

**A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF CULTURE AND
LIVELIHOOD CHANGES AMONG GUJJAR TRIBE IN
RAJOURI DISTRICT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR**

Thesis Submitted For the Award of the Degree of

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Sociology

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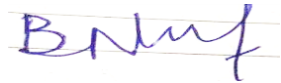


LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY, PUNJAB

2025

DECLARATION

I, hereby declared that the presented work in the thesis entitled “**A Sociological Analysis of Culture and Livelihood Changes Among Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir**” in fulfilment of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** is outcome of research work carried out by me under the supervision **Dr. Keshlata**, working as Assistant Professor, in the **School of Social Sciences of Lovely Professional University, Punjab, India**. In keeping with general practice of reporting scientific observations, due acknowledgements have been made whenever work described here has been based on findings of other investigator. This work has not been submitted in part or full to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree.



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the work reported in the Ph.D. thesis entitled “**A Sociological Analysis of Culture and Livelihood Changes Among Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir**” submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the reward of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** in the **School of Social Sciences**, is a research work carried out by **Bushra Nizami, 42000598**, is bonafide record of his/her original work carried out under my supervision and that no part of thesis has been submitted for any other degree, diploma or equivalent course.



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ABSTRACT

The study presents an in-depth sociological analysis of the cultural and livelihood transformations occurring among the Gujjar tribe in the Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir. The study focuses on four key areas: changes in family and marriage systems, shifts in cultural practices and occupational status, the socio-economic impact of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and livelihood challenges faced by Gujjar women. Through a qualitative approach, the research explores the evolving socio-cultural dynamics within the tribe by employing in-depth interviews with both community members and key stakeholders. The data reveals a notable shift from extended to nuclear family structures influenced by modernization, socio-economic pressures and the influence of social media. Traditional kinship practices are being replaced by more contemporary smaller family units and marriage customs have evolved with delayed marriages and a rise in exogamous unions becoming more common. In addition, the research highlights significant changes in gender roles with responsibilities becoming more shared between men and women. These changes signal broader transformations in the tribe's cultural fabric driven by both internal pressures, external modern influences and shifts in religious perspectives. Education has emerged as a main factor providing opportunities for younger generations to pursue careers in both traditional and modern sectors. However, economic barriers and limited educational opportunities remain significant challenges.

The study also provides a critical examination of the socio-economic impact of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) on the Gujjar tribe's livelihood patterns. While the FRA has provided land tenure rights and fostered opportunities for forest-based economic activities its implementation has faced significant challenges such as bureaucratic delays and limited community engagement. Despite these obstacles the FRA has supported occupational diversification and entrepreneurship offering pathways to economic development. However, the research points out that further community involvement and improved access to markets are necessary to fully realize the benefits of the FRA. The livelihood issues faced by Gujjar women are another important focus of the study which identifies patriarchal norms as a barrier to economic independence. Yet, opportunities for empowerment through education, vocational training and microfinance initiatives are

emerging although cultural barriers continue to hinder progress. Therefore, the study emphasises the importance of inclusive policies and enhanced awareness of government support programs to support sustainable development within the Gujjar community. The findings emphasize the need for a balanced approach that respects the tribe's cultural heritage while enabling socio-economic progress in the face of modernization education and social change.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

A.D.	- Anno Domini (used for historical dates)
CSKHPKV	- Chaudhary Sarwan Kumar Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishwavidyalaya
COVID-19	- Coronavirus Disease 2019
FGD	- Focus Group Discussion
FGDs	- Focused Group Discussions
FRA	- Forest Rights Act
GDP	- Gross Domestic Product
GER	- Gross Enrolment Ratio
ICT	- Information and Communication Technology
IRDP	- Integrated Rural Development Programme
MGNREGA	- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NGOs	- Non-Governmental Organizations
NSSO	- National Sample Survey Office
PDS	- Public Distribution System
PRI	- Panchayati Raj Institutions
R&D	- Research and Development
SDG	- Sustainable Development Goals
ST	- Scheduled Tribe
NST	- Not Scheduled Tribe
UN	- United Nations
UNESCO	- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UT	- Union Territory
WFO	- Women Farmers' Organizations
%	- Percent
KM	- Kilometre

Chapter – I
Introduction

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The tribes have been shaped by historical, social and cultural transformations. Initially tribes were small, self-sustaining and kin-based communities relying on hunting gathering and later agriculture. The colonial era disrupted tribal life leading to displacement and economic dependency. Post-independence tribes received legal recognition but faced challenges from modernization, industrialization and displacement due to development projects. Despite these challenges tribes have adapted by diversifying into agriculture, industries and modern economies while retaining traditional cultural practices. Today many tribes participate in education, politics and mainstream society while still facing issues of land rights and socio-economic development (Bhattacharyya, 2021).¹ A tribe represents a complex social group characterized by shared ancestry, common cultural traditions, distinct territorial boundaries and a collective identity that transcends individual experiences. Tribes are defined by their unique linguistic patterns, endogamous social structures, traditional governance systems and deep-rooted cultural practices that distinguish them from mainstream societies. Within the global landscape tribes emerge as fundamental social units that preserve indigenous knowledge maintain intricate social relationships and demonstrate remarkable resilience in adapting to changing environmental and cultural dynamics. In the Indian context, tribes (often referred to as Adivasis) constitute approximately 8.6% of the population representing diverse ethnic groups with rich historical backgrounds predominantly inhabiting forest and mountainous regions and maintaining distinctive social, economic and cultural practices that reflect their ancestral heritage and collective wisdom. (Sharma, 2022).² These communities are characterized by their strong communal bonds, traditional ecological knowledge, unique social organization and a profound connection to their natural environment making them critical subjects of anthropological research and cultural preservation efforts. India is home to a rich tapestry of tribal communities each contributing to the nation's cultural diversity. With over 700

recognized tribes they constitute around 8.6% of India's population. Spread across various states from the forests of Chhattisgarh to the hills of Nagaland tribal groups like the Gonds, Bhills, Santhals and Gujjars preserve distinct languages, traditions and life styles known for their close relationship with nature tribes often practice sustainable livelihoods like agriculture, hunting and craftsmanship (Majumdar, 2022).³ Despite their vibrant heritage many tribes face challenges such as displacement, poverty and loss of cultural identity highlighting the need for inclusive development and preservation efforts. The Gujjar tribe in Jammu and Kashmir benefits from several constitutional provisions and legal protections aimed at safeguarding their rights. The Indian Constitution's Articles 15 and 46 guarantee Scheduled Tribes—including the Gujjars—protection from discrimination and encourage their educational and economic uplifting. The amended Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order, 2024 improves their rights and representation. The Forest Rights Act, 2006 gives land and resource rights acknowledging their traditional reliance on forest resources. Furthermore, encouraging their socioeconomic development is the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004, which grants reserves in employment and education (Rahi, 2024).⁴

There are a great variety of tribal communities living in Jammu and Kashmir each with distinct social and cultural identity. Among the notable tribes in the area are the Baltis, Bakarwals, Gaddis and Gujjars. Mostly pastoralists with a nomadic way of life and seasonal migration with their animals the Gujjars and Bakarwals Whereas the Balti people live in freezing desert sections of Ladakh keeping their Tibetan-influenced culture, the Gaddis mostly found in the hilly areas practice both pastoralism and agriculture. Emphasizing the need of focused developmental support these tribes struggle with issues including restricted access to education, healthcare and livelihood opportunities despite their rich customs. Comprising about 30.31% of the population of Rajouri District the Gujjars are a sizable tribe. The 2011 census shows that Rajouri has a total population of 642,415, of which Gujjars make a significant proportion. They mostly live in the blocks with maximum concentrations in Rajouri (45.30%) and Budhal (52.50%). With about 80% of the people employed in the main sector agricultural activities predominate. With just 14.1% of some blocks literate their rate is still low. With around 60% of men and 58% of

women less than 24 years of age the Gujjar population is young. Speaking Gojari, they keep the region's traditional pastoral and agricultural way of life (Dwivedi, 2018).⁵

The Gujjar tribe of Rajouri District is undergoing profound changes due to modernization affecting their traditional way of life including family systems, cultural practices and occupations. Traditional joint families are gradually shifting to nuclear setups and marriage customs are influenced by education and urban exposure. Culturally modernity is eroding folk traditions with younger generations adopting mainstream lifestyles (Khan, 2021).⁶ The shift from pastoralism to agriculture and wage labour reflects shrinking grazing lands and limited opportunities in traditional livelihoods. The implementation of the Forest Rights Act has had mixed socio-economic impacts benefiting some while marginalizing others. Education has been very important in creating new job possibilities that raise understanding of health, sanitation and social rights and enable women to engage in economic activities therefore promoting financial independence and better standards of life. Social media has changed young expectations by combining conventional ideas with popular cultural standards therefore hastening cultural changes and questioning of old ideals. These developments draw attention to the conflict between maintaining cultural identity and adjusting to socioeconomic conditions calling for inclusive development honouring the legacy of the Gujjar people development that respects the Gujjar community's heritage. (Sharma 2020)⁷ Including Scheduled Tribes (STs) in Jammu and Kashmir has raised awareness of the socioeconomic difficulties underprivileged people experience. The shift has impacted the Gujjar tribe since it forces discussions on their identity, rights and integration inside more general tribal frameworks while also posing competition for resources and government advantages. The adoption of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill 2024 notably affects the Gujjar people in terms of rights, resources and representation. (Ahmad, 2024)⁸. It strengthens their legal safeguards therefore increasing access to government social programs, education and job possibilities. Better access to land, forest resources, and natural assets brought about by the amendment also helps to enhance their way of life. Politically, the measure guarantees more Gujjar community involvement in decision-

making organizations thereby enabling them to fight for their demands and more successfully support regional development. (Bhat, 2022)⁹

1.2 INDIAN TRIBES AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE LIVELIHOODS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

With about 700 different tribes constituting around 8.6% of India's total population, the nation has an amazing tapestry of tribal communities. Spaced over several geographical areas these indigenous people—also known as Adivasis—have the highest concentrations in states such Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand and Maharashtra. The tribal landscape is characterized by remarkable diversity encompassing unique cultural practices, languages and social structures that have evolved through centuries of adaptation to varied environmental conditions. The main prominent tribes include the Bhil (the largest tribe with over 10 million people) the Gond (second largest with 9 million) the Santhal (third largest with 6 million), and the Munda (fourth largest with 5 million). These communities are distinguished by their deep connection to nature traditional knowledge systems and distinctive economic practices involving hunting, gathering, agriculture and handicrafts. Despite their rich cultural heritage tribal communities face significant challenges including economic marginalization, land displacement, limited access to education and the ongoing struggle to preserve their cultural identities in an increasingly modernized world. (Ghurye, 1980)¹⁰ Their resilience and ability to maintain unique traditions while adapting to changing landscapes make them a crucial component of India's complex social fabric and cultural diversity. (Von Furer-Haimen Dorf & Von, 1982).¹¹

Jammu and Kashmir is home to a diverse array of tribes that play a crucial role in the region's rich cultural tapestry and socioeconomic landscape. According to the official Jammu and Kashmir Scheduled Tribes order of 1989 the region recognizes 12 scheduled tribes, including Balti, Beda, Boto, Brokpa, Changpa, Gujjar, Bakarwal, Gaddi, and Sippi. The Gujjar tribe stands out as the largest tribal community constituting approximately 69% of the total tribal population in the Union Territory with an estimated population of around 1,093,852 individuals. These tribes have traditionally maintained a deep symbiotic

relationship with their natural environment practicing nomadic pastoralism, herding and mountain agriculture. (Warikoo, 2000)¹²

The Gujjars and Bakarwals, in particular represent quintessential nomadic pastoral communities who migrate seasonally in search of grazing lands maintaining a unique lifestyle deeply connected to livestock rearing. In districts like Rajouri these tribes comprise significant population percentages with Gujjars representing around 35% of the district's population. Their traditional occupations involve small-scale land cultivation, cattle rearing and living in modest dwellings often facing economic challenges with a majority living below the poverty line. The tribes' cultural identity is characterized by distinctive linguistic practices with the Gujjar community speaking Gojri, Kashmiri, Hindi, Punjabi and maintaining traditional dress like the Dastar (long turban) and specific cultural practices. Despite their rich heritage these tribal communities face significant socioeconomic challenges including limited access to healthcare, education and infrastructure which threatens their traditional way of life and cultural continuity in the rapidly changing landscape of Jammu and Kashmir. (Shah, et al; 2015)¹³

1.3 CULTURAL AND LIVELIHOOD TRANSITIONS IN GUJJAR TRIBE

The Gujjar tribe traditionally a pastoral and semi-nomadic community has experienced significant impacts on their cultural and livelihood practices due to modernization, urbanization and policy changes. This transition has shaped their way of life in various ways both positively and negatively.

Livelihood Changes

Loss of Traditional Livelihoods Traditionally many Gujjars relied on animal husbandry particularly cattle and sheep herding with the encroachment of urban areas reduced access to grazing land and environmental changes their ability to maintain these pastoral livelihoods has been severely affected. Many have been forced to move to urban areas to find alternative employment (Crisp et al; 2012)¹⁴ **Agricultural Shifts** Some Gujjar communities that had access to agricultural land began transitioning from pastoralism to farming however this shift often comes with challenges such as lack of access to modern

farming tools, techniques and markets. It has made their transition into agriculture difficult and sometimes economically unviable (Kostov & Lingard, 2004)¹⁵. Migration for Work The need for stable income has led many Gujjars to migrate to cities in search of wage labour in industries like construction or even to work as daily wage earners in urban markets. The migration has led to a breakdown of the traditional joint family system and the formation of nuclear families especially in urban centres (Sahni, 2015)¹⁶. Various government schemes aimed at empowering rural communities including the Gujjars have attempted to provide subsidies, loans and education. However, the implementation of these programs often faces challenges such as bureaucratic inefficiencies and corruption (Sharma, 2014)¹⁷.

