

A study of Educational Problems of Gujjars and Bakarwals in Doda District of Jammu and Kashmir:

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Abstract

“The Gujjar community is a major component of our proud cultural canvass. Like all other tribal communities, it has richness of its historical past, its anthropological moorings spread across the length and breadth of the sub-continent and the members of this community still proudly following tribal norms and mores.”

India is a huge and diverse country with various communities, dialects and religions. Diversity of the country is also seen in its topography and landscape. Climatic variations from extremely hot weather in south to freezing temperatures in the North and from humid to dry atmosphere has great impact on human, animal and plant life. India's tribal population is not only the largest one in the world but also has different communities in different parts of India. Our population being more than 60% agrarian one, it is natural for them to rear cattle, sheep and goats, horses and ponies etc. Tribal communities which keep herds of cattle, sheep and goats, horses and ponies are named as Gujjars and Bakarwals in states of U.P, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and J&K. The community that keeps herd of sheep and goats in H.P is known as Gaddies. They are Hindus. As far as Gujjars are concerned, a major chunk of them follow Islam. Though they don't mingle fully with Muslims so is a separate community. Separation is so apparent that their entire culture is different. It is oblivious that before Islamic invasion of India all followed sanatan Dharma. So, all the conversions to Islam happened from 13th to 17th century A.D. It was during this period when Arab invaders invaded and ruled many parts of India. Gujjar community among Hindus is also a tribal community present mostly in Rajasthan and Gujrat. Bakarwals as the name suggests are mostly once that keeps herds of sheep and Goats. So far Gujjar and Bakarwal's original location in India is concerned, it is undoubtedly Gujrat. Archeological findings bring forth the facts that from 6th to 8th century A.D Gujrat was facing continuous spell of drought. Pastures and green fields having vanished and in search for them, Gujjars and Bakarwals might have migrated to Rajasthan. From there with the same or may be with some additional reasons they kept on changing areas. From Rajasthan via Haryana, Punjab might have sought entry into Jammu and Kashmir.

Keywords: Tribes, Schedule Tribe, Ethnic Group, Gujjars, Migration, and socio-cultural.

Introduction

The word 'Gujjar' in the literature of India is an accepted view. Word 'Gujjar' is the derivative of 'Gurujar' which is a Sanskrit word signifying "a valiant out to crush the enemies". With the consistent utilization the word got deformed into "Gojjar" and at that point to Gujjar with further acceptance to have been gotten from 'Gau' a cow and char (Charana), to graze. Gujjars are potentially the fractional descendents of quite a few Eurasian people groups, including the Scythians, Georgians and Khazars of the Caspian Ocean, who participated in the Scythian attacks of South Asia from fifth century BC to the first century CE, chiefly getting comfortable in the Gujarat, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory. Despite tall claims of historians from time to time regarding the origin of Gujjars, vast majority of Gujjars themselves of Asian subcontinent reiterate that they are the descendents of Kshatriyas. Denying their immigration, Gujjars firmly believe in being indigenous since the dawn of civilization. Foreign origin theory about Gujjars is also disproved and labeled as absurd by the modern historians and scholars. They claim that Gujjars of Indian subcontinent are the descendents of Aryans who ruled the subcontinent between 6th century A.D to 14th century A.D. The champions among scholars who labeled Gujjars as indigenous tribe include Kanhaya Lal, Nanak Lal Munshi, Hari Chand Ojha, Baij Nath Buri, Yashpal rajput etc. Hailing Gujjars as brave warriors by some scholars and historians sounds so strange that if their ancestors were Kshatriyas and a valiant race, why would they have let themselves be suppressed at the hands of barbarian invadersto the extent that they had to convert to Islam? Instead, they would have fought and resisted with utmost bravery and fighting skills and killed and neutralized the invaders which the Kshatriyas are known and credited for. If we believe

