

Inclusive Policies and their impact on Tribals of Jammu and Kashmir: A Case of Gujjar Tribals

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Abstract— *Gujjar Tribals constitute the prime share of tribal population of union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Gujjar being the most populous tribe constitutes the 69.1% of total Scheduled Population of Jammu and Kashmir. The Gujjar Tribals have been accorded tribal status under ‘Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Act, 1991’. They are living a pathetic life and are socially-economically backward as compared to the general population of Jammu and Kashmir. The prevalence of discrimination and exclusion of the marginalized communities since the historical times remained the debatable issue to remedy it. Accordingly, Constitution of Independent India has enabled the nation to focus on the protection of distinctive way of life of ST’s and protect them from social injustices and all forms of exploitation and discrimination. The governments at central and state level have also made bold attempts to bring the inclusion of this backward community in the mainstream. Accordingly, various inclusive policies in terms of education, health, employment were put in place to bring the stop of their marginalization. The present paper intends to explore the various policies and to gauge their impact on the tribal population of Jammu and Kashmir in general and Gujjar Tribals in particular. The nature of the study is qualitative and secondary sources of data including census 2011 report and reports of Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the main stay of this study.*

Keywords— *Amendment, Gujjar, Inclusion, Marginalization, Policy, Tribal.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Jammu and Kashmir is the home to diverse cultures and communities, some are settled and few are nomadic. Gujjar (also known as Gojar and Goojar) is an ethnic agricultural and pastoral community of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan, but the community has prominent presence in the Jammu & Kashmir (J&K). Approximately they constitute the 11% of total population share in the union territory of J&K. They are being considered as the largest scheduled tribal population of the Union Territory of J&K. It is believed that the Gujjar community in J&K comes from the state of Rajasthan and adjoining areas of Gujarat. The 2011 census states that the 99.3% of Gujjar population is Muslim. The Gujjar tribe is essentially a nomadic community permanently settled in colonies, taking to farming, businesses and joining government jobs on small scale. The culture of the community is distinct from the other communities. Inter

marriages freely take place among them. They live in traditional types of houses popularly known as ‘Kothas’. However the dressing pattern of the community resembles with the Pashtu community of Pakistan. They are generally tall and strong in their physical appearance. The ladies usually wear a long shirt and shalwar with a cap or dupatta on their head. Primarily they perform the subsistence farming. However, their commercial activities range from cattle rearing to selling of milk and cattle. Gujjars are the great followers of their culture and culture plays a great role in their day today life. Educationally and economically, they are lagging behind the other communities in the state. Their educational status is minimal and their employment rate is lower than other communities.

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The present research work intends to explore the following objectives:

- To explore the various inclusive measures for Tribals of Jammu and Kashmir.
- To analyse the impact of inclusive measures on the Gujjar Tribals of Jammu & Kashmir.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The nature of the study is exploratory and descriptive. Secondary sources of data have been used in the study to fulfil the objectives of the research. The data from secondary sources has been collected from journals, newspapers, Census 2001 and census 2011. Keeping in view the objectives of the study literature was reviewed thoroughly to gauge the impact of inclusive policies on the Gujjar Tribals of Jammu & Kashmir.

IV. CONCEPTUALIZING THE MARGINALIZATION

Marginalization as a Persistent inequality and adversity results from discrimination, Social stigma and Stereotypes". Marginalization is defined as "overt actions or tendencies of human societies, where people who they perceive to undesirable or without useful function, are excluded, i.e., marginalized. These people who are marginalized from a group or community for their protection and integration and are known as 'marginalized groups' (Devesh 2014). Marginalization as "the social process of becoming or being made marginal (especially as a group within the larger society)". Latin observes that "Marginality is so thoroughly demeaning for economic well-being for human dignity as well as for physical security. Marginalized groups can always be identified by members of dominant society and will face irrevocable discrimination". According to Leonard (1984), marginality is defined as "being outside the mainstream of productive activity and social reproductive activity". Mowat (2015) stated that there are two assumptions inherent within the concept of a marginalised group: First, stereotypical assumptions that there is a shared experience which can be associated with people who share certain characteristics (e.g., poverty) – that of marginalisation. Second, there is a shared conceptualisation of whatever it is they are being marginalised from – 'an ideal', ideas which will be explored at a later point within this article.

The issues related to socio-economic and political backwardness are deeply ingrained in marginalization of the marginalized communities. The structural inequalities are maintained by formal policies or dominant cultural norms that privilege one group over the other. These are

manifested in the form of unequal access to livelihood opportunities, educational and educational facilities and decision-making process. These marginalized groups suffer from the historical process of neglect and erosion of their social and cultural capital. They are struggling to stay motivated for changing the conditions of marginalization. The exclusionary nature of social and political structures creates such conditions that it becomes difficult for the individuals of marginalized communities to succeed and secure their existing political system.