Cultural Transition

Changing Social Structure Traditionally the Gujjars followed a tribal-based social structure with strong kinship ties. However, with the increasing influence of modern education and the spread of social media these traditional bonds are weakening. The younger generation in particular is more likely to adopt modern values and lifestyles leading to a shift away from their cultural roots (Inglehart, 2018)¹⁸. Education and modernization increased access to education has helped many Gujjars break out of poverty with more people entering schools and colleges. While education has opened doors to new opportunities it has also contributed to cultural erosion as younger generations embrace urban values, languages and lifestyles leaving behind traditional practices. Impact on Language the Gujjar community speaks their own dialect but the rise of national languages (such as Hindi, Urdu, English) has led to a decline in the use of the Gojri language. The language shift poses a risk to the preservation of their cultural identity and heritage (Akintayo, 2024)¹⁹. Religion and Rituals play a significant role in culture while majority of the Gujjar tribal people in Rajouri district are Muslims but the influence of modern lifestyles however has diluted traditional religious practices younger members of the community may be less inclined to follow ancient rituals and customs favouring a more secular and modern approach to spirituality.

Gender Roles and Rights in traditional Gujjar society's gender roles were well-defined with women often performing domestic duties and supporting pastoral activities with modernization there has been a shift in gender roles with more Gujjar women seeking education work outside the home and greater autonomy. However, resistance to these changes exists in some segments. (Kehan, 2024)²⁰. The Gujjar community faces a crucial moment where they need to navigate the complexities of change while holding onto the essence of their identity. The opportunities that come with modernization like better education more employment options and improved access to healthcare have certainly contributed to their development. These aspects help improved quality of life especially for younger generations and offer avenues that might have been closed off to previous generations. (Mushtaq & Mushtaq, 2024)²¹. Though, the downside is that these transitions often come with a loss of traditional practices, values and ways of life. The erosion of their native language the shift from communal living to more individualistic lifestyles and the weakening of familial ties due to migration and urbanization are significant challenges. These changes can create a sense of cultural fragmentation where the younger generation might struggle to reconcile their modern identities with their ancestral heritage. (Keshlata, 2023)²².

The real challenge for the Gujjar community is to embrace modern opportunities without letting go of what makes their culture unique. It might mean finding ways to incorporate traditional practices into their modern lives preserving languages and passing down values and stories all while ensuring they remain open to the benefits of education technology and economic growth. (Daily Excelsior, 2023)²³. There is a role for local government, cultural institutions and the Gujjars themselves in fostering this balance and supporting initiatives that promote both cultural preservation and development. (Govindarajulu et al; 2023)²⁴. For such efforts to be effective there needs to be consistent engagement with the Gujjar community to ensure their voice is heard and their unique challenges are addressed. This could involve community driven initiatives where local leaders and members are empowered to take charge of their development ensuring both preservation and growth. (Koul and Singh, 2023)²⁵.

Table 1.3.1. Population of scheduled tribes and their percentage in different states of India

S.No.	India/ states/UTs	Total populations	Tribal population	Tribal Population (in percentage)
1	India	1,270,272,105	84,326,240	8.9%
2	Jammu & Kashmir	12,548,926	1,493,299	11.9%
3	Himachal Pradesh	6,856,509	392,126	5.7%
4	Punjab	27,704,236	NST	NST
5	Chandigarh	1,054,686	NST	NST
6	Uttarakhand	10,116,752	291,903	2.9%
7	Haryana	25,353,081	NST	NST
8	Delhi	16,753,235	NST	NST
9	Rajasthan	68,548,437	9238,534	13.5%
10	Uttar Pradesh	199,581,477	1,134,273	0.6%
11	Bihar	103,804,637	1,336,573	1.3%
12	Sikkim	607,688	206,360	33.8%
13	Arunachal Pradesh	1,382,611	951,821	68.8%
14	Nagaland	1,980,602	1,710,973	86.5%
15	Manipur	2,721,756	902,740	35.1%
16	Mizoram	1,091,014	1,036,115	94.4%
17	Tripura	3,671,032	1,166,813	31.8%
18	Meghalaya	2,964,007	2,555,861	86.1%
19	Assam	31,169,272	3,884,871	12.4%
20	West Bengal	91,342,736	5,296,953	5.8%
21	Jharkhand	32,966,238	8,645,042	26.2%
22	Odisha	41,947,358	9,590,756	22.8%
23	Chhattisgarh	25,540,196	7,822,902	30.6%
24	Madhya Pradesh	72,597,565	15,316,784	21.1%
25	Gujarat	60,383,328	8,917,174	14.8%
26	Daman & Diu	242,911	15,365	6.3%

27	D & N Haveli	342,853	178,564	52%
28	Maharashtra	112,372,972	10,510,213	9.4%
29	Andhra Pradesh	84,665,533	5,918,073	7%
30	Karnataka	61,130,704	4,248,987	7%
31	Goa	1,457,723	149,275 10	2%
32	Lakshadweep	64,429	61,120	94.8%
33	Kerala	33,387,677	484,839	1.5%
34	Tamil Nadu	72,138,958	794,697	1.1%
35	Pondicherry	1,244,464	NST	NST
36	A & N Island	379,944	28,530	7.5%

Source: Office of the registrar general & census commissioner of India (ORGI). Ministry of home affairs New Delhi.

Table 1.3.2. Distribution of the Scheduled Tribes Population in Jammu Division

Region/Districts	Total Population (Census2011)	ST Population (Census2011)	Percentage of STs
Jammu Division	5,378,538	810800	15.07%
Doda	409,936	39,216	9.56%
Jammu	1,529,958	69,193	4.52%
Kathua	616,435	53,307	8.64%
Kishtwar	230,696	38,149	16.53%
Poonch	476,835	176,101	36.93%
Rajouri	642,415	232,815	36.24%
Ramban	283,713	39,772	14.01%
Reasi	314,667	88,365	28.08%
Samba	318,898	17,573	5.51%
Udhampur	554,985	56,309	10.14%

Source: Census of India, 2011

Table 1.3.3. District-wise Distribution of Gujjar Population in Jammu and Kashmir

S. No.	Districts	Total Populations	Gujjars Population percentage
1	Kupwara	650393	7.6%
2	Baramulla	1169780	4.4%
3	Srinagar	1202447	3.2%
4	Badgam	629309	2.24%
5	Pulwama	652607	3.13%
6	Anantnag	1172434	7.14%
7	Udhampur	743509	11.16%
8	Doda	691929	9.09%
9	Poonch	372613	39.34%
10	Rajouri	483284	30.31%
11	Jammu	1588772	3.81%
12	Kathua	550084	2.75%

Source: Census of India, 2011

The following table illustrates the distribution of the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population across various districts in the Jammu and Kashmir Division highlighting the concentration of Gujjar communities. The Gujjar tribe is mainly found in the Poonch district (39.34%) and the Rajouri district (30.31%), where they benefit from pasture lands for their livestock throughout the year (Census of India, 2011)²⁶.

1.4 ORIGIN OF GUJJAR TRIBE IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Scholars over the years have investigated the complicated and multifarious origin of the Gujjar tribe from Jammu and Kashmir. According to historical records, the Sanskrit word "Gurjara" is the source of the term "Gujjar"; allusions to the Gujjar kingdom first surface in literary works in the fifth century A.D. Two Sanskrit terms "Gur" means "enemy's," and "Jar's means "destroyer's," so the word Gujjar derives from "destroyer of

enemy." Academic experts such as Cunningham (1970)²⁷ proposed that Gujjars descended from the Kushan tribes migrating from regions such as Afghanistan and Punjab during the first millennium A.D. The predominance of the Gurjara Pratihara dynasty in northern India during the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. which resulted in notable movements of several ethnic groups including the Gujjars into the Jammu and Kashmir region most certainly affected the migration. Studies by historians such as Ibbetson and Smith which emphasized their own customs and pastoral way of life revealed that the Gujjars kept different cultural practices and social structures separating them from other ethnic groups in the region. Additional studies show that the Gujjars' migration in Jammu and Kashmir originated from several elements including sociopolitical upheavals in their native homelands, Gujarat and Rajasthan. Historical background underlined how conflicts and demographic pressures drove the Gujjars to search for fresh grounds leading to their Himalayan residence. Warikoo (2000)²⁸. Though it does not address the Gujjar's suggested later migration, the 12th-century literature "Raja Tarangini" records the presence of several tribes in Kashmir. Scholars have also helped to clarify the Gujjar's historical account by showing that both internal dynamics and outside migration gradually shaped their absorption into the sociocultural fabric of Jammu and Kashmir. The vast tapestry of origin stories shows the Gujjar's ongoing history and their adaptation to the varied cultural terrain of Jammu and Kashmir.

1.5 CHANGING RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE GUJJAR TRIBE

Particularly among the younger generation the Gujjar clan in Rajouri District has clearly changed their popular religion and social media usage. The traditional belief system which is deeply rooted in local customs and Islamic practices is now increasingly influenced by mainstream religious practices and ideologies. (Rahi, 2024).²⁹ The change is partly driven by exposure to global religious content through social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp where new trends and religious interpretations are shared. Social media has also facilitated access to information about modern education, government schemes and livelihood opportunities leading to a shift in economic activities. Younger Gujjar's are now engaging more in non-traditional

occupations such as retail, digital services and government jobs reducing their reliance on pastoralism and agriculture. These platforms have also connected them to wider markets enhancing trade and entrepreneurship thus improving their economic prospects and social mobility (Khan, 2023).³⁰

1.6 IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT OF THE FOREST RIGHTS ACT (2006) ON THE GUJJAR TRIBE

The Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006, formally known as the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 was enacted to address the historical injustices faced by forest-dwelling communities particularly Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers. The Act recognizes individual and community forest rights aiming to provide legal access to forest resources for livelihood, habitation and cultural practices. (Lahiri, 2024)³¹ For communities like the Gujjars in Rajouri District FRA has facilitated the recognition of forest land and resources helping them sustain their traditional lifestyles. Despite its significance the implementation of FRA has been slow and inconsistent across India. While some states like Odisha and Madhya Pradesh have made notable progress others have faced challenges such as bureaucratic delays resistance from local administrations and legal complexities. (Mishra, 2023)³² The FRA Amendment Rules 2012 and 2019 sought to simplify the recognition process and strengthen the role of Gram Sabhas in decision-making but these changes have not been uniformly successful. There hasn't been for those who live in forests, conflicts between the FRA and other conservation legislation as the Forest Conservation Act 1980 often complicate issues. Although the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri gains from FRA, land conflicts, poor awareness and limited access to official procedures still highlight the necessity of stronger implementation education and cooperation with environmental policies for the Act to fulfil its full potential. (Bhat, 2024)³³

1.7 RECENT INCLUSION OF TRIBES IN J&K ST LIST ON THE GUJJAR COMMUNITY

There has been recent modification and alteration. Recent years have seen notable changes in Jammu and Kashmir's (J&K) inclusion of more communities under the

Scheduled Tribes (ST) classification. Together with the current Gujjar and Bakerwal tribes the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill 2024 included other populations including the Pahari tribe into the ST fold. This increase of the ST list in J&K seeks to provide better access to government benefits including affirmative action in political representation and education employment. The inclusion of new tribes into the ST category has had a significant effect on the Gujjar community particularly with regard to resources and representation. While this move has increased the visibility and rights of these newly recognized tribes it has also led to increased competition for the same resources government schemes and reservations that were previously available exclusively to the Gujjars. It has led to debates within the tribal communities about the distribution of resources as the Gujjars who were once the primary beneficiaries of these affirmative action's now share these advantages with other tribes. The influx of new communities into the ST fold has raised concerns regarding the equitable distribution of welfare schemes especially in rural areas like Rajouri District where the Gujjar tribe is predominantly located. These dynamics continue to shape the socio-political landscape of J&K requiring ongoing efforts to balance the rights and interests of all tribes. (Sharma, 2024)³⁴

1.8 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Renowned for their pastoral economy, agricultural economy and workmanship the Gujjar tribe of Jammu and Kashmir is also undergoing extreme changes in their way of life. A multitude of elements including technology, financial pressure, government regulations and shifting social conventions drives these processes. These procedures change the way of life of the tribe but they also provide possibilities and difficulties that affect the cultural identity, social cohesion and economic well-being of the Gujjar people.

The loss of the Gujjar's cultural legacy is one of the main issues this change sets off. Once so deeply ingrained in their cattle-rearing and agricultural ways of life the traditional values, mores, craft and general sense of identity of the community are progressively under threat from globalization through urbanization, industrialization and the inclusion into larger more modern economies of younger generations. These traditional ways of living are being significantly changed by the growing number of alternative

livelihoods including wage work and small-scale trading therefore affecting family life, social organization and gender roles. Furthermore, the several government actions including the Forest Rights Act 2006 are meant to secure rights over the land and improve livelihoods; yet, the socio-economic effects of these policies are still developing. Though the future of the tribe's access to resources and the whole influence of its traditional activities and general economic welfare is yet to be known.

Consequently, understanding how livelihood and cultural changes are redefining the social structure, economic stability and cultural identity of the Gujjar tribe defines the primary study subject. It also looks at how these changes may be managed so the tribe might grow sustainably while maintaining its unique cultural legacy. The study will help to clarify the problems of the Gujjar tribe in how they balance economic adaptation and cultural preservation and will be used to advise policies aimed to encourage sustainable development that values and protects the cultural legacy of the tribe.

1.9 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study is to conduct a sociological analysis of the cultural and livelihood changes among the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir. The study aims to describe and explore the evolving patterns of family and marriage system within the tribe and examine the nature of shifts in gender roles, cultural practices occupational and educational status, religious practices influence of social media and to examine the socio-economic impact of the Forest Rights Act on their livelihood patterns.

1.10 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To explore the changing patterns of family and marriage system among the Gujjar tribe of Rajouri District.
2. To examine the changes in cultural patterns, occupational and educational status of the Gujjar tribe community.

3. To analyse the socio-economic impact of forest rights act on the livelihood patterns of Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District.
4. To study the Livelihood issues of Gujjar women in Rajouri District.

1.11 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the changing patterns and rules of marriage and family structures among the Gujjar Tribe of Rajouri District?
2. How have cultural practices, educational and occupational patterns evolved among the Gujjar Tribe in the Rajouri District?
3. How has the Forest Rights Act impacted the livelihood patterns and socioeconomic status of the Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District?
4. What are the livelihood challenges faced by Gujjar women in Rajouri District and how do they influence their decision-making abilities?

