

# Nomadic Tribes of Jammu and Kashmir: A Socio-Cultural Narrative of Bakarwals and Gujjars

Paper Submission: 10/10/2020, Date of Acceptance: 25/10/2020, Date of Publication: 26/10/2020

## Abstract

Gujjar and Bakarwal establish the two famous traveling innate gatherings of Jammu and Kashmir. Gujjar and Bakarwal are the third biggest ethnic gathering in Jammu and Kashmir comprise over 11.9% of the aggregate population of the state (Census, 2011); Both ancestral gatherings of Jammu And Kashmir State are for the most part subject to raising of sheep and goat. Individuals had a place with Gujjar and Bakarwal communities are immaculate with the joy of outside world. The political socialization of Gujjar and Bakarwals in the state isn't great when contrasted with different networks. Both these innate gathering assume an urgent job in meeting the necessity of drain and meat for the urban communities and towns and subsequently contribute altogether to the domesticated animal's area of the state.

**Keywords:** Tribal, Social, Culture, Migration, Occupation.

## Introduction

The state of Jammu and Kashmir situates in the Himalayan Mountains and shares a border with the state of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab to the south. The state has different independence under article 370 of the Indian constitution, there is one important aspect of its budget and life that is grassland. The Gujjar and the Bakarwals are the third largest community in Jammu and Kashmir. In the state of Jammu and Kashmir, the concentration of Gujjar is observed in the district of Jammu, Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, Anantnag etc.

Being major migrant ancestral gatherings, Gujjar and Bakarwals have domesticated animals raising as the prime business. Though, Gujjars have huge crowds of wild oxen, Bakarwals are related with goat and sheep raising. Both these inborn gathering assume a critical job in meeting the prerequisite of drain and meat for the urban communities and towns and subsequently contribute altogether to the animal's division of the state.

Generally, both these clans are roaming around the geographically sprawled nature. They have occasional movement from the fields of Jammu locale to the upper compasses of Kashmir valley i.e. Pir Panchal, Seoj Dhar and so forth. In addition, before snowfall begins in the upper areas they move back to the fields of Jammu. It takes over multi month for these clans to cover this separation amid which they confront various issues and travel through an intense territory. These inborn gatherings are following this occasional movement since time immemorial. The transitory grazier, who frames an irrelevant extent of the Gujjar populace of the territory, still practice the well-established relocation to subalpine and high fields amid summer. Amid winter they remain in the Shivalik's, i.e., the lower most slopes bordering fields and don't go past the limits of the state as their forerunners used to do. The movement begins from Jammu by the centre of February and the herds achieve Udhampur by end of February when the Gujjars of Udhampur additionally begin upward relocation. The transient course is relatively parallel to the Jammu-Srinagar national superhighway; in any case, up to Ram ban they receive a shorter course keeping away from the activity perils on the parkway where they are frequently faced with huge number of limitations.

Around 66% populace of traveller Gujjar and Bakarwals who fall under same clan gather in the province of Jammu and Kashmir and living underneath neediness line.



**Kritika Sharma**

Dept. of Sociology,  
Lovely Profesional University  
Jalandhar, Punjab India

**History of Nomadic tribes**

The Bakarwal (additionally Gujjar, Bakarwal, Bakarwal and (Bakarwal) are a generally Sunni Muslim itinerant clan situated in the *pir panjal* and Himalayan piles of South Asia. They are generally, and still principally, Goatherds and shepherds. They live in the whole Kashmir locale among India and Pakistan, and in the Nuristan region of Afghanistan.

The Bakarwals have a place with indistinguishable ethnicity from the Gujjars, and between relational unions happen among them. Bakarwals have tribes (gotra) like Gujjars; notwithstanding, "Bakarwals" is likewise incidentally utilized aimlessly to allude to any traveling shepherd bunch in the lower regions, even the individuals who may not have a place with a Bakarwal people group (*gafila* gathering). The Gadaria-Bakarwals have partitioned themselves into three essential family relationship gatherings:

- (a) The dera (household),
- (b) Dada-Potre (lineage),
- (c) the gotra (clan).

The dera is the essential unit of social structure among the Gujjar-Bakarwals. They tally their numbers and portray their touching and qafila bunches as far as the quantity of deras.

A dera for the most part appears when a man builds up an autonomous family unit, which happens ordinarily after his marriage. Every child, along these lines, builds up his very own dera as he gets hitched. A dera ordinarily comprises of five to six individuals. There is a division of work among the individuals from the family based on sex and age. Females perform the domestic tasks of cooking, washing, fetching of water, upbringing of children, collection of wood, and spinning and making of woollen garments. On the other hand, males perform tasks like herding of flock and cattle, repairing of tools and equipment, collection of grass, herbs, deer-musk, hunting of wild animals, ploughing and harvesting of crops.

