

**PREFERENCES AND PATTERNS OF EDUCATION AMONG
GUJJAR PASTORALISTS OF JAMMU REGION: A CASE
STUDY OF RAJOURI DISTRICT**

SUMMARY OF THESIS

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Summary

INTRODUCTION

The union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is situated in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent. As per the data provided by the Census of 2011, it is observed that the religious practices within the state population are primarily dominated by Islam, accounting for approximately 68.3 percent. Hinduism, on the other hand, is followed by approximately 28.4 percent of the populace, while smaller groups belong to Sikhism (1.9 percent), Buddhism (0.9 percent), and Christianity (0.3 percent). In Jammu and Kashmir, there are three distinct regions, Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh are home to a wide variety of tribes, whose presence contributes significantly to the authentic and distinctive ethnic culture of this state, as well as its tribal heritage (Andrabi, 2013). The indigenous communities residing in Jammu and Kashmir, specifically those that have been officially recognized as STs, encompass a diverse array of groups. These include the Balti, Beda, Bot (also known as Boto), Brokpa (alternatively referred to as Drokpa, Dard, or Shin), Changpa, Garra, Mon, Purigpa, Gujjar, Bakarwal, Gaddi, and Sippis. Among these, a total of eight distinct communities can be found in the region of Ladakh, namely Balti, Beda, Bodh or Bot, Brokpa, Champa (or Changpa), Garra, and Mon. Among the twelve STs of Jammu and Kashmir, it is noteworthy that the Gujjar tribe stands as the most populous, boasting a substantial population of 763,806 individuals (Chandar & Rafique, 2020). This figure represents a significant 69.1 percent of the overall Scheduled Tribe population within the union territory. The Gujjars, a semi-nomadic ethnic group, hold the position of being the third largest community in the region of Jammu and Kashmir. According to the census conducted in 2011, the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir exhibits a literacy rate of 68.74%. The educational system within the state is effectively stratified into distinct tiers, namely primary education, secondary education, tertiary education at the collegiate level, and ultimately, the pinnacle of intellectual pursuit, the university level. The aggregate literacy rate of the scheduled tribe residing in Jammu and Kashmir stands at a modest 37.5%, which is notably lower when compared to the national average of 47% encompassing all scheduled tribes. The literacy rates among males and females, standing at 48.2% and 25.25% respectively, are significantly lower in comparison to the corresponding figures for all

scheduled tribes at the national level, which are recorded at 59.2% and 34.8%. A closer look of these tribes reveals similar patterns pertaining to female literacy as well.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Based upon an extensive analysis of pertinent literature review on the topic, this study endeavours to delve into the cogitations and lived encounters of parents, elucidating their predilections regarding the educational pursuits of their children. The present study *Preferences and Patterns of Education among Gujjar Pastoralists of Jammu Region: A Case Study of Rajouri District* is an attempt to study critically educational development of pastoralists in Rajouri district of Jammu region. It aims to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the educational progress and advancements within the pastoralist population residing in the Rajouri district of the Jammu region. The study holds considerable significance for a multitude of reasons. Initially, it possesses the ability to furnish profound revelations pertaining to the educational trends and predilections prevalent within a marginalized populace residing in distinct geographic vicinity. Furthermore, this study has the potential to make significant contributions towards the advancement of policies and programmes aimed at enhancing educational accessibility for marginalized communities.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

As per the findings of the Indian Ministry of Tribal Affairs, it is noteworthy to mention that India harbours a significant majority, surpassing fifty percent, of the global tribal populace. A staggering figure of 84 million individuals, coming from 698 distinct communities, has been duly recognized as the members of scheduled tribes. These tribes, collectively encompassing a total population of 104,281,034, contribute to a significant 8.6 percent of India's overall populace. Despite the implementation of various measures by both the central and state governments aimed at fostering the comprehensive advancement of tribal communities, the outcomes so far have failed to meet the desired standards. In the tribal regions, a multitude of educational predicaments persist, encompassing deficiencies in infrastructural facilities, teacher absences from work, the disposition of tribal students towards education, parental impoverishment, migratory patterns tied to seasons, apathy, and a dearth of parental impetus, are the other factors. In the course of our scholarly investigation, we have

endeavoured to proffer recommendations aimed at enhancing the educational framework within nomadic tribes, as well as other tribal collectives residing in Jammu and other regions across our nation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study is titled as *Preferences and Patterns of Education among Gujjar Pastoralists in Jammu Region: A Case Study of Rajouri District*.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE KEY TERMS

Preferences of Education: Educational Preferences here refers to the choices and priorities regarding the type, level, and nature of education that parents and guardians select for their children which are affected by the various factors as educational aspiration, geographical, socio-cultural, socio-economic and religious factors.

Patterns of Education: It refers to the trends, characteristics, and dynamics related to the education system and the educational preferences made within Gujjar Community. It encompasses the customary sequences or trajectories of educational experiences and accomplishments that individuals traverse throughout the course of their educational lives. How education is pursued, accessed, and utilized within this community.

Gujjar Pastoralists: It refers to a Gujjar pastoralist community in Rajouri district of Jammu region, who traditionally rely on nomadic or semi nomadic lifestyle for their livelihood.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the Educational Preferences of Gujjar Pastoralists in Rajouri District of Jammu Region?
2. What are the Educational Patterns of Gujjar Pastoralists in Rajouri District of Jammu Region?
3. How Geographical, Socio-Cultural, Socio-Economic and Religious Factors Affect the Education of Gujjar Pastoralists in Rajouri District of Jammu Region?

