

## **INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MARGINALIZED GUJJARS AND BAKERWALS IN JAMMU & KASHMIR**

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### **Abstract**

*Inclusive Education (IE) is a new progress towards educating the children with disability and learning difficulties with that of normal ones within the same roof. It brings all students together in one classroom and community, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area, and seeks to maximize the potential of all students. It is one of the most effective ways to promote an inclusive and tolerant society which include marginalized groups also. Marginalized groups include different tribal communities also. The Indian tribal society is a unique society with diversity of nature and people. The term tribe or tribal is not defined anywhere in the Constitution although according to Article 342, ST represents the tribe or tribal communities that are notified by the President. In India, there are more than 573 tribal communities scattered all over the states and majority of them lives in difficult terrains, interiors of forests or remote areas which are difficult to access by mainstream population. As per the census conducted in the year 2011, by the Govt. of India, the tribal groups together constitute 11.9% of the total population of J&K state, which is 0.14% population of the country. Among the total tribal population of Jammu and Kashmir State, the gujjars and bakarwals together constitute 79.7% of the total ST population of the state. Because of this geographical isolation, they are often excluded from developmental activities. Development of tribal population has been a major concern of the nation builders, central and state governments, policy makers, non- government organizations, social scientists, social reformers etc. we have constitutional provisions for social, economic, educational, political, administrative, health and sanitational achievements of the tribal people of our nation. Since our independence various policies, strategies, approaches and models to tribal development have been conceived. Even after*

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*more than five decades of developmental efforts, educational status among the social groups is found to be highly skewed in India. Education is perceived as crucial to processes of planned change. It was seen as the key instrument for bringing about a social order based on value of equality and social justice. The marginalized communities such as Scheduled Castes and Schedules Tribes the degree of educational exclusion is extremely high. The important reason for the low level of education among tribes is their peculiar nature of habitations. Lack of sufficient educational institutions in tribal areas, poverty, and lack of nutritional and healthcare programmes are some of the important problems causing the situation. The national educational policy (1986) stressed the need of the liberalization of education to liberate marginalized sections of the society. This paper highlights the educational concerns of marginalized group i.e Gujjars and Bakarwal tribe of Jammu and Kashmir.*

**Keywords:** Inclusive Education, Marginalization, gujjars, Bakarwals, Education, Jammu and Kashmir.

### **Introduction**

India is a multi-lingual and multi-cultural country, with rich diversity, reflected in the multitude of culture, religions, languages and racial stocks. The population of the country comprises of different castes, communities, social and ethnic groups. India, a second most populous country in the world, has also the second largest concentration of tribal population, perhaps next only to Africa. The tribal population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in India. The Constitution of India had recognized tribal population as weaker section of society based on their socio- economic backwardness and the age-old social discrimination and physical isolation that they had been subjected to. Although the tribal are a minority and constitute about 8.2 per cent of the total population in India or 85 million people in absolute number but unlike scheduled caste population, the tribes are not discriminated against in the same way by the mainstream Hindu population. There are at present more than 700 tribal groups each with their distinct cultures, social practices, religions, dialects and occupations and are scattered in all States and Union Territories in India except for the states of Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, Chandigarh and Pondicherry. The tribes are heavily concentrated in the north-eastern states although they constitute a small percentage of the total tribal population in India.

### **Tribal Population in India**

The population of Scheduled Tribes is approximately 8.2 per cent of the total population of the country. The population of Scheduled Tribes has been on the increase since 1961. The decadal population growth between the Census Year 1971 to 1981 in respect of the tribal population has been higher (36.8%) than that of the entire population (24.6%). The decadal population growth between the Census Year 1981 to 1991 in respect of the tribal population has been higher (30.8%) than that of the entire population (23.9%). Similarly, during Census year 1991 to 2001 it has been 23.5% against the growth rate of 21.5% for the entire population (Table 2). The sex ratio of ST

population was always high compare to the sex ratio of overall population in all Census Years. The sex ratio of ST was in better position at 988 as against the overall sex ratio which was 946 in 1951. In 2001, the sex ratio of ST population was 978, which was higher than the sex ratio of overall population i.e. 933.

### **Constitutional Safeguards for Scheduled Tribes**

The Indian Constitution refers to tribal people as the Scheduled Tribes. The Constitution, adopted and enacted in 1950, is based on the principles of equality and guarantees equality before law and equal protection to all its citizens. It not only guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms, but also prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth. Recognizing the special needs of various weaker sections including STs, the Constitution also enjoins upon the State to make special provisions of affirmative discrimination for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes. These constitutional provisions have replaced the British policy of isolation and non- interference by a policy of inclusion and integration through development. The Framers of the Constitution of India incorporated several provisions which are meant for the welfare and development of the tribal. Some of the important constitutional provisions for STs are as follows:

Article 15 (4): The State to make special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

Article 16 (1): Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State.

Article 16 (4): The State to make provisions for reservation in appointment, posts in favour of any backward class citizens, which in the opinion of the State is not adequately represented in the services under the State.

