.6	31.4	28.4	19	12.5	Nil	2.1

**Source Census 2001**

At the level of Individual tribe, Bot, Balti, Purigpa have more than 22 percent literates are matriculates, implying that every 4<sup>th</sup> literate of these tribes are matriculates. Bakerwal has the lowest proportion of secondary level literates (7.8 %).

Among the ST, literates, 34.9 percent of tribal literates are either without any educational level or have attained education below primary level. The primary level illiterates constitute 26.2 percent followed by illiterates up to middle level (22.1 percent). The persons educated upto metric/ secondary/ higher secondary constitutes 14.7 percent whereas 2 percent only are graduates & above. Non- technical & technical diploma holders form negligible percentage (0.1). The data shows that the proportion of literates after middle school drops down to approximately half in the secondary level of education and declines sharply onwards.

**Objectives of the Study:**

1. To examine the awareness about educational programmes among the scheduled tribes in the study area.
2. To study the impact of educational programmes on scheduled tribes in the study area.
3. To suggest few recommendations to bring further improvements in literacy sector.

**Methodology**

The present study has been conducted in district Rajouri of J&K state. The district Rajouri is selected as it contains highest number of Nomadic Scheduled Tribes (36.2) after poonch.

And in Rajouri Kalakote block has been selected as it contains highest number of nomadic people of Gujar and Bakerwal Tribe. For the conduct of the study, a sample of 80 households have been taken from five villages (Brol, Sialsui, Dalhote, Jungrial, Taredu) of Kalakote block selected by simple random sampling technique.

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected through a questionnaire. Group discussions and personal interview method was also used for collecting the information. The secondary data has been collected from the published reports and govt. offices, news reports, magazines and research papers etc. The block wise list of mobile school has been collected from CEO.

**Table 3: Block wise number of Mobile school in Rajouri District.**

S.No.	Name of the Block	Number of Mobile schools	Enrolment of children	No. Of Teachers.
1	Kalakote	16	565	20
2	Doongi	2	41	3

3	Budhal	Nil	-	-
4	Darhal	Nil	-	-
5	Sunderbani	2	30	2
6	Rajouri	Nil	-	-
7	Manjakote	Nil	-	-
8	Nowshera	2	39	2
9	Thanamandi	3	126	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>33</b>

**Source: Office of the Chief Education Officer Rajouri**

The data from the table reveals that out of nine blocks of the district Rajouri only five blocks have the mobile /seasonal schools. The data also reveals that as compared to strength of migration of nomads, there is shortage of mobile schools.

**Table4: Winter and summer location of mobile schools of Kalakote Block**

S. No.	Name of The School	Location			
		Winter		Summer	
		District	Location	District	Location
1	MPS Aggi	Rajouri	Moghla	Bandipura	Aljore Napken Kangan
2	MPS Akhar	Rajouri	Akhatr(Moghla)	Baramula	Tulian Sukhnai
3	MPS Hari Chumma	Rajouri	Harichumma (Moghla)	Anantnag	Lidder Butt Anantnag
4	MPS Keri Teryath	Rajouri	Teryath (Moghla)	Kargil	Heer Bagan Kargil
5	MPS Khabbar	Rajouri	Khabber (Moghla)	Kargil	Drass Kargil
6	MPS Kundel Pandheri	Rajouri	Kundel (Moghla)	Bandipura	Sukhnai Kangan
7	MPS Moghla	Rajouri	Moghla	Baramulla	Sonamarg,Megandub
8	MPS Saroh	Rajouri	Saroh(Moghla)	Kargil	Meenamarg, Drass
9	MPS Saroon	Rajouri	Saroon	Kargil	Judge Margi Kargil
10	MPS Bravi	Rajouri	Bravi(Kalakote)	Bandipura	Susrian marg.
11	MPS Dharmasal	Rajouri	Dharmasal(Kalakote)	Bandipura	Gadsar Kangan
12	MPS Jatta Mallian	Rajouri	Jatta Mallian(Kalakote)	Shopian	Ravar Nar
13	Tundla	Rajouri	Tundla(Kalakote)	Bandipura	Sail Nai Kangan
14	MPS Devellian	Rajouri	Devellian (Kalakote)	Kargil	Meenamarg Drass
15	MPS Kurlian	Rajouri	Kurlian(Kalakote)	Bandipura	Salamarg Kangan
16	MPS Panjah	Rajouri	Panjah(Kalakote)	Bandipura	Shahi Marg Kangan