4. What are the Educational Problems of Gujjar Pastoralist Students in Rajouri District of Jammu Region?
5. What are the Initiatives taken by the Government for the Education of Gujjar Pastoralists in Rajouri District of Jammu Region?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To Study the Educational Preferences of Gujjar pastoralists in Rajouri District of Jammu Region.
2. To Study the Educational Patterns of Gujjar Pastoralists in Rajouri District of Jammu Region.
3. To Study the Affect of Geographical, Socio-cultural, and Socio-economic Factors on Educational Preferences and Patterns of Gujjar Pastoralists in Rajouri District of Jammu Region.
4. To study the Educational Problems of Gujjar Pastoralist Students in Rajouri District of Jammu Region.
5. To Study the Initiatives taken by the Government for the Education of Gujjar Pastoralists in Rajouri District of Jammu Region.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The present study is delimited to the Gujjar pastoralists.

The study is delimited to the rural blocks of Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir.

The study is delimited to Peeri village of Rajouri District.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Method is defined as a systematic process or a chosen pathway of dealing with facts. Methodology is a way to understand and solve the research problem scientifically.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The methodology employed for the study is case study. Triangulated mixed-methods design, also known as convergent parallel design, is used for the present study as both QUAL and QUAN data are collected concurrently and are equally prioritized (Creswell, 2008). Collection and analysis of each type of data occur separately, and

findings are merged during the interpretation phase to allow for robust conclusions that are supported by multiple data sources. The triangulated research design is used for the present study because it can draw upon the strengths of both QUAL and QUAN data.

RESEARCH APPROACH

A research approach is a systematic plan or strategy used to conduct research and address the research objectives. It encompasses the overall direction and framework of the research process, including the methods, techniques, and procedures used to collect and analyze the data. Given the qualitative as well quantitative nature of the study, mix method approach was employed.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Population is the entire group that the researcher wants to study. The population for the present study is only confined to the Gujjar pastoralist parents, students and teachers of Rajouri district of Jammu region.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

For the present study following procedure was adopted for the selection of sample

QUALITATIVE

For the qualitative part the researcher selected Gujjar Pastoralists densely populated Peeri village as a case for the study, in Peeri village the researcher interviewed 20 families and 10 teachers, total 30 cases for in-depth study. The reason for choosing 30 cases for the present study was based on the idea that limited number of Gujjar pastoralists will help in an in-depth understanding of the group without losing the sight of the whole.

QUANTITATIVE

For the quantitative part the researcher prepared list of all the schools where Gujjar pastoralists' students were enrolled, then the researcher selected 10 percent schools through random sampling technique. Therefore the total 10 schools were selected for the study, out of these 10 schools the researcher selected 20 students from each selected school (that would be the 10 percent criteria for selection of the participants)

So, the total sample size would be 200 students , 100 boys and 100 girls were considered as sampling frame for the study. However, for Henry Garret Ranking method we have also used 200 samples to know the educational problems of Gujjar pastoralists, which include 100 male students and 100 female students. The reason for taking 200 samples is to avoid sampling error and to have 95 percent of significance among the results.

TOOLS USED FOR THE STUDY

During fieldwork, the research tools that were used to collect data mainly included Semi Structured Interview Schedule for Parents and Teachers Prepared by Researcher, Focused Group Discussion (FGD) Points for Parents, Community members and Teachers moderated by Researcher and Educational Aspiration Test (EAT) developed by Dr. Yashmin Ghani Khan.

OBJECTIVE WISE MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Based on the analysis and interpretation of data, it is intended to give a consolidated depiction of findings by taking into account the research questions and objectives of the study. The major findings of the study are given below:

Major Findings of Objective-1

Objective- 1: To Study the Educational Preferences of Gujjar Pastoralist of Rajouri District of Jammu Region.

Educational Background: Context and Concerns

- ❖ Gujjar pastoralists follow nomadic lifestyle which causes seasonal migrations and resulting to disruption in regular schooling. This has significantly affected their preferences and patterns of education.
- ❖ Parental educational background has been found a significant factor affecting education of Gujjar Pastoralist children. Many parents have minimal or no formal education. Some have attended Maktab and Madarsa for basic education. Education levels of parents of Gujjar pastoralist students typically do not exceed middle school. Thus, majority of the Gujjar pastoralist students are the first-generation learners, hence lack of parental guidance in achieving education has been witnessed at large scale.

- ❖ The low rate of literacy has been found among the parents of Gujjar pastoralists' which play significant role in making preferences of education of their children.
- ❖ Although primarily involved in cattle rearing, many have turned to agriculture and casual labour to sustain their families and earn their livelihood. However, it has been witnessed that a large number of Gujjar pastoralists children are dropping out early to support their families as a Labour force or family pastoral activity which is affecting their education.
- ❖ Socio-Economic Conditions of the Gujjar pastoral families are low, hence financial necessities force children to work at early age, limiting leading to the educational opportunities.
- ❖ Lack of schools, infrastructural and educational resources in remote areas also play significant role because of which the schools are unable to create educational ethos conducive for Gujjar pastoralists.
- ❖ The Gujjar pastoralists rely on religious institutions as Maktabas and Madaras for basic education in the absence of formal schooling institutions.
- ❖ It has been disclosed by the majority of parents, teachers and community members during interview and focus group discussions that there is lack of qualified teachers willing to work in the conflictful situation of Rajouri district. The reason for the same has been found the hardship of the remote area, militancy, terrorist prone zone etc. Most of the parents mentioned these factors significantly affecting the access and quality of education provided in these areas to the Gujjar pastoralists.

Preferences of Education with Respect to the Nature, Scope and Form of Education -

- ❖ The educational preferences of Gujjar pastoralists in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir reflect their unique socio-economic and cultural context.
- ❖ The study revealed that Gujjar pastoralists of Rajouri district primarily depend on livestock rearing for their livelihood. This includes herding, cattle breeding, dairy production, and meat preservation. These activities require a specific set

of skills and knowledge that have been traditionally passed down through generations among Gujjar pastoralists.