1.12 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The research provides a valuable insight into the socio-cultural context of India with a concentrated analysis of the Gujjar community. It explores how the Gujjars balance the challenges of modernization with an attempt to hold on to their customary way of life. Through the study of the community's resilience to socio-economic changes the research highlights the resilience of the Gujjars in transforming without losing their cultural identity entirely. The study explores various essential areas of change within the Gujjar community such as changes in family structures, marriage traditions, cultural values, educational transformations, occupational trends and religious traditions. It also discusses the role of social media which is increasingly a key determinant of the community's cultural expression and social dynamics. All of these fields are essential for understanding how outside and internal pressures are redefining the daily life and traditional customs of the Gujjars. The main focus of the study is the socio-economic function the Forest Rights Act performs to guarantee land rights and improve the way indigenous people live. The study will examine how this act has affected the Gujjar tribe in terms of access to resources and

sustainment of their traditional livelihood possibilities. Through following the real effects of the Forest Rights Act the study provides understanding of how legislative policies could either support or threaten indigenous people's socioeconomic stability. The results of this study will help organizations handling indigenous people as well as development professionals and legislators. The results of the research will help legislators in the design of interventions meant to improve the socioeconomic quality of the Gujjar tribe without compromising their cultural identity. By means of the examination of the nuances of modernization, education and socioeconomic transformation among the Gujjar community research can guide policy creation that balances progress against cultural sustainability finally helping the long-term welfare of the tribe.

1.13 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Particularly with relation to the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir the study has suffered many restrictions that affect data collecting and interpretation.

1. The distant and scattered character of the tribal areas in Rajouri District presented major difficulties for data collecting. Lack of appropriate infrastructure for roads and transportation made some of the Gujjar villages inaccessible so fieldwork was challenging and time-consuming.
2. Technological access was limited in the rural and poor area. The restricted capacity to apply digital data collecting instruments may have accelerated the study process and improved efficiency
3. Data on delicate subjects including changes in family structures and livelihoods needed careful negotiating and cultural sensitivity. Sometimes tribal people were reluctant to share these problems freely which would have compromised the depth and richness of the information
4. Data analysis was done using thematic analysis; nevertheless, given the varied and complicated nature of the responses it was difficult to classify the qualitative data into cogent themes. Identification of patterns and coding required time and effort.

1.14 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Delimitations of the study are as follows:

1. Focusing just on the Gujjar tribe the study limited itself to the Rajouri District in Jammu and Kashmir. Though they might have undergone similar cultural and economic changes the study excluded other districts or tribes in the area. The scope of the study was purposefully limited to offer a concentrated investigation of the Gujjar population in a given geographical area.
2. Using in-depth interviews and thematic analysis the study used a qualitative approach to investigate the evolving cultural patterns, family structures, livelihood concerns and socioeconomic impact of the Forest Rights Act on the Gujjar tribe. Large-scale quantitative studies which would have provided a more comprehensive statistical analysis were left out of concentrate on qualitative data.
3. The study limited itself to particular spheres of research including family and marriage systems, cultural changes, occupational level and socioeconomic effects of the Forest Rights Act. To keep a limited and in-depth concentration Gujjar life's other element like political involvement were purposefully left out.
4. With an eye toward present changes in the Gujjar tribe's cultural and lifestyle patterns the study focused on developments that had taken place within a designated recent period. The definition let the research to highlight modern problems but neglected long-term historical changes in the society.

The qualitative data was subjected to thematic analysis and the frequency of specific themes was found via a basic frequency analysis. While the methodological decision enabled a thorough investigation of the problems it did not offer the wide statistical generalizations feasible with other approaches.

1.15 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Gujjar Tribe

Mostly living in the Rajouri District of Jammu & Kashmir the Gujjar tribe describes as a nomadic or semi-nomadic ethnic group. Traditionally engaged in pastoralism and agriculture they preserve separate cultural and social customs.

Family and Marriage System among Gujjar Tribe

Refers to the changing socially accepted union of marriage rites, family patterns, gender roles reflecting on both continuity and change in the Gujjar tribe. It covers customs associated with marriage, kinship and family life as well as their evolving modern equivalents.

Cultural Patterns of Gujjar Tribe

Cultural patterns refer to the collective customs, rituals, beliefs and values of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District. These patterns influence their way of life, social interactions and adaptation to socio-economic changes reflecting both continuity and change.

Livelihood Patterns of Gujjar Tribe

Livelihood patterns describe the ways in which members of the Gujjar tribe sustain their economic well-being. It includes their occupations particularly in agriculture and animal husbandry and how these practices are affected by the socio-economic impact of the Forest Rights Act.

1.16 ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

The organization of this thesis is structured into seven chapters.

CHAPTER I

The first chapter lays the foundational framework for the study by starting with a global overview of tribes and their cultural identity. It narrows its focus to Indian tribes,

particularly examining the impact of modernization on the livelihoods and cultural identity of the Gujjar tribe in Jammu and Kashmir. The chapter also outlines the tribe's historical origins presents the statement of the problem and defines the purpose, objectives and research questions of the study. Also, it addresses the study's significance, limitations and delimitations concluding with operational definitions of key terms.

CHAPTER II

Chapter two provides an extensive review of the literature related to the research topic. It explores previous studies and theoretical frameworks that have contributed to understanding the Gujjar tribe and changes identifying gaps in existing research. The review creates a solid foundation for the current study by offering insights into what has been previously explored and what remains to be investigated thus establishing the relevance of the study.

CHAPTER III

The third chapter is about the research method employed in the study. It outlines the research design, sampling methods and sample size and gives a clear definition of the data collection instruments. The data analysis methods are also outlined indicating how the gathered data were handled and interpreted to effectively answer the research questions. The chapter gives the technical foundation of the research method and its relevance.

CHAPTER IV

Chapter four offers a close examination of data related to the Gujjar tribe based on socio-economic factors and cultural traditions. It employs the application of cumulative frequency distribution and basic percentages to express trends in numbers. The chapter identifies major changes in marriage rituals, including age at marriage and spouse choice that reflect changes in society. Frequency distribution table depicts the change in family systems with a shift from conventional joint families towards more common nuclear families influenced by modernization and economic reasons. The study also discusses the impact of the Forest Rights Act of 2006 on forest resource access with varied community reactions. Occupational changes and cattle rearing as well as forest based livelihood data

are examined highlighting challenges for the community. Gender relations are examined through changing roles of Gujjar women in decision-making and leadership focusing on empowerment. The influence of social media on cultural identity and education with both positive and negative effects is addressed. Legislative reforms expected impacts on the rights and representation of the Gujjar community are carefully scrutinized for trends towards recognition and socio-economic progress. Cumulative frequency distribution and plain percentages are presented in the form of tables to enable easier interpretation of the patterns in the data.

CHAPTER V

Chapter fifth looks into the effectiveness of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 in improving the rights and livelihoods of Rajouri district's Gujjar tribe. The chapter analyses the impact of the Act on such traditional livelihood activities as livestock herding, income from forests and access to non-timber forest products. The positioning of Gram Sabhas and community forest rights to empower the tribe is addressed as well as issues such as migratory trends and hindrances to implementing FRA. Socio-economic impacts and how the Act has added to forest conservation are assessed through interviews conducted on 10 stakeholders. The chapter also examines the possible effects of the 2024 Amendment Bill on the rights and resources of the Gujjar community.

CHAPTER VI

Chapter sixth offers case studies on livelihood and cultural changes among the Gujjar Tribe of Rajouri District examining changes in traditional roles, marriage rites, lineage traditions and the impact of modernization. The effects of the Forest Rights Act 2006 on Gujjar livelihoods are discussed as well as implementation challenges. The chapter also evaluates the addition of new Scheduled Tribes in Jammu and Kashmir and its impact on Gujjar representation and access to resources. Case studies of educational aspirations livelihood struggle of women changes in family structure and intergenerational dynamics give insights into the tribe's changing socio-economic and cultural context. Respondents are Code A, Code B, Code C, Code D, and Code E, case studies were conducted in Rajouri District.

CHAPTER VII

Lastly, chapter five concludes the research by recapitulating the findings and implications. It provides practical recommendations following the research outcomes and proposes research areas for the future. The chapter emphasizes the wider implications of the research and suggests implementable measures for enhancing the livelihood and cultural conservation of the Gujjar tribe against modernization.

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Chapter – II
Review of Literature and Theories

CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORIES

A literature review is needed to position contemporary research in historical and theoretical context. Scholarly study is the act of discovering, analysing, and evaluating relevant studies and publications in order to learn about the targeted area of concern. The methodology allows researchers to understand previous research that was conducted what discoveries were made as a result and how such discoveries may inform future research. Utilizing the findings and methodology of previous studies researchers can enhance their own research designs, hypotheses and procedures.

Literature review is important in placing the research conducted in the research titled "A Sociological Analysis of Culture and Livelihood Changes among Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir" in the existing body of knowledge. A detailed critique of the socio-cultural and economic changes experienced by the Gujjar tribe shall be discussed in the review based on important studies done between 2000 and 2024. The critique shall evaluate how the earlier research has addressed the socioeconomic situation, cultural traditions and impacts of acts such as the Forest Rights Act upon the tribe.

Literature review will help to examine gaps in the current knowledge base i.e. with respect to qualitative insight into cultural and livelihood change. By synthesizing findings from prior research, the review will guide the formulation of research objectives and methodological considerations for the current study. By making certain that the research is well-informed and yields useful insights into the dynamic forces modifying the Gujjar community it will make a significant addition to the existing knowledge in the field.

2.1 PATTERNS OF FAMILY AND MARRIAGE SYSTEM OF THE GUJJAR TRIBE

The Gujjar tribe follows a patriarchal family structure with male authority and nuclear families are prevalent though extended families are also present. Marriages are arranged by elders adhering to strict endogamy within the tribe or sub-groups with cousin

marriages reinforcing family ties. The bride price a form of dowry is commonly practiced reflecting the tribe's cultural and economic norms. Thus, the following reviews provide clear insights into the family and marriage systems of the Gujjar tribe.

Thakur et al., (2023)¹ conducted a study titled "Social Transformation and the Status of Gujjars in Jammu: An Ethnographic Account" focused on the impact of modernization on education and family life among the social group of Gujjars. Following a qualitative research methodology the research collected primary data using focus group discussions, personal interviews and observation supplemented by secondary data collected from assorted sources. The conclusion drawn was that there was a trend away from traditional joint families to nuclear families because of industrialization, urbanization and technological development. Although some of the Gujjars had embraced settled lives with enhanced access to health care and education they still clung to rudimentary cultural practices. The study brought out the need to preserve traditional values while shifting to modern-day lifestyles in a healthy manner.

The research undertaken by Lone, I. R., and Gurna, R. S. (2022)² titled "Sociocultural Profile of Gujjar and Bakerwals in Jammu and Kashmir State," examined the familial and marital structures within the Gujjar tribe residing in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The research centred on the unique cultural and sociological characteristics of the Gujjar community namely pertaining to family structure, marriage customs and the social organisation of the tribe. The study was carried out in Jammu and Kashmir and employed qualitative research methodologies such as ethnographic observations and telephone interviews. The sampling encompassed individuals from the Gujjar and Bakerwal communities with the objective of collecting valuable information on their socio-cultural customs. The survey revealed that Gujjar families were organised based on the "Dera" system in which each married son had his own personal household typically comprising five to six individuals. Within the family lineage referred to as "Dada-Potra," there existed a significant kinship group, whereby property was commonly distributed among male offspring following their marriage. Marriage traditions encompassed "Bata-Sata" (exchange marriage) and the voluntary choice of spouses by parents allowing for divorce and subsequent remarriage. The study emphasized the tribe's traditional character

as marriages outside the society were infrequent. Notwithstanding their itinerant way of life Gujjar families were progressively embracing education and establishing permanent lifestyles while many still maintained strong ties to old customs.

The study conducted by Sawhney (2022)³, entitled "Socio-Cultural Insight of Gujjar and Bakerwal in Jammu and Kashmir," specifically examined the rites, customs, and marital customs of the Gujjar subgroup. Utilizing secondary data obtained from sources such as the Census of India and other periodicals the study examined the influence of modernization on the rituals and customs of the people. Islamic traditions exerted a significant influence on the marital customs observed among the Gujjars and Bakerwals. Traditionally, the Mangni (engagement) was arranged at early stages of life, followed by the Nikah (marriage) ceremony and subsequent Rukhsati (consummation) took place several years later. Preference for early marriage was driven by widespread illiteracy and social fears. Traditional marriages were characterised by their simplicity, with a focus on providing dowry in the form of cattle and jewellery. The survey observed that the majority of families allocated on marriage ceremonies a modest sum of Rs. 50,000, while a minority spent as much as Rs. 1 lakh. Rituals such as the bride's embellishment with silver jewellery and the recital of poetry were essential components of marital festivities. Notwithstanding modernisation the community-maintained adherence to established traditions.

The study titled "A Study on Modernization and Its Impact on the Traditional Lifestyle of Gujjars with Special Reference to the Rajouri District of J & K" by Zameer, M. and Padiyar, G. (2021)⁴. The main focus of the study to examines the family structure and cultural transformation the study gathered responses from 100 members of the Gujjar tribe by random sampling and interviews. Findings indicated that 71% of respondents resided in nuclear families while only 29% maintained joint family systems suggesting a transition from traditional to contemporary family structures driven by modernization factors such as scientific and technological breakthroughs. Notwithstanding these changes the survey determined that Gujjars had not entirely forsaken their traditional values. The tribe remained in a transformative stage gradually embracing contemporary ways of living while retaining cultural traditions.

Dar, F. A., and Suneet, D. (2020)⁵ carried out a sociological study titled "The Changing Patterns of Kinship and Family Structures Among the Kashmiri Tribals." The research focused on the dynamic kinship, marriage and family organizations among the Kashmiri tribal communities, viz., the Gujjars, residing in the Jammu and Kashmir territory. The information was collected from published material, scholarly works and print media. Using a qualitative method the authors aimed to explain the current family structures and identify temporal changes. The research showed a transition from extended family households (Kandan's) to nuclear families which was influenced by several factors such as modernization, education and economic opportunities. Successive generations increasingly moved away from extended homes to form smaller, nuclear clans with greater emphasis on individual freedom in decision-making regarding marriage and family organization. Also, the survey reported a decline in arranged marriages and a shift towards gender equality in the decision-making process in families. Social media and modern communication technologies were seen as significant drivers of these changing dynamics which pose a challenge to traditional patriarchal norms. In conclusion, the research provided meaningful insight into the way social, cultural and economic transformation shaped the structure of kinship systems among the Gujjar tribe.