**Source: Office of the Chief Education Officer, Rajouri (J&K)**

A look at the table reveals that most of the scheduled tribes of Kalakote practice seasonal migration. Seeing their nomadic culture, Govt. has established the mobile schools for the education of their children.

**Analysis and Discussion**

Keeping in view the objectives of the study, the researchers have made an attempt to study and analyse the literacy and education of the Gujjar and Bakerwal of the study area.

**Table 5: Literacy rate of the Gujjar and Bakerwal Tribes**

Village	Sample Households	Literate			Percentage of total literates
		Male	Female	Total	
Brol	12	3	1	4	33.34
Sialsui	10	2	-	2	20.00
Dalhote,	25	3	2	5	20.00
Jungrial	20	4	2	6	30
Taredu	13	3	1	4	30.76
	80	15 (18.75%)	6 (7.5%)	21 (26.25%)	26.25

**Source: Field Survey**

A look at the table No.5 shows that out of the total sample households only 21 are literates which constitute 26.25 percent of the total sample households. The table further depicts that out of 26.25% literates, 18.75% are males and 7.5 % are females. The table also reveals literacy rate which is far less as compare to literacy rate of 37.5 at state level and 47.1 at national level (Census2001). This highlights that the level of literacy is very poor among the Gujar and Bakerwals tribes in the study area.

**Table 6: Distribution of Sample Households as per their seasonal migration**

S. No	Village	No. of Household	No. of Families with Seasonal migration	No. of families having access to health Services	No. of families having awareness about Govt. programmes
1	Brol	12	12	01	01
2	Sialsui	10	07	2	01
3	Dalhote,	25	25	-	02
4	Jungrial	20	20	-	01
5	Taredu	13	10	3	02
		80	74(92.50%)	6(7.5%)	07 (8.75%)

**Source: Field survey**

The distribution of sample households as per their seasonal migration has been shown in table 6 above. The table highlights that Gujar and Bakerwal tribes practice seasonal migration in search of food and fodder during summer and winter seasons. In the study area, the researchers observed during their group discussions and personal interviews with the respondents that these tribes go to higher altitudes during summer commonly known as "Dhoak" for rearing of their animals and families. Their main activities at Dhoaks are generally converting of milk into milk products, collection of wool/jatth from sheep and goat and collection of forest products like Anardhana, Ghuchhiyan etc. The table also speaks that these communities don't have at all any awareness about the support schemes/ govt. programmes being run by the centre/ state for their welfare. Just 6% sample households were aware and having little knowledge about govt. schemes and programmes like mobile schools, mid-day meal schemes etc. This again is one of the main causes for their poverty and backwardness.

**Problems and constraints:**

From the field survey and interaction with the Gujjar and Bakerwal tribes, the following observation has been made regarding the education and health problems.

#### **Inadequate infrastructure**

The condition of seasonal schools meant for the tribal nomadic children of Jammu and Kashmir is pathetic. There is not sufficient infrastructure to run these schools. The teachers take the classes of the children under open sky and when there is rainfall etc, such schools are either shut or else the students have to take shelter under trees. No stationary is in these schools. Thus there is irregular class work in mobile schools.

#### **No Mid-Day Meals**

While mid-day meals are given to the students in government schools, no Mid-Day Meals are being given to the children of the seasonal schools. The Mid Day meals can attract more number of students to such schools.

