

# Understanding the Reasons for Educational Backwardness of Semi-Nomadic Gaddis: A Case Study of District Doda (J&K)

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## Abstract

*In the present study an attempt has been made to understand the causes of educational backwardness among semi-nomadic Gaddis of the study area i.e. district Doda for the period 2012-2013 and to suggest policy measures for their educational upliftment. It has been observed that the educational dropout rate among Gaddis is very high. As we move from primary to higher education the dropout rate goes on increasing and the enrolment in higher education is observed approximately negligible. The main cause of educational backwardness among Gaddis is insufficient number of schools in the Gaddi area and lack of well trained teachers. In the policy it is suggested that sufficient schools with proper facilities and well trained teachers should be provided in the Gaddi areas.*

**Keywords:** Doda, semi-nomadic, Gaddi, scheduled tribe

## Introduction

In India there are varied cultures and ethnic factors. There are certain groups which have assimilated and integrated with the other but there are still some people who observe different customs and a very different way of life. These people have carried on their traditional forces and their relative isolation from other communities have kept them in old socio-cultural heritage. There are still many communities in India who have very different characteristics and are found in the different parts of the country. In India tribal people have continued their different and varied culture apart from Hindu cast and other communities (**R.S. Mann**). In India the tribes mainly live in forests. That means they live in hilly and naturally isolated areas and are also known as people of forest or original habitants. They are also known as Vanyajati, Adivasi, Janjati, Adimjati etc. According to census 1971 the tribal population in India was 38,015,162 which form about 7% of the total population of the country. The highest number of Tribals were found in Madhya Pradesh (8,387,403)

followed in order by Orissa and Bihar with 5,071,937 and 4,932,767 respectively (**census 1971**). Highest percentage of scheduled tribe population in India is found in Madhya Pradesh state followed by Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Jharkhand. Whereas distribution of scheduled tribe population below 1 per cent is found in Bihar, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Sikkim and UP.

## Objectives

The present study has been undertaken with the following specific objectives.

- (1) To find out the level of education among semi-nomadic Gaddis in District Doda.
- (2) To find out reasons behind educational backwardness among semi-nomadic Gaddis in District Doda.

## Study area

Total area of District Doda is 4500 km<sup>2</sup> (approx.). Doda District has been carved out from District Udhampur in 1948. In 2006 state government trifurcated the District into three Districts namely Doda, Ramban and Kishtwar. The District falls between 32 degrees-53' and 34 degrees-21' north latitude and 75 degrees-1' and 76 degrees-47' east longitude. It is bounded by Anantnag in north, District Kishtwar in the north east, while south west and south are bordered by the District Udhampur, Kathua and Chamba area of Himachal Pradesh. On

its west is District Ramban. East and south-east is leh District.

## Data base and methodology

Mainly the study is based on primary data. Before setting out for fieldwork proper tools and Methods had to be designed for data collection to make the study easy and interesting. The Gaddis who are semi-nomadic use to migrate between plains and hills are mostly illiterate. Hence the main tools of data collection was interview schedule. Major variables, parameters and objective of the study were the main basis of the drafted interview schedule. Using interview method primary data were collected from the semi-nomadic Gaddis in District Doda. 100 households were taken in the study area for data collection. Secondary data were also collected from Annual reports and guidelines of the ministry, Government of India. Apart from these books, Journals, websites etc. also formed the source of the collection of secondary data for the study. The data collected through interview schedules from the semi-nomadic Gaddis were edited, codified and analysed with the help of social science research technique. The simple stastical methods were used to analyse the data. The data analysis was planned in such a way that errors could be excluded from the study. Computer was used for stastical data analysis.

## Tribes of Jammu and Kashmir

In Jammu and Kashmir there are many tribal communities that are living throughout the state which becomes the main cause for the

multicultural and multitrade nature of this state. The traditions, cultures and customs that these tribals carry makes this state different from the other states of the country. Tribals in Jammu and Kashmir are scattered in all the three regions of the state that is Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. It is being said that most of the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir state have descended from the famous families of Aryans. In Jammu and Kashmir tribals used to live in the high altitude areas. Majority of these tribal communities are found in Ladakh region. In Kashmir Gujjar and Bakarwals are found in majority. In Jammu Tribals are found in Poonch, Rajouri, Kishtiwari, Bhaderwah, Ramban, Chenani and Kathua (Bani, Basholi, and Bilawar).

The scheduled tribe status to communities residing in Jammu and Kashmir state was awarded on 1989 by the President R. Venkataraman after consultation with government to eight communities namely Balti, Beda, Boto, Changpa, Garra, Mon, Purigpa and Brokpa, Drokpa, Dard, Shin. The four communities namely Gujjar,

Bakarwal, Gaddi and Sipi were notified as the scheduled tribe vide the constitution (scheduled tribe) order (Amendment) Act 1991

### Literacy rate

The overall literacy of scheduled tribe population in Jammu and Kashmir is 37.5% at 2001 census. Which is much lower than the national average of 47.1% aggregated for all scheduled tribes. In Jammu and Kashmir male literacy rate is 48.2% and female literacy rate is 25.5% which is very low as compared to the scheduled tribes at national level which for male and female is 59.2% and 34.8% respectively.