The study by Dwivedi, M. (2018) entitled "Social Structure of Gujjar and Bakarwal of Jammu and Kashmir" analyzed a number of aspects of the social behaviour of these tribes with particular focus on their marriage practices. In particular the study was carried out in the Poonch district of Jammu & Kashmir. Dwivedi adopted a descriptive strategy drawing lessons from available sources or secondary information. The research was conducted through a review of existing literature. The research established that the majority of marriages within the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities were co-parental organized by older adults and were vital for upholding the tribe's social setup. Cases of child marriage and dowry were prevalent social ills particularly among the rural population. The Gujjars and Bakarwals preferred intragroup polygamous marriages and avoided entering into unions with members of other tribes. Monogamy was the common practice and polygamy was permissible under Islamic law, albeit rare. The wedding rituals involved a series of independent ceremonies including elaborate rituals like Matti Khunni, Kapra Baterna, and

Lakri Tokni. One such notable ritual was the "Nikah," conducted in accordance with Islamic teachings. Overall, marriage served as an important institution for the protection of familial relationships and cultural heritage across these communities.

The research "Socio-Religious Dichotomy among the Gujjars of Himachal Pradesh" by Sahni (2016) researched the Gotra hierarchy, clan membership and marriage customs of the Gujjar tribe. This research in Himachal Pradesh examined the function of Gotra and clan identities in shaping marriage customs and their impact on social organization in Hindu and Muslim Gujjar societies. Ethnographic interviews and field surveys formed its methodology of study and it collected specific data from the sedentary as well as the nomadic Gujjar people. Intentional sampling was done and directed towards chosen clan groups following the Gotra ethnicity. In analysis although Gotra used to represent lineage and controlled marriages there was an exogamy rule rigidly prohibiting the marriage of persons from the same Gotra Both Muslim and Hindu Gujjars adhered to the principle alike but religious practice differed. The settled Gujjars deliberately refrained from entering into marriages with their nomadic counterparts although at times they began to accept daughters from nomadic families. Traditional practices among Muslim Gujjars included rituals such as 'Lassi Chilaye' (making buttermilk) and singing traditional songs during marriage. According to the survey although there were some effects of modernization traditional practices were still widespread especially among the nomads. The study put into perspective the phenomenal contrast between the settled and the nomadic Gujjars as regards their marriage traditions as well as their general social organizational forms.

The study done by Roy et al. (2014) entitled "Traditional Marriage Customs in Rajasthan, India: A Study of Kayad Village of Ajmer District." The main focus of the research was to protect and preserve customary traditions among the population. The study was undertaken in Rajasthan's Ajmer district using anthropological methods to study the wedding rituals in the Gujjar group. The researchers used a qualitative approach to conduct in-depth interviews with well-known members of the community, elders and married couples to understand the symbolic and cultural significance of these traditions. Sampling involved intentional choice of families who actively participated in traditional rites thus

ensuring a first priority on those who preserved long-standing customs. The findings stressed the importance of marriage in preserving the social stratification among the Gujjar tribe such that customs like as arranged marriages dowry practices and elaborate wedding rites serve as paramount factors in preserving family and community ties. The research looked at how the tribe's customs acted as a process of reinforcing cultural identity particularly when faced with modern influences. However, it was observed that these customs were slowly evolving due to economic limitations and the influence of education especially among the youth.

Despite these changes, traditional matrimonial practices continued to be a strong pillar of the socio-cultural fabric of the Gujjar community in Rajasthan.

2.2 CULTURAL PATTERNS AND THE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE GUJJAR TRIBE

Cultural practices of the Gujjar tribe revolve around their semi-nomadic existence deeply rooted in pastoralism i.e., cattle and buffalo breeding. The society upholds strong tribal bonds, typified by family-oriented, marriage, festival and unique clothing-centred traditions. Gujjars subscribe to a patriarchal social system in which women have the primary decision-making role. Their conventional occupational position has been linked with cattle rearing and pastoral activities. However, modern factors have led some of them to diversify their activities into agriculture, wage labour, and small-scale businesses. Despite changes the tribe has a deep affinity towards its cultural heritage maintaining certain traditions that enhance their individual identity. Therefore, the following review of literature presents a detailed description of the cultural traditions of the Gujjar tribe and their changing occupational trends situating in relief both the continuity of customary practices and conformity to new influences.

A study titled "Cultural and Traditional Life of Gujjar and Bakarwal Tribes of Jammu and Kashmir" was undertaken by Javid, S. and Muthukumar, J. (2024)⁶, with a major emphasis on the pastoral and nomadic lifestyle of the Gujjar tribe. The research examined the traditional transhumant livelihood which was a seasonal migration that was important for their subsistence means. The research was conducted in the Himalayan part

of Jammu and Kashmir employing a qualitative ethnographic analysis method involving interviews and observations. The survey was specifically conducted on Gujjar families involved in seasonal migration in an effort to record their unique traditions, language, attire, and religious practices. The findings showed that the Gujjar tribe had a deep connection with nature and their animals and their culture was greatly shaped by their transhumant mode of living. Their traditional music, dance, and colourful attire and religious festivals such as Eid and Urs were significant cultural pointers. Additionally, the research focused on the challenges of the Gujjars to preserve their cultural heritage while accommodating modern developments. In conclusion, the Gujjar tribe in reaction to changing socio-economic conditions.

Keshlata et al. (2023)⁷ carried out a study entitled "Transformation in cultural and livelihood aspects among Gujjar tribes in Jammu and Kashmir: A sociological analysis." Using secondary data that was gathered from books, publications and the internet the researchers utilized descriptive analysis to assess such changes. The findings revealed significant changes: the transition from pastoral to diversified economies the adoption of modern farming practices and better educational opportunities. Even as modernization touched traditional roles and practices cultural heritage remained contemporary while cultural patterns were transformed. Major challenges included the processes of underage marriages and persistent cultural practices. The assessment highlighted a gradual but meaningful transformation influenced by globalization and development processes integrating new developments while protecting cultural heritage.

A study entitled "Socio-Cultural Insight of Gujjar and Bakerwal in Jammu and Kashmir" was undertaken by Sawhney, S. (2022)⁸ to examine the social and cultural dynamics of Gujjar and Bakerwal communities in the affected area. The research centred mainly on the socio-cultural aspects of the communities, including their traditional practices, lifestyle and challenges. The research used secondary data sources such as census documents, journals, newspaper publications and books due to challenges faced in collecting primary data amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings revealed that while the Gujjar and Bakerwal groups maintained a uniform cultural identity, their socio-economic status was relatively low compared to the general population. Seasonal migration

referred to as transhumance, significantly hindered educational opportunities for the groups thus leading to the low literacy rates. Despite the process of modernization, old rituals and attire were maintained and the groups continued to observe Hindu and Islamic festivals. The research explored the complex socio-cultural aspects of these communities primarily summarizing their deep-rooted traditions everyday life and complex hardships. Due to the strong barriers to collecting primary data during the COVID-19 pandemic the research turned to secondary sources including census compendiums, academic treatises, journals and monographs. The conclusions explained how the Gujjar and Bakerwal communities maintained their cultural uniqueness resolutely but kept their socio-economic status distinctly below that of the general population. The phenomenon of cyclical migration called transhumance significantly hindered educational chances thus allowing the abysmal poor literacy rates to prevail. Despite the relentless movement of modernity, ancient customs and traditional dressing continued and the communities refused to abandon observing Hindu and Islamic celebrations. The research focused on the continuity of traditional behaviours in the face of changing socio-economic environments.

Sheikh (2022)⁹ conducted a research work titled "Cultural characteristics of Gujjar Bakerwal life in Jammu and Kashmir," which specifically focused on the cultural practices and behaviour that one would notice among the Gujjar tribe that lives in Jammu and Kashmir. The study focused on the rich cultural heritage of the Gujjar and Bakarwal tribes who are famous for their nomadic lifestyle, i.e., in the mountainous regions of Pir-Panjal, Hindukush and Ladakh. Using a qualitative methodology the study explored how these tribes were able to sustain their cultural identity while existing as nomadic residents. The Gujjars and Bakarwals, who were often involved in animal husbandry retained a distinctive cultural identity through their traditional practices, languages (Gojri and Pahari), and traditions. Festivals like Eid, Holi and native religious rituals played an important role in maintaining their cultural heritage. The research found that they evidenced strong cultural resilience in that they had managed to sustain their culture, beliefs and lifestyle in spite of their economic underdevelopment. Their persistence with native languages and traditional ways of life was with minimal effects of modern civilizations. Whether in their nomadic

or settled state the research underscored the Gujjar community's commitment to maintain its culture thus being an integral part of Jammu and Kashmir's rich cultural mosaic.

The research undertaken by Hassan et al. (2021)¹⁰ entitled "Food and culture: Cultural patterns related to food by indigenous communities in Kashmir–A Western Himalayan region" examined the food and cultural practices of indigenous ethnic communities in Kashmir with particular reference to the Gujjar tribe. Carried out in Kashmir's ten districts the research involved semi-structured interviews conducted between 2020 and 2021, including a variety of informants ranging from cooks (Wazas) and housewives to street food vendors and residents. The research methodologies relied on holding face-to-face interviews of 298 subjects in total where 29.53% consisted of Gujjar responses. The analysis of the Gujjar tribe revealed their unique culinary cultural traditions but with the partial utilization of particular food species in comparison with other ethnic populations like Kashmiri and Pahari Indians. The lack of specific food species among the Gujjars indicates a lower degree of diversity in their traditional food traditions. The findings revealed that the use of food species by the Gujjar tribe showed lower cross-cultural overlap especially when compared to the Kashmiri and Pahari tribes. The survey tallied a grand total of 75 edible species utilized in numerous cultural contexts such as festivals, weddings and funerals. However, it was noted that the food habits and recipes specific to the Gujjar community were less dominant compared to other groups in the region.

The study conducted by Abdullah et al. (2020)¹¹ entitled "Historical Background and Socio-Cultural Aspects of Gujjar Community in Jammu and Kashmir: A Case Study" sought to investigate the historic progress and social nature of the Gujjar tribe that lives in Jammu and Kashmir. The investigation paid special attention to the history of migration among the Gujjars which resulted due to severe droughts in the states of Gujarat and Rajasthan between the 5th and 6th centuries. The displacement led them to settle in Jammu and Kashmir primarily for cow grazing. The research highlighted the tribe's strong adherence to traditional practices despite urbanization and modernization. Socio-culturally the Gujjars had distinct characteristics, including their dress, food habits and the celebration of festivals such as Baisakhi which once indicated their cyclical migration.

Gojri was their main language and they also had strong religious affiliations mostly counting themselves as Muslims. The transhumant nature of the tribe significantly influenced their education level so that their literacy rate was 31.65% much lower than the 71.23% that was shown by the total population. Authors had utilized a methodological strategy by using secondary data procured from a variety of sources including government statistics and census data. The findings provided a detailed explanation of the effect of modernization on the socio-cultural identity of the Gujjars.

Kumar, B. (2019)¹² carried out research called "The Gaddi: A Jammu and Kashmir Himalayan Tribe," which specifically focused on the Gaddi population. The observations. The findings indicated that the Gaddi just like the Gujjars maintained a unique cultural identity shaped by traditional rituals, pastoral subsistence patterns and organised social systems. However, the two tribes were faced with challenges related to the modernisation process and changes in the environment. The research aimed to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the socio-cultural and economic complexities defining the Gaddi tribes with extrapolative value for cognate ethnic groups like the Gujjars. The research followed a descriptive research paradigm, utilizing a collection of qualitative data derived through rigorously conducted field surveys, in-depth ethnographic interviews, and direct observational methods. The results outlined that the Gaddi, similar to the Gujjars, held fast to an unerasable cultural identity, based on inviolable customary rituals, pastoral subsistence modes, and hierarchically organized social structures. Both tribal groups, however struggled with daunting challenges brought about by the unstoppable wave of modernisation and the disruptions caused by ecological changes. Kumar's scholarly discourse highlighted the uncompromising resilience inherent to the Gaddi people and simultaneously mapping out confluences with the everyday experiences of the Gujjars, thus laying emphasis on the necessity for carefully crafted policy measures to reinforce the traditional moorings while improving the chronic socio-economic woes besetting these Himalayan citizens. Kumar's study focused on the unyielding will of the Gaddi tribe while highlighting parallels to the situation of the Gujjars with an emphasis on the need to apply targeted policies supporting traditional livelihoods and addressing socio-economic issues peculiar to these Himalayan populations.

The study conducted by Priyadarshini, P. and Abhilash, P. C. (2019)¹³ is titled "Promoting tribal communities and indigenous knowledge as effective solutions for attaining sustainable development in India." "Environmental Development" examined how the integration of historic traditions in current policy could enhance sustainability. One of the main objectives was to explore the way integration could increase sustainability outcomes. The research applied a descriptive design and a mixed methods approach. The qualitative data collection involved interviews and focus groups with the Gujjar community members. A quantitative data collection approach was used through surveys to assess the impacts of existing policies and programs. The sample included intentional selection of tribal areas with large Gujjar populations. The research used structured questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides as research tools. Analysis of data was done applying statistical techniques including descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The results showed that the Gujjars possessed extensive traditional ecological knowledge that if incorporated in current development initiatives could effectively address sustainability problems. The study highlighted the importance of policy designs that recognize and include indigenous knowledge to foster sustainable development while ensuring cultural heritage conservation.

Singh, B. P. (2019)¹⁴ study titled "Indigeneity and Occupational Change: The Tribes of Punjab," analysed the evolution of traditional professions among the tribal ethnic communities of Punjab focusing particularly on the role of modernisation and socio-economic pressures. It attempts to analyse the differences in occupations across tribal ethnic groups and their impact on indigenous identity. The study design was qualitative, using an anthropological method to capture the lived experiences of the indigenous population. Data collection methods in the study were through in-depth interviews and participant observation. The study used semi-structured interviews and field notes as its research tools. Due to the focus on narrative and thematic analysis. The research embarked on a zealous examination of the transformation of ancestral callings in the tribal ethnic settlements of Punjab maintaining a steadfast grip on the implications instigated by the inexorable process of modernisation and rooted socioeconomic necessities. It sought to analyse the complex occupational transformations surrounding such indigenous groups and

the far-reaching consequences it has on the maintenance of autochthonous identity. The research design was resolutely qualitative grounded within an anthropological paradigm carefully constructed to capture the raw lived experience of these societies. The research apparatus included complete ethnographic immersion, including extensive in-depth interviewing and participant observation with semi-structured questionnaire tools and carefully curated field notes acting as main conduits of data. Grounded within a narrative and thematic hermeneutic framework the results clarified that although occupational transitions were inevitably controlled by economic pressures, they drove the inevitable weakening of age-old traditions hence creating a clandestine path towards cultural deracination and ontological dislocation among the indigenous population. The findings confirmed that the occupational changes were prompted by economic considerations but led to the incremental erosion of traditional habits hence causing cultural displacement among the tribes.