#### **No teaching-learning (TLM) material**

None of such schools have teaching learning materials available with them which can aid them in teaching-learning processes. It also hampers the process of education level among the children of these tribes.

#### **Minimum Salary for Mobile Teachers**

The Education Volunteers (EVs) who teach at such seasonal centre are usually engaged for four months at a salary or stipend of Rs 4000 per month. ----Even this meagre amount too is paid to them after months of the closure of the seasonal centres.

#### **Absence of proper schooling environment**

In the seasonal centres, there is also an absence of proper school environment. Students belonging to different classes are made to sit together and one single teacher teaches them their respective subjects which is not proper. The conduct of the classes in the open sky is also a hindrance to regular proper classes. The students who are in the higher reaches with their families have to attend to their scattered grazing cattle than attend the classes and thus even while sitting in the classes, their attention is toward their animals grazing in the nearby open areas. Hence less concentration which makes schools dull and boring to them.

#### **Irrelevant Curriculum**

The seasonal schools set up for the nomadic children have no proper curriculum. Each seasonal school is handled by one Educational Volunteer (EV) each who takes a class of all the children of that particular location irrespective of their age, class, subject etc. All the children are made to sit together and given some work which makes it quite incoherent for them. This haphazard method of learning wherein only one teacher has to teach all subjects to different age groups within 5-6 hours of teaching is further compounded by the teacher's lack of motivation due to a frustratingly low salary.

#### **Lack of motivation among EVs**

Most of the Education Volunteers lack interest in teaching learning process. They also lack devotion and dedication due to various factors like low salary, temporary job, inadequate infrastructure, harsh work conditions etc. The EVs thus also don't take interest in enriching themselves with knowledge. This weakness of teachers directly affects the quality of teaching.

#### **Lack of communication facilities:**

There is lack of road connectivity in Gujjar and Bakerwal inhabited areas. These people seem to be resided in upper riches where no connectivity and communication facilities are given. As a result these people lead an isolated life. This reveals their pathetic condition and poor status.

#### **Recommendations and Suggestions**

On the basis of aforementioned constraints being faced by these communities in respect of education & literacy, following few recommendations are being made to bring further improvements for better education and literacy rate.

#### **Creation of Infrastructure**

In Jammu and Kashmir the seasonal school for scheduled tribe children are in bad conditions. The government needs to strengthen the infrastructure of these schools. A Temporary or permanent school building should be constructed so that the nomadic children can learn under the roof. The school desks or mats should also be provided to these scheduled tribe children so that they could enjoy the sitting facilities like other children.

The stationary which includes books and note books should be provided at the right time to the nomadic children.

#### **Availability of mid-day meal**

In the seasonal schools mid-day meal facility should be provided so that the Gujjar and Bakerwal children could enjoy the meal facility like other children. Besides there is a need to check malpractices if any at different levels so as to make the tribal development programme effective.

#### **Proper Monitoring and Supervision**

There has to be monitoring and supervision of educational and other developmental programmes and schemes so that the status of scheduled tribes can be analysed and further planning could be done for their development.

#### **Availability of basic facilities**

There is a need of providing the basic amenities like safe drinking water, food, nutrition, primary health care, safe environment, productive assets at least at the level of survival and substance with a special focus on tribal women and children.

Govt. And NGOs should develop the tribal settlement by providing the piece of land to the nomadic people without land. There is a need of developing the forest villages by ensuring basic infrastructure and with basic minimum services for those tribals (Gujjars and Bakerwals) of the state living there in.

#### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it can be summed up that the educational status of Gujjar and Bakerwal tribes is miserable in spite of various efforts of central/ state government and other development agencies.

There is a need of more strategies to improve educational standard among Gujjar and bakerwal tribe's areas by ensuring availability of adequate infrastructure. Besides proper monitoring and with the help from experts from multi-disciplinary fields, the educational status of tribal population can be improved. Nothing can be said at the moment, only time can stand as a witness.

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