Balti, Bot, Purigpa and Brokpa are having high literacy rate where as Gujjars, Bakarwals and Gaddis have low literacy rate.

The below given table shows that 34.9 per cent of scheduled tribe literates in Jammu and Kashmir are either without any educational level or below primary level. Literate up to middle level are 21.1 per cent.

**Table 1: Literacy rate among scheduled tribes in Jammu and Kashmir.**

Literacy rate	All STs	Balti	Bot	Purigpa	Brokpa	Gaddi	Gujjar	Bakarwal
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: Office of the Registrar General India.**

Scheduled tribes literate with matric level are 14.7 per cent. Technical diploma holders are 0.1 per cent means negligible. Scheduled

tribes in Jammu and Kashmir with graduation and above are just 2 per cent.

**Table 2: level of education among scheduled tribe in Jammu and Kashmir.**

Names of STs	Literate without educational level	Below primary	Educational level attained				
			primary	middle	Metric or higher secondary	Technical diploma	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
Bot	6.6	19.7	25	20.6	23.9	0.1	3.9
Bakarwal	18.3	30	26	16.8	7.8	Nil	1
Brokpa	3.8	24.6	22.5	26	20.2	0.1	2.8
Balti	3.1	23.2	22.8	24.7	23.9	0.1	2.2
Purigpa	3.2	25.2	22.7	24	22.6	0.1	2
Gaddi	6.6	31.4	28.4	19	12.5	Nil	2.1

### Gaddis

Gaddis are the tribals mainly living in the high altitude or the mountaneous areas of Jammu and Himachal Pradesh. The language which is spoken by the Gaddi tribe is Gaddi. The meaning of the word Gaddi is “seat” though the Bharmour was the seat of Raja of Chamba. Gaddis of Jammu and Kashmir believe that they have migrated from Bharmour region, which is substantiated by the fact that Gaddis of J&K share their Gotras with these of Himachal Pradesh. As the Gaddis mainly live in the forest areas of Jammu and Kashmir. In Jammu and Kashmir Gaddis mainly live in Bhaderwah, Doda and Ramban. In Bani, Basholi, Ballowar and Hiranagar Tehsil of Kathua district majority of Gaddi population is

found. They are also found in Ramban district and Chenani tehsil of district Udhampur. Among these the prominent villages are in Bhaderwah like Bharai, Kansar, Bimlakhi, Haddal, Kakol and Dhamunda. Gaddis are semi-nomadic and have homes in villages

The literacy rate in Doda district has increased from 18.50 per cent at 1981 census to 46.92 per cent at 2001 census. Male literacy rate was 28.59 per cent and female literacy rate was 7.34 per cent. which has now increased to 63.56 per cent and 28.35 per cent respectively for male and female. However district is much below the state average which is 54.46 per cent (2001 census) and national average which is 65.38 per cent.

### Educational status of Gaddis in District Doda

Semi-nomadic Gaddis are among most backward social groups and were not given any special attention for a long time. Now in the recent years literacy rate among the Gaddis having been shown increasing trends but special efforts are needed to bring them in the level of other communities. Below given table no. 3 shows the literacy among Gaddis of District Doda.

The total number of illiterates and literates in Doda is 508. In District Doda out of 508 population size 26.18 per cent people are illiterate (133). The percentage of male and female illiteracy is 21.80 per cent and 78.20 per cent respectively in District Doda.

The percentage of female illiteracy is very high, which clearly shows that there is lack of awareness among the Gaddis about the importance of female education and which is

**Table 3: level of education among Gaddis in Jammu and Kashmir.**

Sex	illiterate	primary	middle	High school	Hr. sec	graduation	P G and Above	Total
Male	29 (21.80) <sup>a</sup>	39 (49.36) <sup>a</sup>	85 (66.92) <sup>a</sup>	58 (55.23) <sup>a</sup>	26 (54.16) <sup>a</sup>	10 (90.90) <sup>a</sup>	4 (80) <sup>a</sup>	251 (49.41) <sup>a</sup>
Female	104 (78.20) <sup>a</sup>	40 (50.64) <sup>a</sup>	42 (33.8) <sup>a</sup>	47 (44.77) <sup>a</sup>	22 (45.84) <sup>a</sup>	1 (9.10) <sup>a</sup>	1 (20) <sup>a</sup>	257 (50.59) <sup>a</sup>
Total	133 (26.18) <sup>b</sup>	79 (15.55) <sup>b</sup>	127 (25) <sup>b</sup>	105 (20.66) <sup>b</sup>	48 (9.44) <sup>b</sup>	11 (2.16) <sup>b</sup>	5 (0.98) <sup>b</sup>	508

**Note.** ‘a’ Percentage w.r.t combined total of both male and female

‘b’ percentage w.r.t individual row.