their bravery, they might have been subjected to offensive attacks by the invaders unawares or without warning. Some socio cultural, political and financial reasons might be behind their surrender and conversion. As the origin of Gujjars is obscure, so is their surrender before the invaders and conversion to Islam. Since, their rituals are not exactly the same as are being practiced by Muslims it is evident that they have preserved and carried forward till today the rituals being observed by their ancestors before converting to Islam. Mention of Gujjars being brave has been made by Yatinder Kumar Verma in his book 'Gurjar Itihas'. He writes that the Kshatriyas of Punjab and Rajasthan fought so valiantly and skillfully that they almost killed all the Barbarian invaders who he mentions were Schythians, Yu-chi and Yetas etc. the war was over and they ruled over the areas for long. Gurjars came to be known as 'destroyers of the enemy'. Kingdoms of Gurjars have been appreciated by the ancient travelers Sulaman and Baladhuri as well. It is said that there were grave safety and security situations in almost all the kingdoms except those ruled by Gurjars. Gurjars ruled from Gujrat to Haryana and Punjab passing through Rajasthan and Saharanpur U.P. 'History of Rajputana 1926' written by Rai Bahadur Gouri Shanker and Hari chand Ojha also mentions that Gurjars were originally inhabitants of the Indian sub-continent and not foreigners. This book traces the rule of Gurjars at Bhinmal and Broach from 2nd to 6th century A.D. A descendant of Pratihara family at Raja Gadh who too was a Gurjar ruled during 9th century A. D. The roots of Broach rulers trace back to Mahabharata (fought between Pandavas and Koravas). The hero of Mahabharata, Karu is said to be the ancestor of those rulers.

Literature Review

1. **Umer Jan Sofi (2014)**. Educational status of tribal's of Jammu and Kashmir : A case study of Gujjars and Bakarwals. He found in his research that the literary rate among Gujjars and Bakarwals students is too low because of the long distance to school, lack of teachers as well as lack of parental resources to pay the school fees such as Books, Uniforms, stationary etc.
2. **Dr Irshad Ahmed, Jamel Ahmed (2018)** : Socio Economic and Educational Status of tribal Gujjars and Bakarwals of Jammu and Kashmir : An overview
This study found no satisfactory socio economic conditions of Gujjars and Bakarwals in Jammu and Kashmir. Some families of Gujjars and Baarwals have good achievement in Education but majority still suffers due to the illiteracy and poverty. According to 2011 census, 31.65% literacy is among Gujjar community and 22.52% literacy among Bakarwal community whereas General population has 55.52 % literacy rate. The study found that majority of Gujjar and Bakarwal community still depend upon their live stock and agriculture. Some of the challenges found by the study are; poverty, lack of awareness, nomadism poor infrastructure as well as poorly motivated teachers.
3. **Riyaz Ahmed Bhat (2018)**. "Socio-economic and political conditions of Gujjars and Bakarwals of Jammu and Kashmir." The study found that most of the Gujjars and Bakarwal Community directly and indirectly depend upon their live stock. There are little bit engage on other economic activities. These tribes are very poor by socially and economically. They ae very backward because of the lack of awareness, they even don't know the various welfare schemes run by cenral as well as provincial government. The present government is trying to take some necessary steps for their upliftment.
4. **Ab Waheed Shah: (2019)** A study of educational achievement of Gujjars and Bakarwals community students of Zone Devsar in District Kulgam. The present study done by Ab Waheed shah found that Academic achievement of Gujjars and Bakarwals is low as compared to general community because of the illiteracy, poverty, ignorance as well as backwardness. This study found that girl's educational achievement is better than boys. The children of the literate parents have good achievement as compared to the illiterate parent's children because they can't guide their children as they don't know how to read and write.
5. **Abhishekh Dutta, Kanwaljeet Singh, Bikram singh, Yashpal Sharma and Rainer W Bussman (2020)**: Documentation of veterinary practices from Gujjar and Bakarwal tribe of district Poonch, Jammu and Kashmir; A boon for animals from our ancestors. This study shows the use of medicinal plants and their live stock uses by Gujjar and Bakarwal in the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. In this study they didn't found any special herb for all the live stock. This study also didn't found specific herb for the cows, buffaloes, oxen and horses the same treatment were given to all the animal species and age. This study found the lack of cultivation of these plant species need to be addressed by the concerned department.

Objectives

1. To examine the efforts of government regarding expansion of primary education system among Gujjar and Bakarwal community of district Doda.
2. To find out the enrollment ratio of age group (6 to 14) in primary education among Gujjar and Bakarwal community of district Doda.
3. To analyze the educational status of Gujjar and Bakarwal of district Doda.