India as a pluralist and multicultural country with rich diversity has a multitude of religions and cultures. However there is no uniform development across all the sections of society. India being the second largest populous country has also the second largest concentration of tribal population only after 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. The marginalization in the present form is not new to the Indian society. It has its roots during the colonial rule of Britain.

V. TRIBAL PROFILE OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Tribal population of union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is among the nascent tribal groups joining the main stream of planned development to which they have brought the distinct and colourful cultural variety. The economy of the tribal groups of J&K is closely linked with the forest and they are living a standard life because of their primitive mode of livelihood. However, majority of these tribal's are placed below the poverty line, possessing meagre assets and are exclusively dependent on forest produce, farming and wages. The peculiar aspect of tribal's of Jammu and Kashmir is their scattered population who inhabit the difficult and remote geographic terrains which possess a severe threat to their speedy development.

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is inhabited by a number of tribal communities who have settled down in all parts of this Himalayan Union Territory. The year 1989 witnessed a remarkable change as eight communities by the Constitution (Jammu & Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order, 1989 and four communities, namely Gujjar, Bakarwal, Gaddi and Sippi were notified as the Scheduled Tribes by the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Act, 1991. According to the census 2011, the total population of

Scheduled Tribes of J&K is 11.9% of total population. According to *Rather* (2017), Gujjars is the most populous tribe having a population of 763,806, thus forming 69.1 per cent of the total ST population. As declared vide constitution (J&K) Scheduled Tribes order, 1989 (as amended vide order no. 3 of 1991 and order no. 36 of 1991) following communities have been accorded tribal status in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir: Balti, Beda, Botboto, Broпка Dropks (Dara, Shin), Changpa, Garra, Mon, Puripa, Gujjar, Bakarwal, Gaddi and Sippi.

The Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is the home to diverse communities, some are settled and few are nomadic. Gujjar (also known as Gojar and Goojar) is an ethnic agricultural and pastoral community of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan, but the community has prominent presence in the J&K. In different states of India, they are categorized as OBC's (Other Backward Class) category, while as in the hilly union territory of J&K and state of Himachal Pradesh they have been included in the list of Scheduled Tribes list. Approximately they constitute the 11% of total population share in the J& K Union Territory. They are being considered as the largest scheduled tribal population of the Union Territory of J&K. It is believed that the Gujjar community in J&K comes from the state of Rajasthan and adjoining areas of Gujarat. The 2011 census states that the 99.3% of Gujjar population is Muslim.

The Gujjar tribe is essentially a nomadic community permanently settled in colonies, taking to farming, businesses and joining government jobs on small scale. The culture of the community is distinct from the other communities. Inter marriages freely take place among them. They live in traditional types of houses popularly known as 'Kothas'. However the dressing pattern of the community resembles with the Pashtu community of Pakistan. They are generally tall and strong in their physical appearance. The ladies usually wear a long shirt and shalwar with a cap or dupatta on their head. Primarily they perform the subsistence farming. However, their commercial activities range from cattle rearing to selling of milk and cattle. Gujjars are the great followers of their culture and culture plays a great role in their day today life. Educationally and economically, they are lagging behind the other communities in the state. Their educational status is minimal and their employment rate is lower than other communities.

VI. INCLUSIVE POLICIES FOR TRIBALS OF JAMMU & KASHMIR: AN EXPLORATION

The prevalence of discrimination and exclusion of the marginalized communities since the historical times

remained the debatable issue to remedy it. Thus to remedy the marginalization in the country, Constitutional provisions in the form of positive discrimination and empowerment measures in the form of policies have been institutionalized under the Indian constitution. Thus, by the time these measures were proved helpful for the social restructuring of the entire socio, economic and political system. With the course of time, both central as well as state governments have initiated certain policies for the socio-economic development of the community. These policies were ranging from socio-economic to political development. These policies were meant to improve the socio-economic and political aspects of Gujjar tribal's. Inclusive measures for the socio-economic upliftment of Gujjar Tribals of Jammu & Kashmir are presented under the following themes.

A. Educational Policies

Pre Matric Scholarship for ST Students: Article 46 of Part IV ("Directive Principles of State Policy") of the Indian Constitution enjoins upon the State to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. The primary objective of the scheme is to support parents of ST children for education of their wards studying in classes IX and X so that the incidence of drop-out, especially in the transition from the elementary to the secondary stage is minimized, and to improve participation of ST children in classes IX and X of the pre-matric stage, so that they perform better and have a better chance of progressing to the post-matric stage of education.