The household is, thus, a primary economic unit. A nuclear family is the production and consumption unit. A joint family which is generally large cannot survive on the meagre pasture resource as the transhumance are on the move for about 110 to 130 days in a year.

The elders want the eligible married youngsters to shoulder the responsibility of looking after the flock of sheep and goats independently. This would ensure greater security to the herds and sharing all responsible jobs by the adult members.

Several deras (households) constitute a family (dada-potra). The pastures are allotted to the lineage and not to the individuals. In a lineage, there may be about two hundred persons. Usually, a Gujjar-Bakarwal father divides his property (animal wealth) among his male children as and when they get married.

The genealogy, therefore, comprises of a few ages and incorporates cousins and far off relatives. They share the basic fields. The ancestry unit is very ground-breaking managerial unit. Every

heredity has a head who is in charge of the financial and political exercises of his gathering.

**Review of Literature**

*Bhat (2013)* analysed the socio-economic condition of scheduled tribes of Kashmir. He also studied the access & magnitude of various socio-economic parameters and concluded that schedule tribe groups are socially and economically underprivileged and do not have access to basic facilities of life.

*Ahmed (2013)* studied the spatial distribution and demographic characteristics of Gujjars and Bakerwals by focusing on their population and habitation in Rajouri and Poonch districts of Jammu and Kashmir. He found that there is a definite shift from transhumance to agricultural and non-agricultural sectors among Gujjars and Bakerwals. He also proposed that there should be provision of a strong infrastructure for better improvement and socio-economic transformation of Gujjars and Bakerwals.

*Gupta and Aslam (2014)* (a) studied the socio-economic problems being faced by Gujjar & Bakarwal tribes. In their studies they observed that both these tribes are still living a miserable life in spite of various initiatives taken by the state and central Government. They also proposed some recommendations which according to them if taken care of, might be helpful for the socio-economic transformation in their way of life for a better tomorrow.

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To study history of nomadic tribes of Jammu and Kashmir
2. To understand the cultural pattern of Gujjars.
3. To understand the cultural pattern of Bakarwals.

**Methodology**

The present study is primarily based on primary field survey. With the help of open-ended questions data is collected in Jammu District. The secondary data are also used. Literature is consulted through books, old research materials, articles, newspaper clipping, official websites, etc. Apart from this the information is also gathered by the observation method which is also used to elaborate the data.

**Bakarwals and their socio-cultural fabric**

To know the socio-cultural background of Bakarwals or any other clan is very important. Culture is the backbone of each and every clan with the help of socio-culture background we know bakerwals in a better manner.

**Culture**

Before we contact the social parts of Bakarwals, it is appropriate to know the idea of culture. The social parts of Bakarwals are same too are shifts in numerous parts of his life. The Bakarwals relocate to the high elevations amid summers. It is required by the run for Bakarwal's to put on warm woollen garments. Bakarwal's are wearing an average head wear called "lungi," with shirt and shalwar. Socially Bakarwals are especially portraying capable by moving, religious ceremonies and traditions and so on. The way of life of Bakarwal's people group is very not quite the same as other network of Jammu and

Kashmir State, their necessities and issues are likewise unique in relation to other people. The method for discussing the network is not the same as other network and is instructively, financially, politically and socially in reverse.

#### **Language**

The Bakarwal people group of Jammu and Kashmir state talks the Gujari (Gojri) dialect originates from the Rajasthan, having impact of different dialects, for example, Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Phari. The Gujjar and bakarwal individuals collaborate with one another in view of the dialect Gojri. The Bakarwals of Jammu and Kashmir State requesting incorporation of Gojri in the eighth booked of the Indian constitution on account of boundless talking dialect all through the Indian sub mainland. As a well-known dialect (Gojri) ten radio and TV slots of India and Pakistan communicates and broadcasts programs in Gojri dialect. The Jammu and Kashmir state establish the Gojri talking individuals as the third biggest semantic gathering after Kashmiri comprises the first and Dogri establishes the second position separately.

#### **Festivals**

Festivals have special appearance among Bakarwals. Bakarwals have special faith on religion and celebrate their festivals with great faith, charm and prosperity. They praise all the celebrations with unbelievable celebration and energy. Bakarwals celebrate these festivals with unique songs and food, traditions and culture.

Followed simply because they have been followed in past. Majority of the bakarwals follows these customs and rituals strictly.