Bhasin, M. K. (2006)¹⁵ carried out a study, titled "Genetics of Castes and Tribes of India: Indian Population Milieu," analysed the genetic features of some castes and tribes in India, such as the Gujjar ethnic group. It sought to understand the trend of genetic variation and population genetics in these groupings. Taking comparative research approach, it employed methods to analyse genetic information. To make the selection of representatives from diverse castes and tribes such as the Gujjars a purposeful sampling strategy was adopted. Quantitative information was gathered through genetic sampling and further analysed using biological markers. Statistical methods such as allele frequency distributions and measures of genetic distances were applied. The findings showed that the Gujjar population had distinctive genetic markers where 35% of their population carried specific genetic features that were not found in any other groups. The study did a comprehensive genetic analysis of several caste and tribal constituencies of India, with a strong focus on the Gujjar ethnic group. It hoped to decode the complex structure of genetic variability and population genetics within these sociogenetic strongholds. Utilizing a principled comparative analytical framework the study mobilized advanced genomic interrogation techniques to probe hereditary information with accuracy. The choice of exemplar cohorts, including the Gujjars with other castes as well as tribal groups was

carefully planned through an intentional stratified sampling process. Empirical data sets were obtained through broad genetic sampling and subjected to a complex analytical framework based on biological indicators. Statistical tools employed advanced methodologies such as allele frequency stratifications and phylogenetic distance quantifications. The results revealed a unique genetic blueprint to the Gujar population, where 35% of them showed idiosyncratic hereditary markers that are not present in comparative ethnic groups thus indicating a deep genetic divergence worthy of further evolutionary and anthropological inquiry. The finding suggests unique genetic characteristics specific to the Gujar population thus improving overall understanding of Indian genetic variation.

Dabral and Malik (2004)¹⁶, in their paper entitled "Demographic Study of Gujjars of Delhi: I. Population Structure and Socio-cultural Profile," aimed at the sociocultural dynamics of the Delhi Gujar tribe. The research highlighted the traditional way of life, family and demographic profile of the Gujjars. Based in Delhi the research employed a survey-based approach targeting Gujar households to determine their socio-cultural practices. The sampling procedure entailed sampling participants from diverse Gujar settlements to have representation across diverse socio-economic segments. The researchers established that the Delhi Gujjars maintained the traditional patriarchal family system largely with support for early marriage and joint families. The research also brought into focus the tribe's economic activities which are mainly in the fields of agriculture and animal rearing while living in the urban environment. The Gujjars were challenged to fit into urbanization without losing their cultural identity.

Education levels were low particularly among women but the study showed a slow transition towards modernization and education among younger generations though it was slow owing to entrenched socio-cultural beliefs.

In the study entitled "Tribal Gujjars of Jammu & Kashmir," Warikoo, K. (2000)¹⁷ studied the socio-cultural dynamics of the Gujar tribe in Jammu and Kashmir. The research studied the cultural identity, traditions, and social organization of the Gujjars, with special reference to how their nomadic lifestyle and interactions with the environment had

shaped the evolution of their unique social structure. The sample included members of the Gujjar tribe carefully chosen to thoroughly study their social norms, family organization, religious practices and challenges faced during the process of modernization. The findings of the research are that even in their state of marginalization the Gujjars were able to sustain their cultural identity and traditions in spite of the increasing challenge from socio-economic changes and urban development projects. Apart from this Warikoo's study highlighted the community's difficulties regarding education, health, and the availability of resources which continued to affect their socio-economic upward mobility. The research enriched the general understanding of Jammu and Kashmir's tribal communities.

The study undertaken by Prabha et al. (1981)¹⁸ entitled "A Bio-Demographic Study of the Gujjars of Delhi-UP Border Villages" sought to examine the cultural dimensions of the Gujjar tribe of border villages that lie between Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. The study employed a bio-demographic approach that fused demographic evidence with observation of culture to provide a comprehensive overview of the Gujjar lifestyle. While specific data regarding the sample method were not provided the research utilized the intermix of interviews and field surveys. The outcomes highlighted the Gujjars' rich cultural heritage defined by distinctive traditions and ceremonies that formed the cornerstones of their daily lives. Key elements of their culture included traditional clothing, celebrations and rites that were central to their identity. The research emphasized the Gujjars' adherence to settled traditions and attaching high importance to the protection of their cultural traditions against changing socio-economic conditions. Rituals such as collective gatherings and celebrations were prioritized as critical aspects that consolidated social relations and promoted cultural conservation. Together the studies presented valuable insights of how the Gujjar tribe maintained its cultural heritage in modernizing itself and in the process of population movement in the Delhi-UP border region.

2.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND LIVELIHOOD PATTERNS OF GUJJAR TRIBE

A blend of ancient traditions and recent modifications defines the socioeconomic and livelihood patterns of the Gujjar community. The Gujjars have been semi-nomadic

pastoralists in the past relying on the rearing of cattle and buffalo for their means of subsistence. The core of their economy was mainly founded on livestock with a support from seasonal migration. Labour and small-scale production predominantly shaped by changing socio-economic conditions. Despite these changes, a large majority of Gujjars continue to uphold their cultural traditions, thus creating a strong sense of identity. The transition from traditional pastoralism to diverse subsistence strategies indicates the adaptability of the tribe while retaining its cultural heritage.

A study named "Challenges in Empowering Tribal Communities: A Case Study of Gujjars and Bakerwals in Jammu and Kashmir, India" was undertaken by Din, S. and Gugulothu, S. (2024)¹⁹. A structured interview schedule was employed to gather information from 135 randomly selected households from three Tehsils. The survey indicated that in spite of efforts to improve literacy and spur economic development through initiatives like mobile schools and housing subsidies there existed limited awareness of these schemes as only 35% of the households were aware of government plans. Apart from that, only a paltry 12% of the households had received assistance from programs such as the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) resulting in dissatisfaction with financial assistance and the limited vocational upgrading opportunities among the Gujjar minority. A carefully designed interview schedule enabled the systematic collection of data from these 135 households carefully selected through randomised choice spanning three Tehsils. The empirical inquiry revealed a stark disjunction between policy provision and grassroots awareness as despite sustained governmental efforts to raise literacy and spur economic mobility—through intervention such as mobile education units and subsidized housing schemes—just 35% of the surveyed households had cognizance of these provisions. Additionally, a paltry 12% had received concrete advantages from flagship schemes such as the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) creating widespread disillusionment with budgetary allocations and the drastically reduced channels for vocational advancement among the marginalized Gujjar community. The report revealed deep structural shortcomings in the thinking and operationalisation of empowerment initiatives for the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities with institutional corruption bureaucratic lethargy and grossly inadequate financial allocations as major

barriers to meaningful socioeconomic development. The report revealed significant shortcomings in the planning and implementation of programmes to empower the Gujjar and Bakarwal groups with corruption, bureaucracy and lack of finances as major hurdles.

Gulzar, et al. (2023)²⁰ conducted a research study titled "The Socio-Economic Perspective on the Role of Policy Measures and Non-State Actors for Tribal Upliftment in Jammu and Kashmir." The analysis highlighted their economic dependence on cattle, which played a central part in the economy of Jammu and Kashmir. It explored the educational barriers faced by the groups that is the low literacy levels which were significantly lower than the state's average in 2001 and 2011. The educational barriers to access faced by the Gujjars and Bakarwals included poor infrastructure, nomadism and financial pressures, especially for girls who were often sent out of school to assist in household chores. The survey carefully analysed the economic underpinnings of these societies, highlighting their deep reliance on cattle rearing an economic pillar in the agrarian and pastoral economy of Jammu and Kashmir. A strict analysis of educational disenfranchisement identified a staggering literacy shortfall with rates documented well below the state mean in both the 2001 and 2011 censuses. The systemic barriers to educational access for the Gujjar and Bakarwal groups were complex involving a perpetual shortage of institutional infrastructure the intrinsic ephemerality of their nomadic lifestyle and the constant economic imperatives that led to the exclusion of girls from school attendance confining them instead to the sphere of domestic drudgery. Analytical design of the study was based on a wide-ranging exegesis of secondary sources synthesizing a body of scholarly treatises, peer-reviewed academic journals and government compendiums to formulate a holistic interrogation of these systemic socio-economic and education asymmetries. Secondary data from books, journals and government reports were used in the research to explore the issues.

An extensive study entitled "Transformation in Cultural and Livelihood Aspects among Gujjar Tribes in Jammu and Kashmir: A Sociological Analysis" was undertaken by Nizami, et al. (2023)²¹. The research particularly analysed the evolving subsistence means and cultural practices of the Gujjar tribes living in Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir. Using secondary data sources like books, newspapers, published research studies and

government reports the research explored significant changes brought about by modernization, urbanization and technological advancements. The research uncovered a decline in traditional Gujjar pastoralism as numerous villages adopted mixed economies that involve both agricultural and non-agricultural activities. The change had both opportunities and challenges: while modern farming techniques increased production the abandonment of traditional means of subsistence and practices was large. Besides the survey also found persistent issues like weddings with minors and ongoing gender inequalities. Also, there were significant developments in education and healthcare, coupled with increased political representation and tourism participation. Conversely the preservation of cultural heritage remained a challenging endeavour. A balanced strategy was promoted by the authors which sought to include modern practices while at the same time respecting and protecting cultural history.

Ahmed, A. (2021)²² carried out a study entitled "Dimensions of Social Change among the Trans-humans: A Case Study of Gujjar Bakarwals of Poonch District in Jammu and Kashmir offers an exhaustive analysis of the social and cultural changes undergone by the Gujjar and Bakarwal community. In order to address the complex experiences of these transhumant populations Ahmed takes a strict qualitative approach involving tools like participant observation and in-depth interviews. The study provides a profound examination of how modernization, climatic shifts and government policies have influenced their traditional practices highlighting the challenges such communities face in retaining their cultural identity in the presence of external threats. Ahmed's study contributes significantly to the discourse around indigenous people as it highlights the intricate dynamics between heritage and modernity specifically in relation to the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities.

Kasana, S. (2021)²³ performed a study called "Sustainable Livelihood and Resilience of the Van Gujjars," which precisely focused on the livelihood activities of the Van Gujjar tribe. The study highlighted their dependency on food provisions as a critical component of their nomadic pastoral society. The research was conducted in the northern regions of India, i.e., where the Van Gujjars would periodically move with their animals. The research was conducted qualitatively with the use of in-depth interviews and field

observation as data collection tools. The purposive sampling method was used to interview 150 Van Gujjars, both males and females from different age groups. The findings were that the Van Gujjars were highly reliant on forest produce and livestock products, such as milk and cheese for survival. Their basic diet consisted of milk products and foraged species of plants. However, the group faced challenges imposition of governmental restrictions on grazing land. Against such challenges the Van Gujjars exhibited resilience by adjusting their traditional culinary practices and exploring other sources of revenue generation.

Islam, J. (2020)²⁴ carried out a study entitled "Social Change of the Kurdmi Mahatos in West Bengal." The study focused on the impact of social and economic change on the traditional mode. The objective was to understand the processes of social change in the community. The method combined qualitative and quantitative approaches including surveys, interviews and field observations. The research indicated that similar to the Gujjars, the Kurdmi-Mahatos were undergoing tremendous changes due to modernization, improved education and strong economic growth. Social institutions and practices were being restructured as individuals within the society adapted to new economic opportunities and social obligations. The research highlighted the challenges faced by the Kurdmi-Mahatos in maintaining their cultural identity amidst such transformations, and compared with those of other indigenous populations like the Gujjars in adapting to socio-economic hardships.

The study by Chandar, S. (2019)²⁵ entitled "Socio-Economic Analysis of Gujjars Tribe in Saraj Area of Jammu Region," traces the economic, social and cultural situation of the Gujjar community in the Saraj region of the Chenab Valley in the Jammu region. Pointing to the social disadvantage and limited access to resources of the Gujjars the study highlights their extreme social marginalization. Economic hardships and social exclusion afflict the community which is bedevilled by a cornucopia of cultural practices. The findings of this research underscore the need for introducing particular programs to assist the Gujjar population in this region in overcoming these challenges and improving their standard of living. Empirical data extraction was choreographed through painstakingly calibrated, standardised survey procedures for quantitative demarcation while qualitative depths were carefully extrapolated through systematically framed ethnographic interviews.

A stratified random sampling design was carefully crafted to provide a demographically representative cross-section of both socio-cultural contingents. The methodological framework included highly designed questionnaires as tools of statistical deconstruction and tightly structured interview protocols for the granular distillation of ethnographic complexities. Sophisticated statistical paradigms, such as cross-tabulation matrices and high-order multivariate regression analytics were carefully applied to decipher the complex symbiosis between socio-economic determinism and stratified community hierarchies. Empirical evidence underlined the systematic socio-economic exclusion of the Gujjar group from their Pahari neighbours playing out concretely in the obstacles faced by Gujjar girls' educational ascendancy and working-class entry into preferred occupations. Further, entrenchment across the caste rubric presented an overarching structural condition influencing the socio-economic destinies of these communities. The inquiry underscored the imperatives for hyper-specifically grounded developmental programs in breaking up and resetting the intensely embedded disparities.