Post Matric Scholarship for ST students: was constituted by Ministry of Tribal affairs; the scheme is implemented by Director Tribal Affairs, J&K. The Scheme provides financial assistance to the Scheduled Tribe students studying at post matriculation or post-secondary stage. The scheme covers professional, technical as well as non-professional and non-technical courses at various levels including correspondence courses covering distance and continuing education.

Educational loan Scheme for Scheduled Tribes students: The 'Jammu and Kashmir Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes & Backward Classes Development Corporation Limited' in collaboration with National Scheduled Tribes Finance & Development Corporation (NSTFDC), New Delhi is providing Educational Loan to the students of the target group for pursuing professional /Technical courses in India.

Mobile Schools for the nomadic population in Jammu and Kashmir are generally 'a single teacher multi-grade school set up to provide schooling for small numbers of children

travelling with their families in small group's schools'. The provision for Mobile Schools was made by Jammu & Kashmir government to provide the educational facilities for nomads (Gujjars and Bakerwals) who migrate regularly from Jammu region to Kashmir valley along with their livestock.

Book Bank Scheme for ST Students: The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has established book bank in Universities and Professional College for ST students. The sets of expensive books and Almirahs are provided for ST students studying in the professional colleges and universities. The sanctioning authority for these books is Director Social Welfare. These libraries act as reservoirs of knowledge for ST students and enable these students to access to books in different subjects.

Reservation in Educational Institutes: The administrative council of Jammu & Kashmir had revised the reservation policy of the UT in December 2019. The Administrative Council has pegged 10 percent reservation for Scheduled Tribes (STs) of the UT. The reservation should be applicable in direct recruitment, admission in professional institutions and distribution of seats in professional institutions at the PG level in Medical, Engineering, Agriculture and similar other post graduate courses.

Hostels for ST Boys and ST Girls: The scheme of construction of hostels aims to supplement the efforts of the State Governments for creating a congenial study atmosphere free from the shackles of domestic shores, so as to encourage students belonging to the target groups to pursue their education career without dropping out.

B. Economic Policies

Scheme with Bank Assistance (BANK TIE-UP SCHEME): The Scheduled Tribes Category persons who are permanent resident of J&K State, living Below the Poverty Line (BPL) and are not defaulters of any financial institution can avail this scheme to establish the income generating unit costing upto Rs.1.00 Lac. The corporation sponsors loan proposals of eligible persons to various banks in accordance with the "SERVICE AREA APPROACH" for financing. The corporation provides subsidy upto 50% of the project cost subject to maximum Rs. 10000/- per beneficiary under Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub- Plan (TSP) and rest of the amount of unit cost is the Bank Loan.

National Scheduled Tribes Finance & Development Corporation (NSTFDC) has been constituted by the Government of India with the purpose to finance the income generating units among the Tribal's. It also aims to finance viable Income Generating Scheme(s)/ Project(s) costing up to Rs.10.00 Lakhs through the State

Channelizing Agencies / affiliated banks and RRBs for the economic development of eligible Scheduled Tribes.

Skill Development Programme: The Jammu and Kashmir Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes & Backward Classes Development Corporation Limited has been undertaking various skill development programmes by imparting training to the candidates of the target groups to develop their skills and knowledge with a view to enhance their competence for wage employment /self employment. Under the scheme the corporation arranges need based vocational training/ skill development programme with the financial support from National Scheduled Tribes Finance & Development Corporation (NSTFDC), New Delhi or other sources. The corporation bears 100% cost of training.

Marketing Linkages: Besides other developmental activities, the Jammu and Kashmir Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes & Backward Classes Development Corporation Limited is promoting facilities for its beneficiaries by providing opportunities to participate in the country's leading fairs like; India International Trade Fair, Dilli Haat, Surajkund Craft Mela as well as in exhibitions/fairs organized in other States on important occasions and festivals etc. The events not only give much needed marketing exposure to these artisans/beneficiaries but also provide an opportunity to market their products at good price which usually they find difficult in their own places.

Khadi and Village Industry Board Schemes (KVIB): The Jammu and Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB) established in the year 1962, is playing a vital role in generating employment for rural poor, unemployed youth and down-trodden artisans of the state by providing financial and technical assistance for setting up of micro and small industrial production units.

Tribal Affairs Department: The government of Jammu and Kashmir has established the tribal affairs department with the purpose to develop a society which offers conducive and stimulating atmosphere for the growth and development, in a safe and protective environment; ensuring dignified life to Scheduled Tribe population. The mission of the concerned department is to promote the social and economic empowerment of Scheduled Tribal population of the J&K through various programmes and policies by means of institutional support to these tribal groups. It also aims to provide equitable environment for development, growth and education of these scheduled tribal's.