Hypothesis

1. There is very less efforts carried out by government for uplifting the primary education system of Gujjar and Bakarwal community of district Doda.
2. The enrollment ratio in schools of age group (6 to 14) in primary education is enough to promote the level of education among the Gujjar and Bakarwal community of district Doda.
3. Majority of the parents of Gujjar and Bakarwal community of district Doda are not educated/illiterate.
- 4.

Methodology

: Selection of Method.

Survey is the most commonly used research technique. It is a methodological gathering of data from a sample of the target population through standardized interview or questionnaires. Survey is one of the important methods of an investigation of social and educational problems. It helps both in identifying as well as solving problems of a group or community as well as the area covered under survey and therefore my research is selected as to work on survey design research.

4.4: Selection of Sample

Any investigation has its limitations. Constraints like time, money and other resources are what push an investigator towards sampling of the target community. Sampling has been done as under:

1. The sample for the present study is of 400 students of 5th to 8th from 30 schools of district Doda.
2. The sample was done on simple random sampling method.
3. Since questionnaires were supplied not only to students but to parents and teachers/educational administrators.
4. Sample of 400 parents has been made respondents.
5. Sample of 150 teachers/headmasters has been made respondents.
6. 30 numbers of schools have been taken for study.

Selection of Research tool

1. Here we have selected self prepared questionnaire for students.
2. Here we have selected self prepared questionnaire for teachers/administrators.
3. Here we have selected self prepared questionnaire for parents.

Table showing the percentage of respondents on each question which was prepared in the questionnaire for the students: N=400

Question No.	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage
1	15	3.75	385	96.25
2	400	100	0	0
3	42	10.5	358	65
4	21	5.25	379	94.75
5	140	35	260	65
6	35	8.75	365	91.25
7	53	13.25	347	86.75
8	28	7	372	93
9	71	17.75	329	82.25
10	37	9.25	363	90.75
11	22	5.5	378	94.5

12	51	12.75	349	87.25
13	11	2.75	389	97.25
14	366	91.5	34	8..5
15	48	12	352	88
16	29	7.25	371	92.75
17	17	4.25	383	95.75
18	46	11.5	354	88.5
19	381	95.25	19	4,75
20	33	8.25	367	91.75
21	51	12.75	349	87.25
22	17	4.25	383	95.75
23	11	2.72	389	97.25
24	364	91	36	9
25	23	5.75	377	94.25
26	21	5.25	379	94.75
27	372	93	28	7
28	0	0	400	100
29	17	4.25	383	95.75
30	11	2.75	349	87.25
31	34	8.5	366	91.5
32	0	0	400	100
33	20	5	380	95
34	361	90.25	39	9.75
35	383	95.75	17	4.25
36	377	94.25	23	5.75
37	12	3	388	97
38	36	9	364	91
39	45	11.25	355	88.75
40	27	6.75	373	93.25
41	11	2.75	389	97.25
42	329	82.25	71	17.75
43	53	13.25	347	86.75
44	21	5.25	379	94.75
45	0	0	400	100
46	37	9.25	368	90.75
47	97	24.25	303	75.75
48	200	50	200	50
49	0	0	400	100
50	29	7.25	371	92.75

Table showing the iteams related with different difficulty areas:

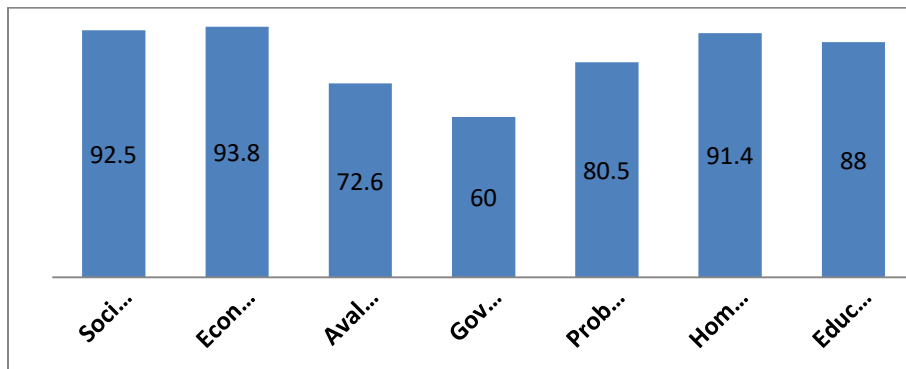
S. No	Areas	Q. Number	Total Number of Iteams
1	Social problems	21, 27, 29, 35, 37, 39	6
2	Economical Problems	10, 20, 22, 23	4
3	Avalibility of Infrastructure	3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 42, 44, 48	13
4	Govt., Facalities	2, 39, 40	3
5	Problems Related to Habitation	1, 7, 11, 12, 25, 30, 31, 41	8