- ❖ It has been found that the Gujjar pastoralist parents emphasized upon the importance of both traditional herding skills and formal education for their children. Traditional skills such as herding, milking, animal care and dairy processing are integral to their way of life and most of them expressed desire that it should be integrated into the formal curriculum and this integration would help to boost the self-confidence of Gujjar children and recognize the value of their indigenous knowledge.
- ❖ The study explored that, most of the parents' aspiration is the attainment of higher education for their children and most of them aspire to get a job in the government services, as they believe this will improve their socio-economic conditions in the future.
- ❖ In this study it has been found that despite their own lack of education, the Gujjar pastoralist parents have a deep desire for their children to succeed academically. They are willing to overcome significant challenges, such as limited school availability and financial constraints, to ensure their children receive an education that can lead to a better quality of life. This determination is evident in their willingness to send children to urban areas for better schooling opportunities as they grow older.

Subject Preferences of Gujjar Pastoralist of Rajouri District -

- ❖ The study revealed that Gujjar pastoralist parents in Rajouri district are keenly aware of the importance of formal education and prefer subjects that they believe will offer their children better career prospects. All parents value formal education highly and desire for professional careers for their children.
- ❖ The study found that English, Mathematics, Science, Social Science and Urdu are the most preferred subjects at the middle school level, which indicates that it is the first and foremost subject preferences among Gujjar Pastoralists of Rajouri district.

- ❖ The Study found that Gujjar pastoralist parents prefer **Mathematics, Physics, and Biology at higher secondary level** for their children. Whereas, some parents prefer **Mathematics, Computer Science and English at higher secondary level** to prepare their children for careers in computer science, which they believe have a promising future.
- ❖ Very few parents have shown preference of Social Science subjects like Economics, History and Political science keeping in view the preparation of civil services at the senior/higher secondary level and above.
- ❖ Most of the parents prioritize the subjects that align with professional aspirations e.g., engineering, medicine, computer science at the senior secondary level and above i.e. higher education level which indicated that Gujjar pastoralist parents have desire to provide professional education with the aim of their children becoming doctors and engineers. Therefore, Parents prioritize subjects that align with professional aspirations (for example engineering, medicine, career in computer science). Whereas some of the parents have given respect to the preferences of their wards which show that the parents have given space to their ward's interest.

School Preferences of Gujjar Pastoralists -

- ❖ The study found that there is a consensus on the importance of monitoring school performance for determination of preferences among the available choices despite many parents lacking formal education themselves. Parents understand that better school performance translates to better opportunities for their children. Parents prioritize schools having good academic performance, understanding that this is crucial for their children's academic and future professional success. Thus, the study revealed that monitoring school performance is considered crucial among Gujjar pastoralists for selecting the best educational institutions, ensuring children receive quality education that supports their future careers.
- ❖ The study found that majority of the parents mostly prefer government schools for their children's education due to poor socio-economic conditions and limited school choices in their localities. Thus, the government schools have been found

their first preference for education. Whereas the private schools are least preferred choice of the common Gujjar pastoralists parents of Rajouri district.

- ❖ Apart from the limited options of schools available in the locality and their low socio-economic status, the locale of the government school, availability of free education, government initiatives of ‘School Chalo Abhiyan’ etc are also found the significant factor of parents’ preference for government schools the education of their children.
- ❖ The Gujjar pastoralist parents and community members emphasized the need for better infrastructure and resources in the government schools.
- ❖ The study also found that majority of Gujjar pastoralist parents are uneducated or having low level of education but they prefer to educate their children. It has also been found that some parents aim to send their children to better schools in the cities for further education especially for higher education and better opportunities and prospects of the career, even if they are initially reliant on local schools.
- ❖ It has also been found in the present study that some of the parents expressed the requirement of teachers having proficiency in teaching Gojri medium of language along with the Urdu and English language. They expressed that it will minimize the language barrier among the Gujjar pastoralists students who are the first-generation learners and coming from the community where only Gojri language is spoken.
- ❖ The study found that the reliance on religious institutions as Maktabas and Madarsas have been found for basic education in the absence of formal schooling infrastructure.
- ❖ The study found that Gujjar pastoralists preferred mobile schools during the seasonal migration period as they provide opportunity of access to education during their seasonal migration. These schools have a very significance as they provide opportunity of access to education during their seasonal migration, which is a very crucial problem of Gujjar pastoralist community. The mobile schools also play important role in balancing traditional lifestyles with modern educational needs.

Educational Aspirations Affecting Preferences of Education -

Educational Aspirations of Parents

- ❖ Majority of the Gujjar pastoralists parents are uneducated but they have concern in determining preferences of education for their ward. Though, due to lack of education, they are not able to make decisions regarding the educational preferences of their children, however, they are actively involved and engaged in the process of making preferences of education for their wards.
- ❖ The educational backwardness of these parents become major hindrances in many educational decisions, due to which they are not able to contribute much for better educational attainments of their children, however, these parents believe that the educational attainment among the Gujjar pastoralists will improve the overall social status of their community. They also believe that educational attainment of Gujjar pastoralist students will increase the political representation of this community in future.
- ❖ The parents of this community have shown major concern for the transportation facility which causes barrier in the access of education. They have shown concern for better connectivity of roads and establishment of the schools in their locations for better educational opportunity of their children.
- ❖ The parents also expressed that due to non-availability of the Gojri medium teachers, the Gujjar pastoralists students are facing language barriers which causes low educational aspiration among the children and it should be taken into consideration for ensuring better education of the children of their community.
- ❖ Majority of the parents of the Gujjar pastoralist student believe that with the educational attainment of modern education, their children will improve their overall socio-economic conditions. In this way, their future will be secured by getting quality formal education which they call “modern education”.
- ❖ They also believe that with such modern education, their children can get government jobs that will make them economically capable and socially acceptable. It may also help them in overcoming the difficulties of their traditional profession of cattle rearing.