Bhat, J. A. (2018)²⁶ carried out a research paper titled "A Comparative Analysis of the Socio-Economic Conditions of the Gujjars and Pahari's in Relation to Caste, Occupation and Education." Quantitative information was collected through standardized questionnaires while qualitative information was gathered through interviews. Sample respondents from both groups were identified through stratified random sampling. Research tools included questionnaires for quantitative data analysis and interview schedules for the collection of qualitative information. Statistical methods such as cross-tabulation and regression analysis were used to evaluate the relationship between socio-economic indices and community status. The findings revealed that Gujjars faced more socio-economic challenges compared to the Pahari's specifically in terms of education and employment opportunities with caste playing a significant role in shaping these conditions. Empirical data collection was undertaken through highly standardized survey tools for quantitative analysis and qualitative aspects that were carefully extrapolated through formal interviews. Stratified random sampling methodology was adopted to ensure representational inclusion across both demographic groups. The methodology toolkit included highly developed questionnaires for statistical examination and highly designed

interview protocols for the in-depth elicitation of ethnographic themes. Sophisticated statistical techniques such as cross-tabulation and multivariate regression analysis were employed to clarify the complex interrelationship between socio-economic determinants and hierarchical community stratification. The results shed light on the deep-seated disparities experienced by the Gujjar population compared to the Pahari population with marked adversities in educational access and vocational mobility. In addition, caste-based stratification proved to be a critical determinant having a deep structural impact on socio-economic trajectories. The research highlighted the urgent imperative for accurate developmental interventions to address these systemic imbalances. The examination highlighted the need for targeted development initiatives to address these inequalities.

The study titled "Cultural, Economic and Educational Status of Gujjar and Bakarwal Tribal of Jammu and Kashmir" by Dwivedi, M. (2018)²⁷ The research on the economic, educational and cultural condition of the Gujjar and Bakarwal tribal communities of Jammu and Kashmir provides a comprehensive and detailed analysis of these marginalized communities which are known as Scheduled Tribes in India. These communities with their rich cultural tradition and nomadic lifestyle have an important place in the socio-economic life of the region. Though they have plenty of challenges limiting their development and inclusion in regular society research provides a good look at their economic hardships, education inequalities and cultural activities to shed more light on issues in the systems with practical remedies towards their enhancement. They had in the past remained livestock-reliant suffering immense difficulties on top of shrinking pasture lands, poor market accessibility and inadequate diversified livelihood possibilities. The research identifies that their income levels are lowest in the region with most families being below the poverty line. The denial of government welfare schemes and institutional facilities further excludes these groups from mainstream society leading some to leave behind traditional livelihoods and relocate to cities seeking low-paying employment. The research demands special interventions including granting of grazing rights enhanced market linkages and the encouragement of alternate livelihoods to better their economic well-being and decrease their vulnerability. Education is another significant area of concern for the Gujjar and Bakarwal people. The research finds very poor literacy rates

especially in women and girls caused by a mix of socio-cultural, economic and geographical factors. The transhumant nature of these communities does not allow children to access regular schools since they regularly move with their parents in search of grazing grounds. Moreover, the absence of infrastructure including schools and hostels in remote locations also discourages access to education. Gender inequalities are also common where girls are frequently removed from school to help in domestic work or raising animals. In spite of government efforts such as mobile schools and seasonal hostels their implementation is still lacking. The research highlights the imperative for innovative educational interventions that address the specific needs of these nomadic communities such as the increase in mobile schools, vocational training, and awareness campaigns to emphasize the value of education. The research's strength is in its broad coverage of the economic, educational, and cultural aspects of the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities. It is complemented by empirical evidence in the form of surveys and interviews that add weight to its findings. The research also provides policy-based recommendations such as grazing rights, alternative sources of livelihood and innovative schooling. By pointing out the systemic marginalization of the above communities the study brings to fore the need for inclusive development policy at an urgent level. The study is not without its limitation however its geographical scope is mainly confined to Jammu and Kashmir which could be limiting its applicability to Gujjar and Bakarwal communities elsewhere. Although the research recognizes gender inequalities it might have done better to analyse the particular problems of women and girls in more detail.

An investigation study named "Socio-economic Conditions of Gujjars in South Kashmir: Their Challenges and Strategies" was undertaken by Naikoo, et al. (2018)²⁸. A keen observation of the socio-economic conditions undergone by the Gujjar population in South Kashmir was provided in the research. A purposeful sampling technique was employed and it specifically aimed at Gujjar families across different localities in South Kashmir. The survey yielded a number of significant findings: the Gujjars faced significant socio-economic challenges like low-income levels, inadequate access to education and health and limited economic opportunities. The research highlighted that these circumstances were compounded by geographical isolation and socio-political dynamics.

The research indicated various coping strategies adopted by the Gujjars such as customary pastoralism and agricultural activities to deal with their economic hardships.

Palahnia, A. (2018)²⁹ completed a doctoral dissertation entitled "Livelihood Economics of Gujjars in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh," which examined the economic situation and livelihood practices of the Gujjar community in Kangra District. The research carried out at CSKHPKV, Palampur aimed at knowing the economic problems and prospects of the Gujjars their social group remaining marginalized. The research identified substantial economic difficulties for the Gujjars such as low levels of income poor access to improved agricultural methods and poor infrastructure. The report noted that pastoralism continued to be an essential livelihood option but was progressively bounded by environmental degradation and economic stresses. The Gujjars had poor access to government schemes and financial assistance which heightened their economic vulnerability. The dissertation stressed the importance of targeted economic interventions and enhanced access to resources in order to promote the livelihoods of the Gujjar community in Kangra District.

Mayaram, S. (2017)³⁰ research paper "Rethinking Mobility: The Story of the Gujjars" in the context of mediaeval and early colonial India. The purpose of the investigation was to analyse historical patterns and ramifications of movement in the case of the Gujjars, a particular focus of which was their migratory actions and their social-political as well as cultural dynamics. History was analysed along with archival study and textual documents from various sources. The research examined the reasons behind the mobility of the Gujjars including economic opportunities and socio-political factors and discussed how these migrations had affected their sense of self and integration into different destinations. The research revealed that the Gujjars free and fast mobility played a crucial role in their capacity to adapt and rebound socioeconomically. The study highlighted the complex interconnection of migration, identity formation and integration of various regions in a sophisticated understanding of the Gujjars' past trajectory and their place in the broader socio-historical scenario of India.

Suri, K. and Sharma, P. (2017)³¹ carry out research titled "Socio-Economic Conditions of Dodhi Gujjars in the Suchetgarh Border Area of Jammu District." Livelihood aspects among the Gujjar community were the main targets of the research, with specific interest in education, health and income status. The research was conducted at Suchetgarh which is a border area in the Ranbir Singh Pura block. Using a simple random sample approach, the researchers selected 50 respondents from different families in the area. Data for research were collected through questionnaires, interviews, case studies, and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs). The findings showed that the Dodhi Gujjars faced challenging situations with limited financial resources, poor shelter and minimal educational attainment. A large percentage of the participants had an income level of less than Rs. 5,000, was living in temporary housing, and had limited access to education and healthcare. Moreover, the survey also identified gender disparities with a strong bias towards the education of boys over girls. Despite some government initiatives, the Gujjars were not aware of the available schemes and their socio-economic status was poor. The research stressed the need to enact specific interventions in order to increase the quality of life and potential of the Dodhi Gujjars society.

The study conducted by Abass, Z., Ahmed, J., and Ahmed, I. (2015)³², entitled "Socio-Economic and Educational Status of Tribal (Gujjar and Bakarwal) of Jammu and Kashmir: An Overview," two of the most influential tribal communities in Jammu and Kashmir. Classified as Scheduled Tribes in India, these groups have traditionally been discriminated against and have had very poor economic stability, social inclusion and education. The report provides a thorough examination of their present status pointing out the systemic problems that they encounter and proposing possible lines of action for their upliftment. The Gujjar and Bakarwal are nomadic by tradition with livelihoods based on pastoralism and animal rearing. Their cultural practices such as their own language (Gojri), traditional dress and folk practices are an intrinsic part of their identity. The research though finds that these cultural practices are threatened by modernization, urbanization and the loss of their traditional grazing areas. The removal from the forest and pasture has interfered with their nomadic way of life. Their economic struggles as the community's face poverty restricted access to markets and poor government assistance are what add up

to this culture loss. Education is also a key concern area for Gujjar and Bakarwal communities. Alarming low levels of literacy are found among girls and women based on a mixture of socio-cultural, economic and geographical determinants. Children find it challenging to go to formal schools since their nomadic lifestyle involves regularly moving with their families in pursuit of pasture. Also contributing to limited access is the absence of infrastructure, including schools and boarding schools in inaccessible places. Gender inequalities are also widespread with girls frequently being taken out of school to help with domestic work or cattle rearing. In spite of mobile schools and seasonal hostels by government initiatives these efforts are still insufficient. The research highlights the immediate necessity of innovative educational interventions specific to the specific needs of these nomadic people such as the increase in mobile schools, vocational education and campaigns to sensitize people towards the necessity of education. The strengths of the study are that it gives complete coverage to the socio-economic and educational aspects of the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities. It is substantiated by empirical evidence such as surveys and interviews that provides legitimacy to its findings. It also presents pragmatically derived suggestions for policymakers like grazing rights, livelihood alternatives and innovative schooling strategies. Through this identification of the systemic exclusion of these groups the study underlines the importance of bringing urgent attention to policies of inclusive development. Yet the study does contain some weaknesses. Its geographical focus is mainly confined to Jammu and Kashmir, which might limit its applicability to Gujjar and Bakarwal women and girls in other areas. Although the study recognizes gender inequalities it might have given a better insight into the particular issues confronted by women and girls.

A case study conducted by Kumari, N. (2015)³³ entitled "Paradoxes of Tribal Development: A Case Study of Gujjars of Himachal Pradesh" Despite the introduction of various programs the benefits have not been shared entirely with the community due to bureaucratic inefficiencies, remoteness of the place and limited knowledge among the Gujjars about their rights and privileges. The research concluded that although there had been some improvement in socio-economic conditions of the tribe significant inequalities continued, i.e., in the areas of literacy, income generation and access to healthcare. Kumari

called for more targeted interventions and policy improvement implementation in order to address the contradictions of development for Gujjar people effectively.

Gupta, S. K. and Aslam, M. (2014)³⁴ read a research paper titled "Socioeconomic Challenges Faced by the Gujjar and Bakerwal Tribes: A Case Study of Rajouri District (J&K)." The sample consisted of interviews with women from Gujjar and Bakerwal, backed up by field observations and community surveys. The findings showed that Gujjar women faced significant socio-economic issues including limited opportunities for education and health, exclusion from jobs and inadequate infrastructure. The research highlighted the way in which these issues worsened the issues faced by Gujjar women thus affecting their overall level of living and economic independence. Gupta and Aslam prompted policy interventions to resolve these issues and enhance the socio-economic conditions of Gujjar women. They laid emphasis on offering improved education facilities, improved medical facilities and a better infrastructure to continue their economic prosperity.

Mayaram (2014)³⁵ carried out a study, "Pastoral Predicaments: The Gujjars in History," closely examining the past and present troubles faced by the Gujjars. The research particularly focused on their livelihood issues and adopting the historical analytical method. To assess the evolving dynamics impacting the Gujjars the research involved exploring historical documents, conducting interviews and observing at the field level. The findings showed marked challenges in Gujjars' subsistence mechanisms such as land degradation, grazing grounds being limited and access to the resources being restrained. With the passage of time political as well as economic transformations have complicated these issues and led to greater marginalization among the Gujjars. This comprehensive investigation embarked on a careful examination of both the historical precursors and present-day challenges besetting the Gujjar community with an unrelenting concentration on the ontological vulnerability of their modes of subsistence. Grounded in a strictly implemented historical-analytical framework the study methodologically triangulated archival interpretation, ethnographic interviewing and extended field reconnaissance in order to interpret the complex interaction of structural factors remaking Gujjar livelihoods. The empirical findings charted a set of existential barriers such as the

irreversible degradation of farmland harsh constraints on nomadic mobility and institutional withholding of vital resources. The constant advance of politico-economic transformations has worsened these challenges leading to an unstoppable cycle of marginalization. The research strongly explained the dialectical continuum between past policy paradigms and present-day socio-political strategies, showing how the gradual erosion of pastoral privileges has driven the Gujjars to fall into deep economic precariousness and multidimensional socio-economic marginalization. The research strongly showed how past policies and recent events have progressively undermined the Gujjars conventional pastoral pursuits with diminished economic security and heightened socio-economic vulnerability.

A comprehensive analysis conducted by Tufail, M. (2014)³⁶ titled "Impact of the Strikes on the Livelihoods of the Gujjars and Bakarwals of Jammu and Kashmir." The study revealed that strikes had largely affected the economic activities of these tribes, including their traditional ways of employment and trade customs. These disturbances saw a huge reduction in their incomes and overall socio-economic stability. The findings highlighted the huge effects of political and social unrest on these peoples' traditional means of livelihood showing how these disturbances enhanced their already existing vulnerabilities and stifled their economic progress. The study provided key insights into the broader socio-economic challenges faced by the Gujjar tribes owing to external disturbances.

An investigation titled "Spatial Distribution and Demographic Characteristics of Gujjars in Jammu Division: A Case Study of Rajouri and Poonch Districts" was undertaken by Ahmad, N. (2013)³⁷ The research, conducted in the Jammu Division used a quantitative method with structured questionnaires. During the research, information was collected on sources of income, work, education and resource access from Gujjar families living in various villages in the two districts. The economic changes and limited market access put pressure on their traditional subsistence activities, i.e. pastoralism and small-scale farming.

In the study of Sofi (2013)³⁸ entitled "Tribal Development in Jammu & Kashmir: Retrospect & Prospect" provides an in-depth analysis of the past and contemporary

challenges faced by the people of Jammu and Kashmir's tribal groups with particular focus on the Gujjar and Bakarwal tribes. These tribes were originally recognized as Scheduled Tribes in India and have been long isolated and plagued by glaring socioeconomic and educational disparities. The study examines the past history of tribe development in the region evaluates the performance of past and ongoing programs and provides recommendations for future action. The intermingling of historical studies and contemporary statistics makes it possible for the study to paint a comprehensive picture of the opportunities and for the Gujjar and Bakarwal community there is another important area of concern that is education. Especially among girls and women the survey reveals abysmally low literacy levels due to a combination of socio-cultural, economic, and geographical factors. Children belonging to these tribes occasionally accompany their family while searching for pasture thus making it hard for them to access formal schools. In addition to this hindering access to education is the lack of infrastructure such as schools and hostels in remote areas. There are also discernible gender distinctions; females are frequently removed from class to assist with household chores or care for the animals. Government initiatives like seasonal hostels and mobile schools despite their efforts still lag behind in implementation. The study highlights the urgent need for innovative educational solutions tailored to the specific needs of these mobile populations such as the establishment of mobile schools, vocational training and awareness campaigns to ensure the applicability of education. The report also evaluates how effectively earlier and current policies intended for tribal development in Jammu and Kashmir function. It draws attention to the fact that numerous schemes and initiatives have been instituted in order to address the educational and socioeconomic challenges that tribal populations confront yet their impact has remained minimal due to inadequate implementation, ignorance and inadequate infrastructure. The study underlines the importance of more complete and integrated planning for the growth of tribal populations based on their specific socioeconomic and cultural context. It promotes greater government agency, non-governmental organisation and community leader collaboration as well as greater involvement of tribal groups in designing and implementing development projects. The extensive review of the past and contemporary. Backed by real data and case studies it provides an extensive analysis of the socioeconomic and educational challenges facing the Gujjar and Bakarwal community.