6	Home Environment	34, 24, 27	3
7	Accademic Problems	19, 26, 32, 33, 38, 41, 45, 46, 47, 48	10

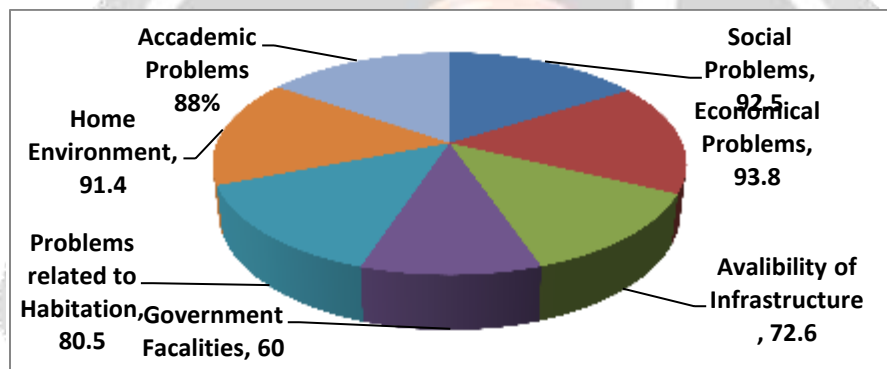
Table showing percentage of students' educational problems in different dimensions:

S.No	Areas	Q.Nos	Q. % wise	Average Educational problem to students in this dimension
1	Social Problems	21 27 29 35 37 39	87.25 93 95.75 95.75 97 88.75	$87.25+93+95.75+95.75+97+88.75 \div 6=92.5\%$
2	Economical Problems	10 20 22 23	90.75 91.75 95.75 97.25	$90.75+91.75+95.75+97.25 \div 4=93.8$
3	Avalibility of Infrastructure	3 4 5 6 8 13 14 15 16 18 42 44 48	89.5 94.75 65 91.25 93 97.25 91.5 88 92.75 88.5 82.25 94.75 50	$89.5+94.75+65+91.25+93+97.25+91.5+88+92.75+88.5+82.25+94.75+50 \div 13=72.6$
4	Govt., facalities	2 39 40	0 88.5 93.25	$0+88.5+93.25 \div 3=60$
5	Problems Related to Habitation	1 7 11 12 25 30 31 41	96.25 86.75 94.5 87.25 94.25 87.25 91.5 97.25	$96.25+86.75+94.5+87.25+94.25+87.25+91.5+97.25 \div 8=80.5$
6	Home Environment	34 24 27	90.25 91 93	$90.25+91+93 \div 3=91.4$
7	Accademic problems	19 26 32 33 38 41 45 46 47 48	95.25 94.75 100 95 91 97.25 100 90.75 75.75 50	$95.25+94.75+100+95+91+97.25+100+90.75+75.75+50 \div 10=88$