- ❖ Majority of the parents of Gujjar pastoralist children prefer Science streams for them followed by Computer Science and Mathematics. They believe that by learning Science, Mathematics and Computer Science, their children will become professionals like doctors and engineers and this will contribute significantly in uplifting the community.
- ❖ Few parents of Gujjar pastoralist children want to make their ward civil servants to serve the country. Thus the parents of the Gujjar pastoralist children are having very strong educational aspirations despite the fact that most of them are being uneducated or very less educated. The Gujjar pastoralist parents are looking forward to having Gojri medium teachers for achieving better educational pursuits of their children and also, better connectivity of roads from the schools to their localities so that it may improve further their educational attainment. During interview and focused group discussion, it was stated by the parents and community members that the educational aspiration of the parents have played significant role in making preferences of their children despite their lack of education which shows the significantly high educational aspiration for their wards.

Educational Aspirations of the Students:

To understand the educational aspirations of the students of Gujjar pastoralists community, the Educational Aspiration Test (EAT) of Dr. Yashmin Ghani Khan was administered on the 200 Gujjar pastoralist students selected through random sampling from the pool of the Gujjar pastoralists studying in 10 schools of Rajouri district.

It has been revealed by the administration of the above-mentioned tool that –

- ❖ Among the male Gujjar pastoralists students, 23 % of the male students are having above average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are highly realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals with high commitment for the goal. 40. % of the male students are having average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals but normal commitment for the goals. 37 % of the students are having below average level of educational aspirations which denotes that

they are in unrealistic level of the educational aspiration and they are lacking in deciding educational goals for their future.

- ❖ In the case of female Gujjar pastoralist students, 25 % of the female students are having above average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are highly realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals with high commitment for the goal. 47.0 % of the female students are having average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals but normal commitment for the goals. 28 % of the students are having below average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are in unrealistic level of the educational aspiration and they are lacking in deciding educational goals for their future.
- ❖ Total 24 % of the male and female students are having above average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are highly realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals with high commitment for the goal. Total 43.50 % of the male and female students are having average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals but normal commitment for the goals. 32.50 % of the male and female students are having below average level of educational aspirations which denote that they are in unrealistic level of the educational aspiration and they are lacking in deciding educational goals for their future.
- ❖ 22.58 % of the male students in rural areas of Rajouri district are having above average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are highly realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals with high commitment for the goal. 38.71 % of the male students in rural areas of Rajouri district are having average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are realistic in the educational aspirations and possess well defined educational goals but normal commitment for the goals. 38.71 % of the male students in rural areas of Rajouri district are having below average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are in unrealistic level of the

educational aspiration and they are lacking in deciding educational goals for their future.

- ❖ 28.57 % of the male students of Gujjar community in urban areas of Rajouri district are having above average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are highly realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals with high commitment for the goal. 57.14 % of the students in urban areas of Rajouri district are having average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are realistic in the educational aspirations and possess well defined educational goals but normal commitment for the goals. 14.29 % of the male students in the urban areas of Rajouri district, are having below average level of educational aspirations, which denotes that they are in unrealistic level of the educational aspiration and they are lacking in deciding educational goals for their future.
- ❖ Total 23 % of the male students of rural and urban areas together, are having above average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are highly realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals with high commitment for the goal. Total 40 % of the male students of rural and urban areas together, are having average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals but normal commitment for the goals. Total 37 % of the male students of rural and urban areas together, are having below average level of educational aspirations which denote that they are in unrealistic level of the educational aspiration and they are lacking in deciding educational goals for their future.
- ❖ 25.58 % of the female students in rural areas of Rajouri district are having above average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are highly realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals with high commitment for the goal. 44.19 % of the female students are having average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are realistic in the educational aspirations and possess well defined educational goals but normal commitment for the goals. 30.23 % of the female students of Gujjar community in rural areas of Rajouri district are having below

average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are in unrealistic level of the educational aspiration and they are lacking in deciding educational goals for their future.

- ❖ 21.43 % of the female students of Gujjar community in urban areas are having above average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are highly realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals with high commitment for the goal. 64.29 % of the female students of Gujjar community in urban areas are having average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are realistic in the educational aspirations and possess well defined educational goals but normal commitment for the goals. 14.29 % of the female students of Gujjar community in urban areas of Rajouri district, are having below average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are in unrealistic level of the educational aspiration and they are lacking in deciding educational goals for their future.
- ❖ Total 25 % of the female students residing in rural and urban areas, together are having above average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are highly realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals with high commitment for the goal. Total 47 % of the female students residing in rural and urban areas, together are having average level of educational aspirations which denotes that they are realistic in the educational aspiration and possess well defined educational goals but normal commitment for the goals. Total 28 % of the female students residing in rural and urban areas, together are having below average level of educational aspirations which denote that they are in unrealistic level of the educational aspiration and they are lacking in deciding educational goals for their future.

Thus the study found that, though approximately one-third of the population is having high educational aspirations, the majority of students have average or below-average levels of educational aspiration. It has been also found that female students' educational aspirations are generally better than those of male students, indicating the absence of gender discrimination.

- The study found very high educational aspirations among the parents whereas, high and average educational aspiration among more than 50% of the students

of the Gujjar pastoralists community in Rajouri district of Jammu region. Thus it may be concluded that the high educational aspirations among the parents for their children influenced by various factors such as peer influence, peer motivation, peer competition, motivation from success stories, and stimulation from social causes as found in the interview and focussed group discussion and high and average level of educational aspiration among more than 50% of the students may be utilized as a resource to bring the students of this marginalized community into the main stream.