Source: Field Survey

an area where targeted interventions are needed.

Next is the primary education where the total number of semi-nomadic Gaddis is 79 in district Doda. In District Doda 15.55 per cent of population is having primary education out of which (39 male) 49.36 per cent are male and (940 female) 50.64 per cent are female..

The total number of population having middle school education increases in the study area. The total in District Doda is 127. Which is 25 per cent of the total population in the study area. Out of which (85 male) 66.92 per cent are male and (42 female) 33.8 per cent are female.

As for as high school education is concerned there are 105 persons having high school education in the study area. which is about 20.66 per cent of the total population. Out of which (58 male ) 55.23 per cent are male and (47 female) 44.77 per cent are female.

In both Blocks as it comes to higher secondary education and above the number starts declining. In the study area the total population having higher secondary education is 48 which is about 9.44 per cent of the total population having higher secondary education in the study area. Out of which 26 are male and 22 are female. In percentage term 54.16 per cent are male and 45.84 per cent are female having higher secondary education.

Regarding graduates the total number is 11. Which is about 2.16 per cent of total population in the study area. In the study area 10 male and 1 female is graduate. In percentage term it is 90.90 per cent male and 9.10 per cent female who are graduate in District Doda. .

When we come to the higher education that is P.G and above there are just 5 persons having P.G and above qualification in the study area which is just 0.98 per cent of the total population in the study area..

The data provided in above table 3 through survey clearly show that above high school education level the number of persons goes on declining.

So from the above discussion it becomes clear that the majority of people have attained education up to middle standard.

Above middle school the number of students goes on declining. Very few students are found graduate and post graduate in the study area. But female number among these is very little or we can say negligible.

As for as education is concerned the literacy rate among the Gaddi is very low in fact some of them have taken up many high ranking government jobs. According to census of 2001 37.3% persons are literate which is very low. Among Gaddi women literacy rate is 19.6%. Majority of these literates are below 10<sup>th</sup> standard.

### **Reasons behind low educational attainment of Gaddis.**

Like all other sectors of socio-economic life, educationally the Gaddis of the study area are at different levels of development but on the whole formal education has made a very little impact on these people. Their geographical isolation from other people and lack of communication are very much responsible for their low educational standards. Some parents due to economic factors are not in a position to send their childrens to school. In many cases if they join school then after primary education they are withdrawn so that two healthy hands can be added to work. In many cases the school are away from their locality. Childrens have to travel 5-10 km. to attend school. In some areas infrastructure is not good. So in bad weather school remains closed.

Also it has been observed during field survey that most of the schools in the study area are single teacher or two-teacher



school, and their day-to-day functioning is not monitored by the higher officials of the education department resulting into very poor educational outcomes of children in rural areas in general and those belonging to Gaddi community in particular. In case the children is able to get primary education from the nearby school, for middle and higher education he has to travel long distance which needs financial help and in many cases parents for safety and economic reasons do not send their children for further studies.

These tribal people have many blind faiths. One of them is that education makes them incapable to do their traditional work as sheep rearing and agriculture etc. Educational condition of women among Gaddis is very worse. Only negligible females are educated. Parents due to social and economic reasons are not willing to send their daughters to school alone. Marriage of girls among Gaddis is done at very early age which is not allowed under the law, which also hinders their educational process. Parents think that their process of getting education away from home will affect their future life. Till today no hostel for gaddi students is functioning in the state where as gujjar students on the other hand are provided hostel facilities. So it is the immense need to establish these hostels for semi-nomadic Gaddis in the state.

## Conclusion

The literacy among the semi-nomadic Gaddis is very low. The semi-nomadic Gaddis children lack access to primary

education despite the constitutional adoptions of the right to elementary educations and the implementation of serve Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), inadequate number of schools, near by near their poor communication facilities, lack of awareness about the importance of education are found to be the major reasons for such kind of situation of semi-nomadic Gaddis. The percentage of people having higher education among semi-nomadic Gaddis in study area is very low. In the study area only 5 post graduates are found. After middle school education the drop out rate goes on increasing.

## Suggestions

Education which has now become the primary requirement of every individual for social and political improvement should be given up priority. Government and planning agencies should look in to the factors which are responsible for restricting the students from entering schools for different levels. Also efforts should be made to check drop-out rates at different levels. The agencies associated with adult education should contact gaddi families and should sensitize them about long term benefit of formal education for their children. Attempts should be made to organise various programmes for motivating Gaddis towards educational facilities so that they can take benefit of it. In schools well educated and motivated teachers should be appointed so that the quality of education in these schools should be improved. Free books, uniforms and mid-day meal programmes should be properly implemented in these schools.

Various hostels for Gaddi students on the line of other ST community of the state should be established in state so that it provides residential facilities to these students. Pre-metric scholarship should be provided to gaddi students. Primary and middle schools in areas have Gaddi population should be upgraded so that they can easily get education in near by schools.

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