#### **Marriage Ceremonies**

Different communities have different cultures of their marriage ceremonies. Marriage constitutes an important picture of the society. Marriages among the Bakarwals are fixed at an age of 17-18 years among boys and 14-15 years among girls. The Bakarwals hold their marriages in simple manners with old traditions. The relatives and neighbours send curd as a mark of gift to the household celebrating the wedding. The wedding household uses a lot of curd i.e. Dahi and salt in their meals. The bride is decorated with silver ornaments like silver chain, silver earrings, bangles, silver rings and silver necklaces. The bridegroom wears head wear like lungi, waist coat, and shirt and shalwar besides red handkerchief in his hands and "SHERA" on forehead which adds to his grace and glory.

Folk Games Bakarwals are mostly play the games according to their manners. They play numerous games like Stone lifting, Arm Holding, Pan Geet and so forth.

Dress Pattern Even though the society has changed due to modernization and developments, the dress pattern of Bakarwal's have not changed and remain constant

People Games: Bakarwals are for the most part play the amusements as indicated by their conduct. They play various recreations like Stone lifting, Arm Holding, Pan Geet et cetera.

Dress Pattern: Even however the general public has changed because of modernization and advancements, the dress example of Bakarwal's have not changed and stay steady

**Food Habits:** -Bakarwals are for the most part reliant on drain items, grains, wheat and maize. They are vegans and non-veggie lovers. Maki Ki roti, ganhar, sarsoon ka droop, lassi, kalari, and so on.

#### **Occupation**

Bakarwal's group creatures like wild ox. They relocated to upper parts of Himalayas with their bison amid summer season and returned to fields amid the winters. There is an absence of gifted labourer who hones some exchange or craftsmanship. Bakarwals are for the most part subject to the raising of wild ox and their items. This people group has safeguarded and kept up its creativity from end-to-end.

#### **Education**

Education is viewed as a standout amongst the most essential instrument for the progression of the nation. Present society can't play out its exertion of financial advancement, mechanical change and social development without completely controlling the limits of its nationals. Educationists are endeavouring to give careful consideration towards the levels of training to build up the standard of the planned clan understudies. Instruction assumes a noteworthy job in the improvement of youngsters, networks and nations. Free and mandatory instruction up to standard level to all youngsters, particularly young ladies, will assist us with breaking the chains of neediness and segregation. The ancestral networks are as of now in reverse in training. The Bakarwal's guardians are completely neglected to spur their kids to send them to schools. The education rate among Bakarwal's is deficient. The non-accessibility of schools, parental state of mind towards training and relocation makes it harder to send their kids to schools. The administration should take unique consideration towards the instruction of Bakarwals with the foundation of versatile schools. These versatile schools are vital and are required when they move to their Dhokes. The general proficiency rate of the STs is 37.5 percent at 2001 registration. This is much lower than the national normal of 47.1 percent totalled for every booked clan. Male and female proficiency rates (48.2 percent and 25.5 percent) are much underneath when contrasted with those recorded by all STs at the national level (59.2 percent and 34.8 percent). As indicated by statistics report 2011 India establishes of around 58.96 percent booked clan's literates of the aggregate populace of 72.99 percent.

The people group lives under the peaceful economy. The Bakarwal's are not having a perpetual existence because of climatic conditions, fill in as roaming life move with their steers to fields amid winters and relocates uneven locales amid hot spell of the year.

#### **Political**

Politically socialization of Bakarwals in Jammu And Kashmir State isn't great when contrasted with other network of the state. One who associated with legislative issues straightforwardly or in a roundabout way is a political member. The

general level of contribution in a general public is the degree to which the general population all in all are dynamic in governmental issues. Political cooperation results in more prominent dependability of political culture and political framework. In each political framework support in governmental issues is a critical component. In each general public the political power is controlled by few office heads. The Bakarwal's trusted that post freedom period will accompany expectations and yearnings and end of backwardness and neediness. With the demonstration of start of free instruction in the territory of Jammu and Kashmir, numerous Bakarwal's got taught and associate intently in governmental issues and organization.

#### **Gujjars and narratives from the field**

Gurjar or Gujjar are a pastoral rural ethnic gathering with populaces in India, Pakistan, and a modest number in north eastern Afghanistan. Elective spellings incorporae Gurjara, Gurjjar, Gojar and Gūjar.

Gujjars are phonetically and religiously various. In spite of the fact that they can talk the dialect of the district and nation where they live, Gujjars have their very own dialect, known as Gujari. They differently pursue Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism. The Hindu Gujjars are for the most part found in Indian conditions of Rajasthan, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Plains and Maharashtra, while the Muslim Gujjars are for the most part found in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Indian Himalayan districts, for example, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Garhwal and Kumaon divisions of Uttarakhand

#### **Cultural Heritage**

Gujjars are the commanding organization of individuals living the region of Jammu and Kashmir. They have their very own run of the mill social personality, talk distinctive dialect in various vernaculars and have diverse occupation, music, distinctive way of life and attire design. They are popular for steers, sheep and goat raising. In any case, there is an absence of mindfulness among the general population to protect the history, prehistoric studies and culture of the gujjars clan. We have toconstruct the open exhibition hall for protection of their legacy.