Findings of Objective-2

Objective-2 *To Study the Patterns of Education among Gujjar Pastoralists of Rajouri District of Jammu Region.*

Pattern-1: Informal Education among Gujjar Pastoralists of Rajouri District of Jammu Region

- ❖ In this study it has been found that the pattern of education among Gujjar pastoralists of Rajouri district is deeply linked with their culture. The informal education is provided by the family with day-to-day life activities, through different skills, rituals, traditional ceremonies, religious beliefs and values.
- ❖ Traditional knowledge of the community including professional knowledge is transmitted from elder generation to young generations through oral education in the form of informal education in the family and community.
- ❖ In true sense the experiential learning is given in the form of informal education as the younger generation learns through hand-on experiences in close contact to the elder generation.
- ❖ The study revealed that during the interview and focused group discussion with Gujjar pastoralist parents and community members, it has been found that the Gujjar pastoralist parents preferred to send their wards at Mosques, Maktabas and Madarsas for the religious education at very early age.
- ❖ The children of Gujjar pastoralists start education in the families with the informal education. Due to nomadic life style, the children migrate with the families. At the age of 4-5 years, the children of these communities need formal

education but due to migration they are unable to enroll in the formal education setup. To fulfill the gap, the government initiated mobile schools as an alternative to formal education system. The children of these migratory tribal community get further support of education from these seasonal schools known as mobile schools which are the alternative form of education. Thus, mobile schools are the alternative form of schools, having blending of informal education and formal education, providing access to education to the Gujjar pastoralist students.

- ❖ Under the Mobile school system, makeshift classes are set up for the children between April and September. At the end of this period, the students can return to their 'home' schools or continue to study in the mobile schools which also move with the migratory populations to their winter locations or summer locations as per the seasonal requirement.
- ❖ During focused group discussion and interaction with Gujjar pastoralists community, the teachers working in mobile schools, parents, community members, and students passed out from the mobile schools, it was revealed that - “these seasonal schools are the backbone of the elementary education of Gujjar Pastoralists children”
- ❖ In this study it has been found that the pattern of informal education among Gujjar pastoralists of Rajouri district is deeply linked with their culture. The informal education is provided by the family with day-to-day life activities, through different family occupational skills, rituals, traditional ceremonies, religious beliefs and values.
- ❖ The study revealed that as a part of informal education, the Gujjar pastoralist parents prefer to send their children at Mosques, Maktabs and Madarsas for the religious education at very early age.
- ❖ The families transmit the customary practices and rituals through observation, interaction with community members, story-telling, celebration of family functions, social and religious functions and festivals etc.

Pattern-2 Non-Formal Education

- ❖ The study revealed that some of the Gujjar Pastoralists parents also prefer to send their wards to the carpet weaving centres, where the Gujjar Pastoralists students learn basic skills of carpet weaving which plays a significant role for the socio-economic development of these students.
- ❖ The study revealed that Gujjar pastoralists parents preferred to send their wards in anganwadi centres, these anganwadi centres plays a significant role to bring health awareness, and child development activities among these children. All these non-formal education centres play essential role for rural developments and make the Gujjar pastoralist children more skilful.
- ❖ The study also found that Gujjar pastoralist children assist their parents to manage the ranching activities. It has been revealed by the parents that our children help us in cattle rearing work, where these children learn how to herd the animals. It is the part of non-formal education where these children some basic skills which help them to develop their Socio-economic conditions.
- ❖ The study found that some parents send their wards in the families of other communities as a domestic servant which is the also a source of income for them.
- ❖ The study also revealed that Gujjar pastoralist parents send their wards at knitting and training centres, where these children learn some basic skills of knitting and weaving which plays a significant role to make them skilful.

Thus, we may conclude that the non-formal education centres are very important source for providing non-formal education to the Gujjar pastoralists. We can say that these centres are playing role, as a source of vocational education. Some of these centres or work places which are providing non formal education are:

- Carpet Weaving Centres
- Shepherds/ Cattle Herds Centres
- Crewel Embroidery Centres
- Domestic Servants in the Families
- Knitting and Training Centres

- Anganwadi Centres.

5.2.3 Pattern- 3 Formal Education

- ❖ The study found that the formal education among Gujjar pastoralists starts with the primary education which is mostly provided by the Government Schools. These schools are often the first point of formal education for the Gujjar Pastoralists children, laying the foundation for their academic journey.
- ❖ The study revealed that most of the Gujjar pastoralist children start their education in government primary schools at the age of five years, which are widely accessible across the district. These schools offer free education. The government provides uniforms, books, and mid-day meals, encouraging the enrolment and attendance. Despite these efforts the dropout rate is very high among Gujjar pastoralist students which need to be addressed.
- ❖ The study found one more important pattern of formal education among Gujjar pastoralists during the migration and seasonal movement in upper reaches pastures of Rajouri district is “Mobile Primary Schools” as an alternative form of formal education system which is a good initiative taken by the government of Jammu and Kashmir, playing an important role to reduce the dropout rate among Gujjar pastoralist students.
- ❖ The study found the pattern of secondary education among Gujjar pastoralists in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, encompasses various institutions, including government schools, Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS), Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs), Navodaya Vidyalayas (NVs), Gujjar and Bakkarwal Hostels, and private schools.
- ❖ The higher secondary education pattern for Gujjar pastoralists in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, is shaped by a variety of factors including monitoring school performance for better educational preferences for those who can afford, and reliance on nearby government schools due to socio-economic constraints.

Findings of Objective-3

Objective-3 To study the affect of geographical, socio-cultural and socio-economic factors on educational preferences and patterns of Gujjar pastoralists of Rajouri district of Jammu region.