The study also offers legislators feasible recommendations such as the requirement of alternative livelihoods, grazing rights and innovative educational programs. By highlighting the systemic marginalisation of these groups, the study underlines the imperative requirement for development strategies to be inclusive in nature.

Nevertheless, the study had some constraints. Its primary focus is on the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities, and hence its applicability to other tribes in the region might be limited. In addition, the study is largely based on secondary data and case studies which may not have captured the full complexity of the issues that these groups are facing. While the study documents gender disparities it might have provided a closer look at the specific challenges faced by girls and women.

The study entitled "Forest Utilisation Patterns and Socio-economic Status of the Van Gujjar Tribe in Sub-Himalayan Tracts of Uttarakhand, India" was undertaken by Sharma, et al. (2012)³⁹ with the view to exploring the socio-economic conditions of the Van Gujjar tribe. The research explored the mechanisms used by the Van Gujjars, a mobile pastoralist community, to cope with socio-economic changes while remaining heavily reliant on forest resources. Conducted in the sub-Himalayan region of the state of Uttarakhand. The sample was made up of Van Gujjar families with a particular focus on their income levels, education access to healthcare and dependence on forests. The findings indicated that, despite their long history of dependence on forest grazing and extraction of resources the Van Gujjars were experiencing increasing socio-economic challenges. Deforestation conservation efforts and restricted access to forests had significantly impacted their subsistence livelihoods. Furthermore, the population struggled with low literacy levels limited access to healthcare and poor modern infrastructure. The study highlighted the socio-economic backwardness of the Van Gujjars and stressed the need for policies that appropriately balanced forest conservation with the subsistence needs of the rural people. To enhance the socioeconomic status of the tribe the authors recommended improving education and healthcare access along with the use of sustainable forest management practices.

Thakur, D. T. D. in his (2009)⁴⁰ book "Tribal Life and Forests," His fieldwork based on ethnography consisted of interviews and participant observations to collect primary data whereas secondary data were collected from the literature and government reports. The sample comprised the households of Gujjars who depended upon forest resources, examining areas like income generation, education, health and their issues regarding adjustment to modern development policies. Thakur's research indicated that although the Gujjar tribe existed in symbiosis with forests, they were marginalized socio-economically because of restricted access to healthcare services and educational facilities. Traditional livelihoods of the tribe were in danger as a result of deforestation, contemporary land-use policies and lack of government patronage. The research further brought to the fore the economic hardships of the Gujjars and their attempts at integrating with mainstream society while preserving their cultural identity. Thakur presented a detailed report of the socio-economic situation of the Gujjars and their struggle for rights and recognition.

2.4 LIVELIHOOD ISSUES OF GUJJAR WOMEN

Wani, M. A. and Majid, T. (2024)⁴¹ conducted a study entitled "Educational Status of Tribals of Jammu and Kashmir: A Case Study of Women (Gujjars) in District Budgam." The main aim was to assess the literacy status, livelihood concerns, education access and problems of Gujjar women in the district. The research study was descriptive in nature and employed a mixed-methods study approach. Purposive sampling method was used and a particular sample of Gujjar women was chosen to serve as representatives of the community. Structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews were the tools of research. The result revealed that Gujjar women in Budgam encountered serious educational problems including restricted access to schools, cultural and socio-economic restrictions resulting in lower literacy levels and education attainment.

The study undertaken by Yasmeen, R. (2023)⁴² titled "Issues and Challenges of Gujjars of Jammu and Kashmir," particularly analysed the gender-specific barriers in the subsistence means of Gujjars. The educational levels of Gujjar women were greatly restricted, added to by their nomadic lifestyle which hampered them from procuring permanent education despite attempts at setting up mobile schools. The tribe also had a

major communication lacuna with state governments owing to their geographically remote location in hilly areas thus preventing frequent interaction with the government. Thus, they remained unaware of government plans for helping them. Further, the economic status of the tribe was further deteriorated by extensive unemployment, poor medical facilities and early marriages thus hampering academic success and overall well-being. The research used qualitative methods to analyse how the Gujjar communities interacted with the state as well as how they underwent the structural limitations. The research concluded that there existed a deep and embedded disparity between the needs of the tribe and the solutions applied by the state. Land invasion harassment and poor healthcare conditions contributed to their vulnerabilities. The researchers stressed the need to promote communication and offer adequate structural support especially for women to upgrade their socio-economic status.

A case study conducted by Singh, J. and Bhandari, R. (2022)⁴³ entitled "Problems and Challenges in Transhumance as a Livelihood Strategy: A Case Study of Van-Gujjar in Upper Yamuna Basin" discussed the livelihood issues faced by Van Gujjar women in connection with their traditional transhumance. Conducted in the Upper Yamuna Basin the research employed a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys to gain a comprehensive understanding of the problems faced by the Van-Gujjar community. The sampling included in-depth interviews with Van-Gujjar women and field observations to gather precious information regarding their daily lives and ways of making a living. The analysis focused on significant concerns including the impact of environmental changes, regulatory constraints and socio-economic pressures on the traditional phenomenon of seasonal migration. The research showed that Van-Gujjar women experienced greater difficulties due to the reducing number of grazing lands increasing conflicts with settled societies and lack of policy assistance. These challenges greatly disrupted their traditional obligations and economic security compelling them into insecure patterns of living. As per Singh and Bhandari, there is a need for policy interventions as well as eco-friendly development practices to ensure provision of assistance to the Van-Gujjar women and ensure their traditional livelihood mechanisms are conserved.

In a study entitled "Livelihood Economics of Gujjars in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh, "Palahnia, A. (2018)⁴⁴ studied the economic livelihood of women among the Gujjars of the Kangra district. Findings were generated through data from 60 Gujjar farms within the period of the 2016-17 agricultural season. The studies reported a notable engagement of females in dairy farming with 86.18% of adult females practicing the activity compared to 74.82% for adult males. The females contributed to farm outputs in agriculture to a lesser but not insignificant proportion of 13.01%. The research underscored that buffalo rearing contributed to 75% of the total household income thereby highlighting the very significance of livestock to the sustainable livelihood of the Gujjar community. Palahnia highlighted the very significant contribution of women to household income despite certain socio-economic challenges like limited access to veterinary services, loans of money and support from government programmes. Despite systematic inequalities in income distribution and availability of resources the research highlights the key contribution of Gujjar women in sustaining their households through animal husbandry and agriculture.

Nusrat, R. (2015)⁴⁵ research, entitled "Unheard Voices of Van Gujjar Women: A Thematic Analysis of Coping Patterns by Women in the Context of Sedentarization among Himalayan Pastoralists," carried out a thorough analysis of the socio-cultural implications of sedentarization on Van Gujjar women living in the Himalayas. The research explored the effects of coercive sedentarization on the pastoralist way of life and examined the coping mechanisms employed by these women. Conducted in the foothills of the Himalayas employed a qualitative method with thematic analysis to identify the nuanced experiences of these women. The sample process involved gathering in-depth interviews from Van Gujjar women which provided rich and descriptive data. The results uncovered significant socio-cultural challenges including the slow erosion of traditional behaviours and the effects of sedentarization on the positions of women within society. Through new coping strategies women showed resilience in coping with their shifting socio-economic conditions. In the analysis the unique challenges faced by Van Gujjar women were highlighted with emphasis on their adaptive responses and broader implications of sedentarization on their sociocultural organization.

Sofi's (2013)⁴⁶ study, titled "Paradox of Tribal Development: A Case of Gujjars and Bakarwals of Jammu & Kashmir (India)," sought to evaluate the effectiveness of developmental programs run by the government and the extent of knowledge about such programs among the native people. Data was collected through structured interviews. The findings showed that although there were intensive government efforts in the form of literacy programs, development of infrastructure and job schemes the targets had not been fully attained by the target communities. Poor implementation of poverty alleviation schemes and corruption during the allocation of resources were considered to be among the major issues in the study. They were found to be of little utility due to poor implementation and the lack of sufficient information among the beneficiaries. The probe found the paradoxical circumstance that although resources were made available and Scheduled Tribe status was granted. The report suggested the total restructuring of the implementation strategy to better respond to these populations.

Hussain, A. et al; (2012)⁴⁷ carried out a study entitled "Demography, Perception, and Impact of Traditional Pastoralists (Van Gujjars) on Biotic Resources of Corbett Tiger Reserve and the Adjoining Forest Divisions", The method employed a mix of field surveys, interviews, and demographic studies collecting primary data from Van Gujjar households residing in the forest. The sampling covered a cross-section of the tribe and involved families who made their living by livestock grazing and forest produce. The findings were that Van Gujjars' traditional pastoralism contributes meaningfully to their sustenance but the rising controls over access to the forest and the conservation initiatives are significantly impacting their livelihood. The study also revealed how conservation efforts are perceived by the tribe indicating that they regard them as marginalizing and underrepresenting them in policy-making. The authors stress that policies need to be made that balance conservation with the livelihood needs of the Gujjar people.

Joshi, R. (2012)⁴⁸ carried out a study entitled "Gujjar community resettlement from Rajaji National Park, Uttarakhand, India". The study was conducted on two rehabilitation locations; Pathri and Gaundikhatta in the vicinity of Haridwar. Whose people were resettled as a result of conservation activities in Rajaji National Park. The study employed in-depth structured interviews with 47 families at Pathri and 70 at Gaundikhatta addressing issues

like changes in livelihood, education and health awareness. The local schools were surveyed and 83 women were interviewed to assess the effect of training and empowerment schemes. The survey showed that resettlement greatly enhanced the livelihood of the Gujjars who moved from a nomadic way of life to a settled life with access to modern amenities such as mobile phones, education and healthcare. Empowerment of women through vocational training and healthcare also met with great success. The majority of families reported being satisfied with the rehabilitation program reporting improvements in their level of living and more integration into society.

Koundal, V. (2012)⁴⁹ carried out a study, titled as "Socio-Economic Conditions of Nomadic Gujjar Women in Udhampur District of Jammu and Kashmir," mainly studied the economic and social conditions of Gujjar women living in the nomadic settlements of Udhampur District. Adopting a descriptive study approach, the study utilized a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches like surveys and interviews to gather extensive data. To ensure the accuracy of the results a representative sample of nomadic Gujjar households in Udhampur was selected with a focus specifically on women. Analysis discovered that Gujjar women faced significant socio-economic barriers including limited access to education, healthcare and economic opportunities. While taking an active role in maintaining household economies through pastoralism and subsistence agriculture these women had low levels of income and poor living conditions. The research concluded that the economic challenges experienced by the residents were aggravated by their customary nomadic lifestyles and socio-cultural practices. The research stressed the necessity of putting in place targeted interventions to improve the socio-economic status of Gujjar women. Such interventions should entail enhancing their access to education and healthcare in addition to offering meaningful support for their economic activities.

2.5 RESEARCH GAP

From the reviews of literature that range from the year 2000 to the year 2024, it can be clearly seen that although many studies have examined different facets of the Gujjar community in Jammu and Kashmir there are still important research gaps. Quantitative analyses related to socio-economic status, demographic characterizations, and policy

impacts like the Forest Rights Act on the livelihood of the community are the areas that have been widely researched. Research tends to focus on statistical information and general summaries which give a general idea but are not rich in capturing the qualitative aspects of cultural change and the subtle effects on everyday life and customary practices. The qualitative research gap is most evident in the lack of extensive investigation into how changes in family patterns, marriage systems and occupational shifts influence the cultural practices and individual experiences of the Gujjar community. All but the most recent research has neglected to clarify how environmental and legal policies shape cultural adaptations and personal stories in the community.

To address the gap, the study titled “A Sociological Analysis of Culture and Livelihood Changes Among Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir” aims to provide a deeper understanding through qualitative methods. The research will focus on exploring evolving family structures, cultural and occupational shifts, and the socio-economic effects of the Forest Rights Act with particular attention to the challenges faced by Gujjar women. By adopting a qualitative approach, the study will offer a more nuanced perspective on the Gujjar tribe's cultural and livelihood dynamics.

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework is an essential element of any research since it offers a systemic prism through which the study's goals can be examined. Based on research established on theories the framework assists in comprehending intricate social phenomena informing data gathering and ensuring consistency in interpretation. For the current research on the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir theoretical frameworks provide an analytical backdrop to investigate livelihood and cultural transformation ensuring that results are placed within wider sociological debates. Authors such as Durkheim, Parsons and others provide key perspectives on understanding cultural dynamics, social systems and livelihood adaptations rendering their theories essential for this study.

Changing patterns of family and marriage systems

Émile Durkheim (1895)⁵⁰, in his classical book *The Rules of Sociological Method* theorized society as a system of interrelated parts each with a specific purpose to provide social cohesion and stability. He was strong in stressing the significance of collective conscience and institutions like marriage and family to sustain societal order. Durkheim believed that any modification in these institutions has to be explained in terms of how they feed into the overall stability of society. Durkheim's concepts further in the *Social System* where he pointed out that institutions such as family and marriage play essential roles in socializing a person offering emotional support and controlling behaviour. Parsons noted the flexibility of these institutions, proposing that even as societies become modernized forms such as family and marriage change to maintain their functional position in the overall social system. (Talcott Parsons (1951)⁵¹

The Structural-Functionalism approach provides a solid framework for explanation of the shifting patterns of the family and marriage systems among Rajouri District's Gujjar tribe. Traditionally, both family and marriage structures among the Gujjar tribe have had crucial functions of organizing kinship relations, enhanced economic cooperation and upholding cultural values. But with heightened exposure to contemporary influences like education, urbanization and the use of social media the systems are subject to change. The increase in nuclear families vis-à-vis extended families and changes in marriage patterns such as transformation in gender roles and matrimonial arrangements mirror the community's adjustment to more extensive socioeconomic alterations. Structural-Functionalism can explain the changes are not just disorientations but are adaptive ones that enable the Gujjar tribe to maintain vital social functions while adapting to modern challenges. In addition, the theory sheds light on the social tensions created by such changes e.g., intergeneration conflicts or the breakdown of the old social cohesion which might destroy the stability of the community but also enhance individual autonomy and socio-economic mobility.