Article 16 (4A): The State to make provisions in matters of promotion to any class or classes of posts in the services in favour of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

Article 46: The State, to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and protects them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Article 164 (1): In the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, there shall be a Minister in charge of tribal welfare who may in addition be in charge of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes or any other work. (Now applicable to Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa).

Article 243 D: Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in every Panchayat.

Article 243 (T): Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in every Municipality.

Article 244 (1): Provisions as to the administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes in any state other than the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram (Fifth Schedule).

Article 244 (2): Provisions as to the administration of Tribal Areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram (Sixth Schedule).

Article 275 (1): Provision of payment of grant-in-aid to enable the States to meet the cost of such schemes of development as may be undertaken by the States with the approval of the Government of India for the purpose of promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in that State or raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas therein to that of the administration of the rest of the areas of that State.

Article 330: Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People (Lok Sabha).

Article 332: Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of the States.

Article 335: The claims of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State to be taken into consideration consistent with the maintenance of efficiency of administration.

Article 338 A: A National Commission for Scheduled Tribes to investigate, monitor and evaluate all matters relating to the Constitutional safeguards provided for the Scheduled Tribes.

Article 339: Control of the Union over the administration of Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes.

Article 339 (1): Appointment of a Commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in the States.

Article 340: Appointment of a Commission to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes and the difficulties under which they labour and to make recommendations to remove such difficulties and to improve their conditions.

Article 342: To specify the tribes or tribal communities to be Scheduled Tribes. In addition to the above constitutional provisions, there are numbers of laws both Central and State, which provide protection and safeguards for the interest of the Scheduled Tribes.

### **Tribals of Jammu and Kashmir**

Tribals are found in the infertile zones of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat etc. Jammu and Kashmir is one of the border states of India, has a total population of 1,25,41,302 including male population of 66,40,662 and

female population of 59,00640. The Scheduled Tribes account for 11.9 per cent of the total population of the State as per Census 2011. In Jammu and Kashmir, there are 12 Scheduled Tribes which were enumerated officially for the first time during the 2001 census recording a population of 1,105,979. The Census 2011 shows the entire ST population of the state at 14, 93, 299 in comparison to 11,05,979 of Census 2001. Out of twelve Scheduled Tribes, 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)

**Table 1: Population of Scheduled Tribes in J&K**

Name of the district	ST population Census 2011	ST population Census 2001	Variation in population
J&K	1493299	1105979	387320
Kupwara	70352	51753	18599
Budgam	23912	14547	9365
Leh	95857	96174	-317
Kargil	122336	105377	16959
Punch	176101	149018	27083
Rajouri	232815	160049	72766
Kathua	53307	33969	19338
Baramulla	37705	28886	8819
Bandipora	75374	54996	20378
Srinagar	8935	3485	5450
Ganderbal	61070	41959	19111
Pulwama	22607	10552	12055
Shopian	21820	10944	10876
Anantnag	116006	80856	35150
Kulgam	26525	20287	6238
Doda	39216	28400	10816
Ramban	39772	29353	10419
Kishtwar	38149	27917	10232
Udhampur	56309	42875	13434
Reasi	88365	60753	27612
Jammu	69193	42089	27104
Samba	17573	11740	5833

Source: Census 2011

The Gujjars and Bakarwal tribes are the two nomadic tribes which form the third largest community in Jammu and Kashmir. Gujjars and Bakarwals are found in all the three regions of the state including Jammu (comprising districts of Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Poonch, Rajouri etc), the Kashmir Valley (comprising the districts of Srinagar, Baramulla, Kupwara, Pulwama, Budgam and Anantnag) and Ladakh (comprising Kargil). Gujjars were primarily a nomadic community who have now settled down to a large extent and have become sedentarized or settled in permanent villages in the plains bordering the foot hills and have taken to cultivation of land as their primary occupation. Besides, there are semi-settled or sedentary transhumants Gujjars who combine the cultivation of land with pastoralism. They move to the lower and middle mountain areas and Pir Panjal pastures in the summer with their flock of buffalos where they engage in cultivation and come back to the plains in the winters. Bakarwals are primarily pastoralists rearing goat and sheep for livelihood. They leave their homes each summer for the high-altitudes of Himalayas and spend their winter in plains and foot hills of Shivaliks. During their journeys to the higher reaches of the mountains during summer when the snows melt and the passes open, the Bakarwals trek through the remotest areas of the mountains to reach the higher pastures of the Pir Panjal range where they rest in temporary hutments in the picturesque valley and graze their herd of sheep. In those high altitude pastures which are excellent grazing grounds for their cattle, they graze their cattle, fatten their flock and achieve higher prices for their sheep. In autumn, having sold their sheep, they descend to the plains leaving the extreme cold of the mountains behind them in October. The tribe is greatly dependent on its livestock and hence the need for higher pastures and colder climates makes the community embark on a journey, sometimes stretching for weeks and months on foot.