Major Findings on Geographical Factors

- ❖ The study explored that the Rajouri district is characterized by its mountainous terrain, which affects the accessibility and availability of educational infrastructure. Villages are often dispersed across difficult terrain, making travel to schools challenging for children.
- ❖ The study revealed that the severe winters and moderate summers in the Rajouri district create climatic difficulty resulting in seasonal migration of Gujjar pastoralists moving to lower altitude in winters and higher altitude in summers which affect the educational patterns and preferences of the community. The seasonal schools become the only ray of hope in these difficult situations.
- ❖ The study found that because of the geographical hardship, the numbers of schools in such remote areas are very less and the students find it difficulty in reaching the schools due to distance from their residence. This has become a major factor in increasing dropout. Apart from this maintaining the quality with adequate infrastructure has witnessed a major problem affecting the attendance and enrolment of the students.

Major Findings on Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting the Education of Gujjar Pastoralists of Rajouri District:

- ❖ The focused group discussion and interview data revealed the following major socio-cultural factors which are affecting the education of Gujjar pastoralists of Rajouri district.
- ❖ The study found that seasonal migration disrupts the continuity in education of Gujjar pastoralists and it also creates difficulty for consistent school attendance which results the high drop-out rate among Gujjar pastoralist students of Rajouri district of Jammu region.

- ❖ The study found that Gujjars pastoralists are mostly dependent on cattle rearing profession which is only the source of income for them, it limits their ability to pay for educational expenses such as school fees, uniforms, and study materials.
- ❖ The study found that Gujjar pastoralists' community is much closed community having traditional knowledge and pastoral skills frequently take precedence over formal education. The community highly values their skills such as herding, animal husbandry, and seasonal migration patterns.
- ❖ The study found that the Gujjar pastoralist students face social exclusion and discrimination, due to which they may not be able to access high-quality education.
- ❖ The study found that early marriage and child labour are the responsible factors Affecting the education among Gujjar pastoralist students which results high drop- out rate especially among girls, because of these cultural practices such as the expectation that children will assist their parents to manage the pastoral activities is the another reason for high drop-out rate among Gujjar pastoralists of Rajouri district.
- ❖ The study found lack of awareness among the Gujjar pastoralists community about the advantages of formal education is another issue which needs to be addressed.
- ❖ The study found that schools in tribal majority areas of Rajouri district are suffering due to inadequate infrastructure, insufficient teaching staff, and lack of basic facilities which discouraging parents to provide quality education to their children.
- ❖ The study found medium of instruction issues among Gujjar pastoralist students. During the interviews and Focus Group Discussion with Gujjar pastoralists, it was found that the curriculum does not respect their diversity and Gojri language. Sometime Gujjars pastoralists find themselves hesitant in speaking in front of the teachers because of the language barrier. They feel more comfortable when someone talk in their own language at the school premise. However, they express that most of teachers prefer English and Hindi language in the classroom. They do not respect their local language.

Socio-Economic Factors

- ❖ The study found that most of the Gujjar pastoralists depend mainly on pastoralism for their livelihood. They involve their children in cattle rearing as readily available workforce and domestic works. Their poor economic conditions force them to choose the cattle rearing for earning money for minimum livelihoods and satisfy their bare needs. The Gujjar community in Jammu and Kashmir is deemed to be living Below the Poverty Line (BPL), which signifies that they have a low level of living standards and a miserable life. Despite the fact that, most members of the Gujjar community are involved in cattle rearing (a form of pastoralism), they are cut off from the rest of the society (Ahmed & Ahmed 2015).
- ❖ The study also found that some Gujjar pastoralists have moved towards agriculture sector that also require seasonal land labours and the condition has not changed for them also. The education does not get the priority due to their low socio-economic conditions and economic necessity succeeds over the educational pursuits, consequently, children of the Gujjar pastoralist community remain engaged in helping with live stock, agriculture and other related activities which becomes a very important factor Affecting the education of their children.

Findings of Objective-4

Objective-4: To Study the Educational Problems of Gujjar Pastoralist Students in Rajouri District of Jammu Region

Major Findings on Educational Problems of Gujjar Pastoralist Students in Rajouri District of Jammu Region:

- ❖ The study found that there are total 10 major problems that Gujjar pastoralist students have faced in their academic career. These problems are non-availability of medium of teachers, no transport facility/connectivity, poor economic conditions, communication barriers, No learning atmosphere, low standard of education in seasonal schools, migration disturbances, non-availability of schools at locale, infrastructure issues in schools, and exclusion of gojri subject from the J&K Board of School Education curriculum.

- ❖ It has been found that Gujjar pastoralists students have faced the problem of non availability of medium of teachers, as the Henry Garret Ranking results shows total score 63.45 which means it is first and the foremost problem among the Gujjar pastoralists students which needs to be addressed.
- ❖ It has been found in this study that the second major problem faced by the Gujjar pastoralist students is no transport facility/connectivity for them which shows 56.52 total score as per the Henry Garret Ranking result, which indicates that it is the second problematic issue among the Gujjar pastoralist students which needs to be tackled.
- ❖ The present study revealed that poor economic conditions faced by the Gujjar pastoralists students as shown in the Henry Garret Ranking score 55.30, which indicates that it is the third problematic issue among the Gujjar pastoralists students which needs to be addressed.
- ❖ The study found that the fourth major problem faced by the Gujjar pastoralists students is communication barriers which comprises 54.98 score as per Henry Garret Ranking result which indicates that it is the fourth major problematic issue among the Gujjar pastoralists students
- ❖ According to the Henry Garret Ranking the fifth major problem faced by the Gujjar pastoralist students is no learning atmosphere at govt. schools which indicates the major issue among the Gujjar pastoralist students.
- ❖ It has been found that the sixth major problem faced by the Gujjar pastoralists students is the low standard of education in seasonal schools which comprises 51.44 score as per the results of Henry Garret ranking method among the Gujjar pastoralists.
- ❖ Similarly, the seventh major problem faced by the Gujjar pastoralists students is migration disturbances which comprises 50.86 score as per the Henry Garret ranking results, which indicates another major issue among the Gujjar pastoralists students.