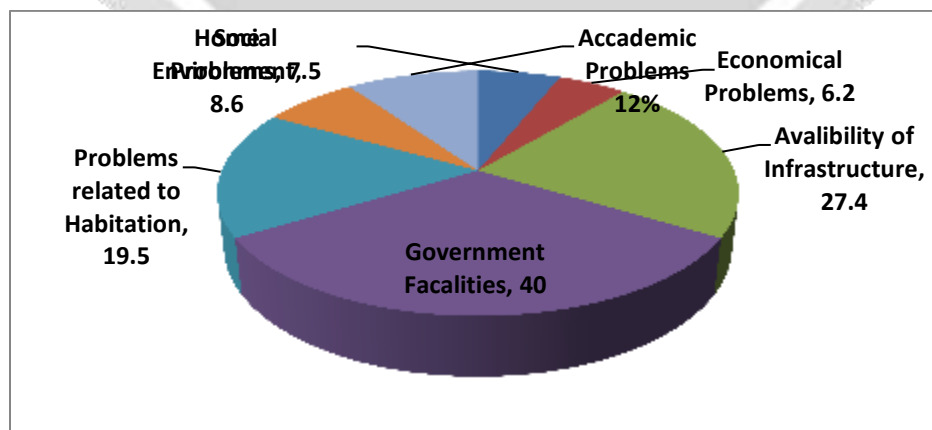
Bar graph showing percentage of students' educational problems in various dimensions



Pie chart showing percentage of students' educational problems in various dimensions



Pie chart showing percentages of students' have no educational problems in various dimensions



Analysis of Data and Results

Finding No. 32: Investigator learned that majority of students get scholarships, free text books, free uniform and mid day meal from government. But same percentage of them has said that the financial assistance is not enough for their educational development.

Finding No. 33: It has come to the knowledge of investigator that even in this age which is rightly called the age of science and technology, very less number of students has said that they will opt for medical or engineering courses for higher studies.

Finding No. 34: Investigator learned that most of the parents are not in favor of sending their children for higher studies. Majority of them show no or little concern about the education of their children.

Finding No. 35: Investigator has learned that most of the parents don't use liquor and majority of them don't engage in quarreling.

Finding No. 36: Investigator learned that majority of students gave no response on the question if they have habit of smoking, liquor consumption, and chewing of betel etc and majority of students are unaware of negative impacts of these habits on their health.

Finding No. 37: Another finding is that over 80% of students engage themselves in household activities before and after school time.

Finding No. 38: Investigator found that very less percentage of students i.e. around 6 or 7% said that they will continue their education whereas vast majority around 80% of them said they haven't decided to do so.

Finding No. 39: Investigator found that more than 70% students said that they don't get career guidance from school or any other institution however very less percentage of them around 10% gave affirmative response.

Finding No. 40: Regarding availability of coaching/tuition centers in the locality of students, investigators finding is that around 75% students said there is no such facility in their locality. Very less percentage of students i.e. around 4% said this facility is available in their locality.

Main Conclusions

From findings the investigator reaches the following conclusions in connection with educational problems faced by the Gujjar and Bakarwal students in district Doda wherein three educational zones namely Gundana, Bhatyas and Bhagwa have been the areas of investigation conclusions drawn from the responses of students.

1. Having figured out male, female ratio of Gujjar and Bakarwal students investigator concludes that because of taboos, follow up of old rituals and traditions, pastoral migratory life style which is typically tough for this tribe, parents still hesitate or find it difficult to educate their female children even if they are admitted in educational institutions most of them dropout after elementary education very less/minimum percent of them peruse secondary and higher secondary education.
2. Investigator concludes that similar trends in connection with girls' education among this tribal community are seen in all the three educational zones of District Doda where 27 schools have been investigated.
3. Study reveals that among Gujjar and Bakarwal students vast majority is of those who have low I.Q and hence are poor performer.
4. Census reports reveals that the population increases among Gujjar and Bakarwal community have been remarkably less in comparison with the total population increases in Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory between 2001 and 2011.

Suggestions for Parents

1. Parents are suggested to send their children to the schools no matter how hard it may be for them.
2. Parents are suggested to work on the maxim that knowledge is a light and without which their children will be in darkness.

3. Parents are suggested not to engage their children with cattle, sheep and goats and allow them ample time for their studies.
4. It is suggested that parents visit schools frequently and interact with the teachers.
5. It is suggested that parents attend meetings regularly.
6. It is suggested that parents turn motivators for their children.

Note: - *The biggest ever role in motivating and encouraging a child towards acquiring education is of parents/guardians. It is they who can allow their children adequate time for their studies. It is again they who disengage their children from household of other works and make their emotionally attached to their view point about the education; they can pass it on to their children.*

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