Gujjars and Bakarwals were already having low literacy rates in J&K. As per census 2001, the literacy rate of tribal population in J&K is 37.5 percent which is far lower than the average literacy 47.1 per cent of tribal at national level. The literacy rate of male of 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). The literacy rate in Jammu and Kashmir is 68.74 per cent as per Census 2011 with male literacy at 78.26 per cent and female literacy at 58.01 per cent.

There is schooling facility available for all migratory populations during winter in the form of stationary and permanent government schools at different places all over the state but at the summer locations where the good numbers of nomadic children move with their parents, the educational facilities are less. Mobile schools which are meant for education of these tribal people always face shortage of funds and teachers. These schools also lack infrastructural facilities.

### **Reservation of Seats**

The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has reserved 12 seats out of 32 for tribal in J&K Legislative Assembly. The provision of reservation is also extended to public employment. The new reservation policy under Notification No.5/GOS/9/(15)/SWD/WD dated 19.8.2003 reserves 33 per cent of seats for STs in all government jobs and in professional courses. Besides, five years' relaxation in age is given to STs Candidates. As a result of this policy, the participation of STs in public employment is very high. As against their population percentage of 20.6 per cent, the percentage of STs Employees in the state government service as on December 2007 was 33.57 per cent. Even the representation of ST females in the government services is very high (7.20 per cent) which is encouraging sign of women's participation in the administration of the state.

### **Tribal Development Policies and Programmes**

Jammu and Kashmir has a large proportion of tribal population (20 per cent). This percentage includes only the major tribal communities i.e., Gujjar, Bakerwal and Gaddi. Both central and state governments have launched several developmental programmes for the welfare and empowerment of the weaker section of society including STs. In J&K these comprise schemes for educational development, economic development and social development. The Department of Social Justice, Empowerment and Welfare acts as 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.

### **Sex Ratio**

The overall sex ratio of ST population is 910 females per 1000 males which is lower than the national average (978) for the total ST population. At individual level, all the seven major tribes have registered overall sex ratio which is lower than the

national average with Bakarwal having the lowest (868). The sex ratio among the STs in the age group 0-6 years is (979) is higher than that of the national average. Among the numerically larger tribes, Purigpa, Balti, Gaddi and Gujjar have registered child sex ratio higher than that of all STs at the national level with Purigpa having a preponderance of girl children (1019), whereas Bot, Brokpa and Bakarwal have registered the child sex ratio lower than that recorded by all STs at the national level.

**Literacy & Educational Level**

In Jammu & Kashmir the overall literacy rate of the STs as per the census 2011 is 50.6% which is much lower than the national average of 58.96% aggregated for all STs. Male and female literacy rates 60.6% and 39.7% are much below if compared to those recorded by all STs at the national level (68.53% and 49.35 %). It can be further seen that the State increased in the tribal literacy rate from 37.50% to 50.60% in the span of 10 years (2001 to 2011). The State tribal literacy is lower than the National average as per the recently concluded Census and also the literacy gap is (8.36). Among the larger tribes, Balti, Bot, Purigpa and Brokpa have registered higher literacy rate whereas Gujjar, Gaddi and Bakarwal have a lower literacy rate than that of the national average. Similar trends are discerned in these tribes in respect of female literacy also. The analysis has brought this fact to the fore that the efforts put in by the Government through various tribal education schemes to reach to the far-flung areas and bring down literacy gap has materialized at ground level yet there is tremendous scope for bringing further improvements with focused attention.

**Comparative Literacy Rates of STs (2001-2011)**

<b>Literacy Rates of STs in percent (2001-2011)</b>		
<b>Category/Census Year</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>
Total Population	55.5	67.2
Scheduled Tribes	37.5	50.6
Gap in Literacy Rate	18.1	16.6

Source: Census Reports of India, 2001-2011

**Challenges in the education of Gujjars and Bakarwals in J&K**

The literacy rate among the Gujjar and Bakarwals is too low as compared to other inhabitants of the state. These tribal communities are already lagging behind the rest of the tribes. Some of the challenges in the provision of educational services to transhumant’s areas are similar to those faced by other rural and marginalized households in the region, although often more severe. These include nomadism, militancy, lack of teachers, poor infrastructure as well as poorly motivated teachers, a household economy dependant on livestock, with children spending long periods away from their homes and schools and transhumant mobility.



There is dearth of good teachers who can devote their time to educate these Gujjar and Bakkarwal children. Teachers hesitate to move with these nomadic Bakarwals due to which most of them largely remain illiterate. Lack of awareness among gujjars and bakerwals towards education is also act as a great challenge because they give importance to their ancestral profession i.e sheep and goat rearing, cattle herding etc.

### **Conclusion**

The Scheduled Tribes (ST), like the Scheduled Castes, is the most socially and educationally disadvantaged and excluded groups in our country. The wide-spread discrimination against scheduled groups has long histories in India. There is a great need to redesign and reframe the educational process for gujjars and bakerwals so that they also contribute in developmental processes in the state. There is a great need for proper implementation of the programmes and policies made for gujjars and bakerwals for their education. A lot of efforts have been made but there is much more need to do in this direction. There is a great need for inclusion of this marginalized group so that the dream of inclusive society can be achieved.

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