- ❖ The study explored the eighth major problem among Gujjar pastoralists students is non availability of school at locale which comprises 45.98 score as per the Henry Garret ranking.
- ❖ The study revealed that infrastructural issues in schools is another major problem among the Gujjar pastoralist students which comprises 40.07 score in Henry Garret ranking results which indicates that infrastructural issues in schools is the ninth major problematic issue among Gujjar pastoralists students.
- ❖ The study also found that exclusion of gojri subject from the J&K Board of School Education curriculum is another major problem faced by the Gujjar pastoralists students which comprises 27.67 score as per the results of Henry Garret ranking method which indicates that the exclusion of gojri subject is the tenth major problematic issue among the Gujjar pastoralists students in schools.
- ❖ It has been revealed by most of the Gujjar pastoralist students that the Gojri language is easy and comfortable for them to understand, but while writing they mostly prefer Urdu and English. However, the students said that the Gojri language is the most preferred language among the Gujjar Pastoralist Community, but, neglected at the school level. Therefore, the students demanded the inclusion of Gojri subject in Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education curriculum which helps to reduce the language barriers among the Gujjar pastoralists and also helps them to ensure better education. All these issues needs to be addressed on priority basis so that it can bridge the gap in education among Gujjar pastoralists community.

Findings of Objective-5:

Objective-5- To Study the Initiatives taken by the Government for the Education of Gujjar Pastoralists in Rajouri District of Jammu Region.

Financial Support to Gujjar Pastoralists Community

The study found that financial support for uniforms, books, and scholarships have significantly encouraged their interest in ensuring better access and participation in education.

The study also revealed that the community leaders and parents also advocated that the scholarships, financial support for uniforms and books help to bridge this gap, and such type of financial assistance may be helpful in encouraging the poor people for educating their children. With the help of financial support, adequate resources may be provided for quality education.

5.5.2 Government's Affective Role and Policies in Supporting Education among Gujjar Pastoralists

The study found that the Government of India and the Government of Jammu and Kashmir have taken various steps to uplift the educational attainment of Gujjar Pastoralist students in Jammu and Kashmir particularly Rajouri district, which includes as under:

- Mobile Schools for Gujjar Pastoralists
- Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan
- Girls Hostel Scheme
- National Scheme of Incentives to Girls for Secondary Education
- Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage
- Scheme of Vocational Education
- National Merit-cum-Means Scholarship Scheme
- Scheme for construction and running of Girls' Hostel for students of secondary and higher secondary schools
- Scholarship schemes for Gujjar Pastoralist students
- National Scholarships

Apart from these schemes the other provisions includes free uniform and books, several scholarship schemes, financial assistance to the Gujjar pastoralists parents for their occupation etc are the major steps taken by Government which are playing significant role in the upliftment of the educational attainment of Gujjar Pastoralist students.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that majority of the Gujjar pastoralist parents are uneducated but they have concern in making preferences of education for their ward. Though, due to lack of education, they are not able to make better decisions regarding the educational

preferences of their children. Apart from this, the educational backwardness of their parents become major hindrances for many educational decisions, due to which they couldn't make better educational attainments for their children. However, the parents believe that the educational attainment among the Gujjar pastoralists will improve the overall social status of their community. They also believe that educational attainment of Gujjar pastoralist students will increase the political representation of the community in future. However, the parents are more concerned regarding the better connectivity of roads and school locations for better enrolment of their children.

The parents also expressed that due to non-availability of the Gojri medium teachers, the Gujjar pastoralists students are facing language barriers which should be taken into consideration for ensuring better education. Furthermore, majority of the parents of the Gujjar pastoralists student believe that the educational attainment of their children will improve their overall socio-economic conditions and many of the parents believe that their children's future will be secured by getting quality formal education which they call "modern education". They also believe that with such education, their children can get government jobs which will make them economically capable and socially acceptable. It may also free them from the difficulties of their traditional profession of cattle rearing.

Moreover, majority of the parents of Gujjar pastoralist children want to choose science streams for their children, followed by computer and mathematics. They believe that taking science, their children will become doctors and engineers and serve the community. Few parents of Gujjar pastoralist children want to make their ward civil servants so that they can serve the country. Therefore, the overall result reveals that the parents of the Gujjar pastoralist children are having a very strong educational aspiration despite the fact that most of them are uneducated or less educated. The Gujjar pastoralist parents are looking forward to having Gojri medium teachers for better educational pursuits of their children. Further, better connectivity of roads from the schools to their localities so that it may improve their educational attainment.

The study concluded that the Gujjars' majority population is mostly involved in cultural activities as evidenced by their social structure. It also recognises that Scheduled Tribes are, in some ways, repositories of indigenous knowledge and

wisdom. Results of the present study indicated that Gujjars are more connected and linked with their traditional occupational activities and as compared to the other scheduled tribes communities of J&K. Gujjars have a low literacy rate and they are more deprived or negligible towards education which needs to be addressed.

Despite the Gujjar Pastoral population's engagement in primary and secondary education, tertiary education has been limited due to lack of resources and infrastructure for higher education, educational awareness and modernization. The study concluded that most of the parents and community members considered the importance of mobile schools and suggested that the new mobile schools should be opened in the areas of Gujjar Pastoralists and quality of education in mobile schools should be improved and also the existing mobile schools should be made functional so that the quality education can be ensured and maintained.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Educational implication is one of the most important feature of any research. Each research must contribute in different fields. In the present study, the researcher tried to explore, the educational culture, preferences and different trends and patterns among Gujjar pastoralists. Therefore the implications of the study are as follows:

- ❖ This study helps us to know the educational preferences of Gujjar pastoralist students studying in different government schools, mobile schools and private schools.
- ❖ This study can be helpful to understand the educational aspirations of Gujjar pastoralist students, parents and community members.
- ❖ This study can be helpful to know the different educational patterns among tribal students, for instance the formal education patterns, informal education patterns and non formal education patterns.
- ❖ The finding of this study will be helpful for the educationist to understand the overall educational preferences and educational patterns of these pastoralist communities with special reference to their cultural lifestyle and lifestyle.
- ❖ This study can be helpful to understand the socio-cultural perspective of education amongst the tribal students.