J&K State Advisory Board for Welfare and Development of Gujjar and Bakerwal: In order to have focused attention towards the Development of Gujjar Bakerwal Community, State Advisory Board for the Development of Gujjar Bakerwal has been constituted in

the year 1974 by Government order No. 23-PS of 1974 dated 18.03.1974. The main objective of this Board is to identify the factors which are responsible for the Socio-economic backwardness of Gujjar Bakerwal community and simultaneously advice suitable measures and economic interventions for rapid socio-economic development of Gujjar & Bakerwal community.

VII. IMPACT OF INCLUSIVE POLICIES ON GUJJAR TRIBALS OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

The Government of India has given solid shape to Part IV (Directive Principles of State Policy) and other Articles of the Indian constitution for the development and inclusion of ST's of country. By the time the government had enacted different legislations and brought in various schemes with changing time and modernity for the advancement of Tribals. Though the government has fulfilled its moral responsibility to enact these measures, but the intensity of their impact is providing a sad picture. The analysis of data from the secondary sources has revealed following facts with respect to the socio-economic and political status of Gujjar Tribals of Jammu and Kashmir:

- The field research for the present study threw ample light over the fact that 'most of the schools which were still 'mobile', were only on paper and majority of those were not moving with the nomadic communities'. Besides, all the mobile schools in Poonch district meant for the nomadic population have stopped moving with the migrating population while few schools in Rajouri still move with the nomads (Suri 2014).
- Literacy rate among the Gujjar Tribal's of J&K was 37% in 2001 census, while as literacy rate of General population at the same time was 55.5%. Thus, this presents the sad picture of the educational aspect of the Gujjar community in J&K (Sofi 2013). Also, according to census 2011, literacy rate at state level is 67.16%, while as literacy rate for ST's and Gujjars of J&K is 60.6% and 47.3% respectively. There is improvement in the literacy rate of all the groups/communities in J&K and the rate of change is positive in all the groups. The rate of change is quite impressive and greater in case of Gujjar Tribals of Jammu and Kashmir. But, despite the continuous efforts of central and state government to encourage education among the ST's, the literacy rate of some tribes such as Gujjars of Jammu and Kashmir is extremely low (47.3%) as compared to state average (67.16%).

The 2011 census report also reveals that the despite numerous efforts, the Gujjars are still at the bottom of the graph.

- The Gujjars of Jammu and Kashmir are socially and economically backward and they are being deprived to integrate into the mainstream regional culture and social status (Shahbaz 2015).
- The Gujjar tribal economy is fragile and they are still doing primitive jobs like cattle rearing. Therefore it does not allow them to buy the costly assets such as mobile phones, washing machines, computers etc. (Bhat 2018).
- According to census 2001, 61.5% of Gujjar Tribal's were cultivators as compared to 28.80% cultivators of General population of J&K. Thus, the Gujjar community has more involvement in cultivation as compared to General population of the erstwhile J&K state. Therefore, it indicates that Gujjar Tribal community is still practicing primitive economic activities (Census 2001).
- 2001 census data also reveals that only 2.7% of Gujjar population is working as House Hold Industry (HHI) Workers, while as the same indicator for the general population of J&K is 6.2%. Thus, it states that Gujjar Tribal's of J&K have minimal presence in HHI's as compared to general population. Therefore, it restricts the opportunities for the Gujjar Tribal's (Census 2001).
- The Work Participation Rate (WPR) of the ST population of Jammu and Kashmir is 43.9 per cent which is lower than that of the total STs at the national level (49.1 per cent). Both male (50.9 per cent) and female work participation rate (36.1 per cent) among the tribes are lower than the corresponding figures (53.2 per cent male WPR and 44.8 per cent female WPR) recorded by total STs at the country level (Rather & Balamurugan).

VIII. CONCLUSION

Both central government and Jammu and Kashmir government have launched various socio-economic programmes for the rural and Tribal people. These programmes were meant to advance the income and social aspect of the beneficiaries. These programmes are planned keeping consonance with the existing income level of the beneficiaries. These programmes are designed in such a manner that they provide a constant source of income to the beneficiaries. The purpose of these inclusive measures is to generate employment opportunities among Tribals and provide them an alternative to the primitive

cultivating techniques. However, the statistics from census 2011 and other studies has presented a gloomy picture of the Gujjar Tribals of Jammu and Kashmir. The Gujjar Tribals are living a wretched life and are socially-economically backward as compared to the general population of J&K. Thus, there exists a need to dawn such a mechanism and comprehensive strategy that will alter the socio-economic conditions of Gujjar Tribals in a constructive approach.

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