#### **Settlement Structure**

From the archaeological and chronicled confirmations, it is in any case, apparent that however the Indo-Afghan were the transcendent race in the antiquated populace of Kashmir, there was positive admixture of different races every now and then. The Gujjars who had been a migrant clan are broadly getting to be inactive having a settle life in this district. However, creature raising is as yet polished, the arable agribusiness has likewise accomplished a noticeable quality in the control of the Gujjars. The comparable kind of clan and practices is found among the general population of Afghanistan, Baltistan, Gilgit and Punjab territory. These individuals talk the Dardic lingo which was like the Pisachas of Sanskrit writing of old period.

#### **Pastoral and Agricultural Practices**

A portion of the Gujjar settled down to farming and a large portion of them are herders and favour the peaceful life. They are fine tall race men,

with rather dumb appearances and vast conspicuous teeth. The peaceful life was very much portrayed in Indian history and convention. In Bhagavat Purana it is specified that the cowherd Yadava rulers relocated to Saurashtra area from Mathura to look for field. Comparable sort of hypothesis one can uses in the investigation of Gujjars in Jammu and Kashmir too.

#### **Sheep and Goat Pastoralism**

Sheep and goat stay in the early cultivating. One can take asset to ethno-natural and the oral custom of present-day sheep and goat pastoralist of this locale. Their oral stories may speak to the summarizing the social memory of their past. The sheep and goat pastoralist networks guarantee their source from a familial horticultural stock. These people group associate themselves to the old network which was made reference to in the Shiva Purana. In Shiva Purana, it is portrayed that Parvati asked Shiva that she needed sheep. To charm her, he made a smash and wonder. In course of time these two duplicated in to enormous group and turned into an annoyance. At that point Parvati requested that Shiva take away the sheep and that day onwards a specific gathering of individuals who minded the sheep. One can infer that the source of this clan may return to the old-time rame.

#### **Population History and Biological Relatedness**

Frame and structure of bones and teeth contain key data about the historical backdrop of a populace and its relationship to different populaces, particularly since this morphology is in any event partially hereditarily decided. Relatedness between human gatherings has for some time been a vital region of enthusiasm for human studies. Organic Distance or "bio-remove" is the estimation of relatedness or uniqueness between populaces or subgroups inside populaces dependent on the examination of polygenic skeletal and dental qualities.

#### **Ancient DNA**

Following Ancestry: The investigation of DNA from archaeological remains offers another and conceivably ground-breaking methods for tending to a significant number of the issues already under the domain of bio-remove examination of skeletal and dental morphology alone. This new outskirts in bio-separate examination can possibly address this and different issues in human studies identifying with spatial and worldly relationship between and inside populaces. The investigation of DNA in living and wiped out populaces induces new points of view on populace sources in various inborn zones.

#### **Conclusion**

Verifiably and archeologically, this locale has a high potential that can investigate and remake the past, which thusly would pick up data that will help us in understanding the present situation. From the above talk one can state that, there is a colossal degree for the investigation of Gujjars people group from the Ethno-archaeological point of view. One of the central points which have added to the reinforcing of the territorial character of Jammu and Kashmir is the Gujjars culture and their personality. Various researchers have considered in detail of the Gujjars clan from the present point of view, for example, their

specialty, culture, history and so on. In the light of the above discoveries, it is very evident that, for recreation of territorial personality of Jammu and Kashmir one needs to consider the crucial pretended by the Gujjars in the public arena and history. Subsequently, this methodology leaves plentiful extension for the students of history, archaeologists and anthropologist to cooperate and draw from one another's discoveries and display their grant in a way which would enhance their particular teaches as well as would fortify the Gujjars personality in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

**References**

1. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282106445>
2. Dr. Kheraj, Arshad Ahmed, Parwaz Ahmed, Dr. Meenaxy International Journal of Academic Research and Development ISSN: 2455-4197, Impact Factor: RJIF 5.22 Volume 2; Issue 4; July 2017; Page No. 364-368
3. P.S. Slathia, Parveen Kumar, S.K. Gupta Constraints of Nomadic Tribes of Jammu and Kashmir in Livestock Rearing\* agriculture research paper
4. The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies (ISSN 2321 - 9203)
5. [www.theijhss.com](http://www.theijhss.com)
6. ISSN 2224-3178 (Paper) ISSN 2225-0964 (Online) Vol.44, 2018
7. [www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org)
8. [jstore.com](http://jstore.com)
9. [www.academicjournal.com](http://www.academicjournal.com)