- ❖ This study will be helpful for parents, teachers and community members to think about the educational problems faced by Gujjar pastoralist students in mobile schools.
- ❖ This study would be helpful to understand the problems of seasonal migrated students.
- ❖ This study would be helpful to explore the social and cultural perspective of education among Gujjar pastoralist communities.
- ❖ This study would be helpful for educational authorities to know the educational awareness among Gujjar pastoralist communities.
- ❖ This study will be helpful to know the different initiatives taken by the central and state government for the development tribal communities.
- ❖ This study revealed the demand of Gujjar pastoralists parents for the inclusion of Gojri subject in school curriculum of Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education, so that the linguistic issues can be addressed among these tribal pastoralists' students.
- ❖ As such the results of the present study would be fruitful to the Administrators, Educationists, sociologists, and future researchers who are interested to research on the educational scenario of these Gujjar pastoralist communities.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE POLICY MAKERS

- ❖ The Govt. should recruit Gojri medium teachers for enhancing the overall educational performance of the Gujjar pastoralist students.
- ❖ The educational authorities must include Gojri as a subject in school curriculum so that their ethnic culture can be promoted.
- ❖ The Govt. should open more schools to near the areas of Gujjar pastoralist tribes, so that the Gujjar pastoralist students may not face the problems of connectivity of schools from their homes.
- ❖ The mobile schools should be improved and also must be made functional, so that quality education can be ensured and maintained.

- ❖ The Govt. should enhance the funds for these remote schools so that they can improve the extra-co curricular activities in the schools.
- ❖ Govt. should provide adequate financial support to the Gujjar pastoralist students for their uniform, books and other scholarships as it will encourage their interest in the attainment of education.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TEACHERS

- ❖ It can be suggested to teachers to motivate the Gujjar pastoralist communities to enroll their children in schools so that it can help to bridge the educational gap among these tribal communities.
- ❖ Teachers should provide quality education to all the children, particularly the mobile school teachers should pay more attention to the Gujjar pastoralist students, so that the quality of education can be improved in these Mobile Primary Schools.
- ❖ It can be suggested to the teachers to organize awareness programme about the importance of education.
- ❖ Based on the findings of the study it can be suggested that teachers should pay extra attention to the Gujjar pastoralist students, and try to communicate with them in their local language.
- ❖ As the present study found that Gujjar pastoralist community is a very closed community, so it can be suggested to the teachers to respect the culture and language of these Gujjar pastoralist children enrolled in formal educational Institutions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PARENTS

- ❖ Parents should participate actively in school committees and parent-teacher meetings so that they are aware about the different educational performance of their children.
- ❖ Teachers should pay extra attention to students with below-average and average levels of educational aspirations to improve their educational attainment.

- ❖ Teachers need to be actively involved in their students' educational pursuits and should use a variety of instructional approaches designed to engage students and satisfy their intellectual needs.
- ❖ Parents should have positive attitude towards the educational choices of their children.
- ❖ Parents must have high educational aspirations and occupational aspirations regarding the education of their children.
- ❖ Based on the findings of the study it can be suggested to the parents to witness regularly and motivate their children to get higher education, so that their socio-economic conditions can be improved.
- ❖ It can be suggested to the parents to promote their culture, make sure their participation in different cultural activities.
- ❖ Parents should be aware about the progress of their children at school and make sure their children' participation in different curricular and co-curricular activities.
- ❖ It can be suggested to Gujjar pastoralist parents that they should be aware about the importance of mobile schools and other residential institutions which are specially meant for the tribal communities to bridge the gap of education.
- ❖ It can be suggested to the parents that they should show positive response to their children's education and cooperate with the school teachers in this regard to address the educational problems faced by the students in formal school setting.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE STUDENTS

- ❖ Based on the present study it can be suggested that they should be aware about the different initiatives and scholarship schemes provided by the state and central Government for their development.
- ❖ It can be suggested to the tribal Students to take part in social and cultural activities and never hesitate to communicate with other community members.
- ❖ Students should participate regularly in curricular and co-curricular activities.

- ❖ Students should understand their potential to choose the best choices for their future in the field of education.
- ❖ This study suggests that students should go to the class on regular basis in formal education system and try to motivate their parents to enroll them in high quality educational institutions.
- ❖ Students should understand the value of education and think about their parents' sacrifices toward education for their children.
- ❖ Students should participate in cultural activities and organize cultural event which reflects their culture at national, so that their culture can be promoted.
- ❖ Based on the finding of the study, it can be suggested that students should understand the importance of formal education, non formal education and informal education which is transmitted through their culture.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH STUDIES

- ❖ The present study is conducted only on preferences and patterns of Gujjar pastoralist students of Rajouri district, at elementary and secondary school level, therefore, further research studies can be conducted for higher education level in future.
- ❖ Ethnographic studies can be conducted on socio-cultural perspective of Gujjar pastoralist community.
- ❖ Further studies can be conducted on Mobile Schools, and seasonal migration issues of Gujjar Pastoralists.
- ❖ The present study is conducted only on rural areas of Rajouri district of Jammu region and particularly the Jammu and Kashmir Board of school education students' further studies can be conducted on other state and central board of school education.
- ❖ This study is only limited to Peeri village of Rajouri district of Jammu region, therefore further research studies can be conducted on other districts of Jammu and Kashmir.