Changes in cultural patterns and the educational changes

The Theory of Cultural Modernisation developed by Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel (2005)⁵² in *Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence* discusses the mechanisms by which modernization specifically urbanization economic growth and technological change induce changes in societal values and cultural norms. As societies modernize traditional, religious, and communal values tend to yield to more secular, individualistic and rational values. Inglehart and Welzel propose that the change is unavoidable because societies evolve with urbanization and technological progress which culminates in cultural transformations in family organization gender roles and general cultural values. The theory fits well in explaining how groups such as the Gujjar tribe who have been historically based on rural, kinship-based social organization evolve culturally as they encounter urban society and participate in globalized networks.

Social Learning Theory proposed by Albert Bandura (1977)⁵³ In *Social Learning Theory* identifies the way in which people acquire behaviour, norms and values through observing others especially in a setting where varied cultural influences converge. In this scenario of social media, urbanization and globalization the theory identifies the dynamic role of media and peer interaction in influencing attitude, behaviour and cultural adoption. Bandura's model emphasizes that the Gujjar community especially younger generations, learn new cultural norms and education-oriented values by being exposed to other cultures through digital media, media usage and by their contact with urban areas. Social Learning Theory therefore explains how new norms like individualism, gender equity or ambitions in higher education are selectively taken up by the community gradually.

Modernization Theory rooted in the work of scholars such as Talcott Parsons (1951)⁵⁴, describes how traditional societies change when they modernize. Modernization is a transformation from customary practices to contemporary ways of living marked by alterations in social organization, economic pursuits, family forms and educational systems. Modernization within the paradigm is regarded as a linear process whereby societies progress through developmental stages ultimately embracing more complicated

and sophisticated systems. As a society modernizes the cultural values of that society shift towards secularism, rationality and individualism. Parsons' theory thus gives us an optic to observe how such traditional societies such as the Gujjar tribe evolve to face such pressures as they interface with modern education systems state policy and urban influence.

The Theory of Cultural Modernization provides an essential insight into the changes in the cultural practices of the Gujjar community since traditional values and norms are affected by urbanization and global trends. Traditionally, Gujjars have had cultural practices that stem from pastoralism, kinship systems and indigenous ceremonies. Conversely, modernization, fuelled by openness to urban areas and technological change is resulting in profound changes. Contemporary values such as gender equality, individualism and secularism which have been spread through media and school education are slowly being absorbed in Gujjar societies. For example, traditional gender roles that long fashioned social and family structures are slowly changing as younger generations particularly women pursue school and careers away from home. In the same vein urban migration has brought with it new material desires and cultural practices including fashion changes lifestyle and even language with young Gujjars taking up urban dialects or even switching to mainstream languages like English or Hindi.

Along with modifying gender roles and terminology the Social Learning Theory is also useful in describing how the Gujjar tribe has assimilated these cultural transformations. New generations are exposed to new cultural standards through media social networks and contact with other communities which tend to be effective socialization agents. While watching these novel behaviours and norms through social networking or urban chains Gujjar youth start emulating contemporary life while also negotiating or questioning ancient customs. All these shifts in cultural mores are not merely tied to media use but to expanding access to education in urban areas as well. The dynamic shift in cultural transmission mirrors how the traditional ways of the Gujjar tribe change embracing modern values but retaining a link to their roots.

Modernization Theory has a direct impact on the educational changes among the Gujjar tribe. The Gujjars have traditionally emphasized oral culture where knowledge was

transmitted through family and community but not through schooling. Although, with modernization schooling has become an essential pathway for social integration and upward mobility particularly for the young generation. Education especially in towns or government schools has brought in new concepts abilities and professional prospects that sharply contrast with the traditional pastoral way of life in the tribe. The young Gujjars, drawn by the changes in the larger society to be literate and professionally qualified are increasingly opting for formal education thus changing the community's way of learning and acquiring knowledge. The shift is one aspect of the general process of cultural modernization in which values in education move away from traditional, community-oriented systems to more individualistic, state-controlled models of learning. With younger Gujjars accessing formal education an increasing focus is placed on the acquisition of skills in healthcare, technology and commerce as prerequisites to integrating into the wider economy.

Simultaneously, Social Learning Theory describes the way the Gujjar tribe learns and adapts to new educational practices through social exposure. As urbanization and media influence increase the Gujjars observe and imitate educational practices like formal schooling and academic achievements prevalent in urban and non-tribal communities. These are informed by social networks or education outreach programs that influence their values and aspirations concerning education. Most notable are models of education witnessed within social media circles or among metropolitan peers that influence Gujjar youth towards rethinking, including greater aspiration toward formal certification and white-collar professionalization. Gujjar society's absorption of modern systems of education marks the turning point that indicates a greater shift towards evolving away from archaic and retaining aspects of primal thinking to take up full societal membership under newly developed human systems.

Combined, these theories illustrate how the cultural practices and educational patterns of the Gujjar tribe are changing in reaction to outside modernizing forces. The introduction to new values, new systems of education and the effects of globalization are not only remaking the cultural makeup of the tribe but are also offering avenues for socio-economic change.

Socio-Economic Impact of the Forest Rights Act on the Livelihood Patterns

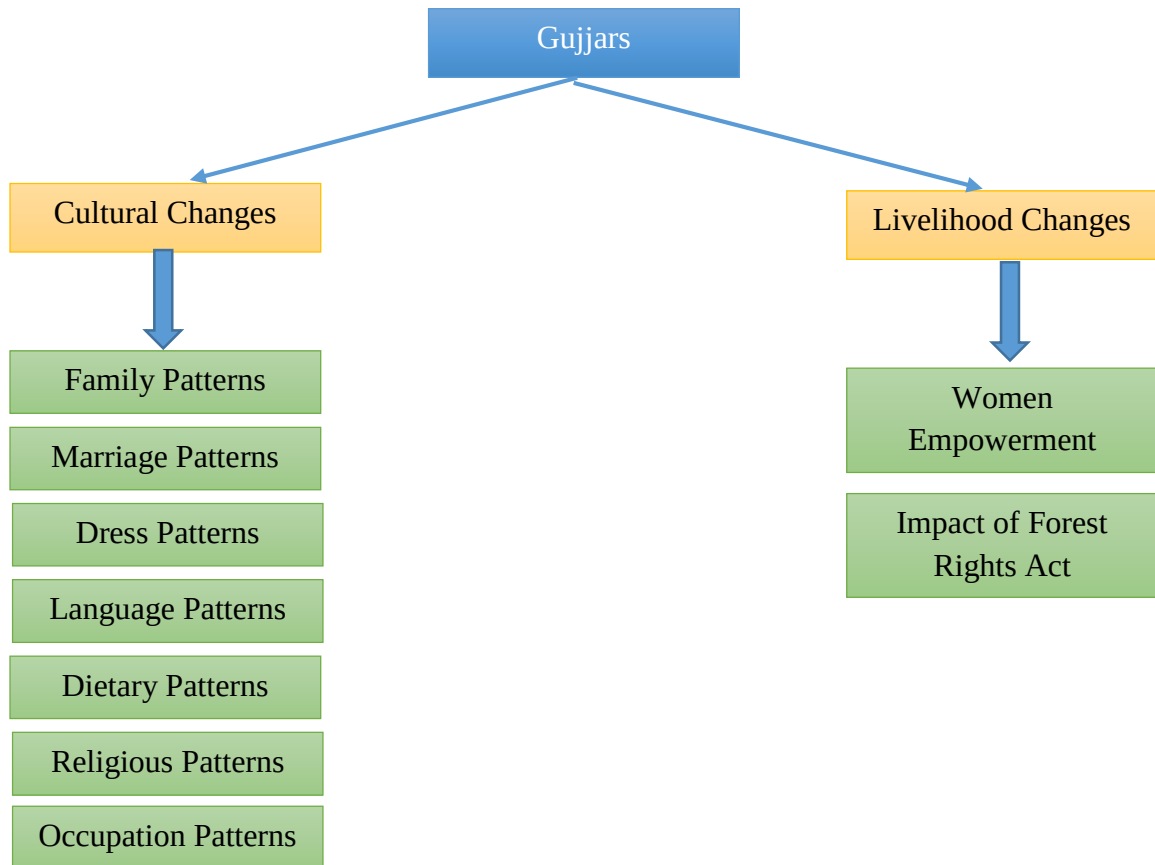
Developed by Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway in *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the Twenty-first Century*, the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF (1992)⁵⁵, offers a comprehensive model to understand how communities sustain their livelihoods in the face of changing conditions. Examining how laws like the Forest Rights Act (FRA) might affect access to the five kinds of capital natural, human, financial, social and physical the framework centres on these resources. The SLF underlines that livelihood solutions have to be seen in the framework of vulnerability, resilience and adaptation to outside obstacles including policy changes or environmental changes." Parallel to this, Political Ecology—as Paul Robbins defines in *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction* (2004) investigates the political, social and economic forces influencing human-environment interactions. It emphasizes how policies create power relations and resource access therefore stressing how underprivileged groups—like the Gujjars—manage state policies like the FRA inside uneven power systems (2004)

Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) and Political Ecology present a rich interpretation of how the Forest Rights Act (FRA) influences livelihood patterns of the Gujjar tribe. SLF is especially beneficial in examining the Gujjars' access to natural resources such as forests for grazing, fuel wood and agriculture. The certification of their forest rights by the FRA can strengthen the community's natural and financial capital through sustainable management of resources and income generation from agroforestry. Nevertheless, bureaucratic obstacles, land encroachment and deforestation can hinder the complete enjoyment of these rights. Furthermore, the vulnerability context in the SLF emphasizes the possible socio-economic risks such as the stresses from climate change or external market pressures. Political ecology fills this gap by discussing the political and economic forces behind FRA implementation. Whether the Gujjar tribe is able to take advantage of the act is frequently determined by local power structures disputes with other actors and government policies. The theory identifies that although the FRA can ensure legal recognition its advantages are distributed unevenly and clashes with more dominant forces might restrict access of the Gujjars to resources countering the chances of socio-economic improvement envisaged through the policy.

Talcott Parsons' Theory of Modernization built throughout his contributions to social system work notably in *The Social System* (1951), outlines the process whereby traditional societies are adjusted to accommodate modern influences such as changes in cultural practices, family arrangements and ways of living. In Parsons' opinion as societies modernize, social, economic and political arrangements change leading to a disintegration of traditional norms and practices. The theory is applicable to the understanding of the transition of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri as they engage with urbanization, education systems, social media and state policies such as the Forest Rights Act. Modernization reinforces individualism, formal education and changes in livelihoods and individuals more and more engage with state policies that impact their access to resources and opportunities.

Modernization theory is essential in interpreting how the Gujjar tribe of Rajouri District has undergone transformation in response to shifts in cultural, educational, and livelihood trends. While the Gujjar community confronts urbanization and the Forest Rights Act of the state their traditional lifestyle such as pastoralism and use of forest products is being reshaped. The community's embrace of contemporary education systems urban migration for work and changing family patterns mirror the adaptation process to the larger societal changes described by modernization theory. The theory offers a valuable perspective for understanding the socio-economic transformations in the Gujjar community and their attempts to balance their traditional values with the new opportunities presented by modernization.

2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM



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Chapter – III
Research Methodology

CHAPTER-III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

3.1.1 Description of Jammu and Kashmir (Union Territory)

Jammu and Kashmir is a union territory of India situated in the Himalayan Mountains, bordering the states of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. Jammu and Kashmir previously governed as a state from 1952 to 2019 was restructured as a union territory in 2019 following the abrogation of Article 370¹. The region is characterized by its varied geography encompassing the frigid arid deserts of Ladakh, the temperate Kashmir Valley, and the humid subtropical area of Jammu. As of 2011, Jammu and Kashmir has a population of 12.4 million and is characterized by many cultures and languages such as Kashmiri, Gojri, Dogri, Pahari, and Ladakhi. The economy is predominantly focused on services and agriculture featuring a robust horticultural sector. The region lures millions of tourists each year captivated by its picturesque landscapes and cultural legacy².



Source: Jammu Map: <https://stock.adobe.com/search?k=jammu+map>

Figure 3.1: Location of Jammu and Kashmir in India

3.1.2 Climate of the region

The climate of Jammu and Kashmir (UT) exhibits considerable geographical variations because to its varied topography. The region consists of three primary climatic zones: the humid subtropical climate of Jammu the temperate climate of the Kashmir Valley and the cold dry conditions of Ladakh. In Jammu summers are characterized by high humidity and temperatures frequently surpassing 45°C although winters are rather mild with January temperatures falling to approximately 4°C. The region predominantly experiences precipitation during the monsoon season from July to September. In contrast, the Kashmir Valley endures frigid winters characterized by substantial snowfall especially between December and February with temperatures in Srinagar potentially down to -5°C and even lower in elevated regions like as Gulmarg³.

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir established on October 31 2019 after the abrogation of Article 370 has an estimated population of 12.54 million according to the 2011 Census. The figure indicates a substantial rise from 10.14 million in 2001 with a growth rate of around 23.64% over that decade⁴. The region is primarily Muslim with over 68% of the people practicing Islam⁵. Recent forecasts for 2024 anticipate the population to be roughly 15.38 million⁶. The literacy rate is approximately 67.16%, with male literacy at 76.75% and female literacy at 56.43%. Jammu and Kashmir's distinctive demographic and cultural landscape is always evolving in response to persistent socio-political development⁷.

3.1.3 Livelihood Dependence of the Population

The livelihood of the populace in Jammu and Kashmir mostly relies on agriculture and associated sectors employing over 70% of its inhabitants. The 2011 census indicated that the region's population was roughly 12.27 million with a substantial number living in rural areas where agriculture is the predominant occupation. The agricultural environment is varied comprising multiple agro-climatic zones that facilitate the development of staple crops like as rice, maize and wheat as well as high-value cash crops like saffron and medicinal plants⁸.

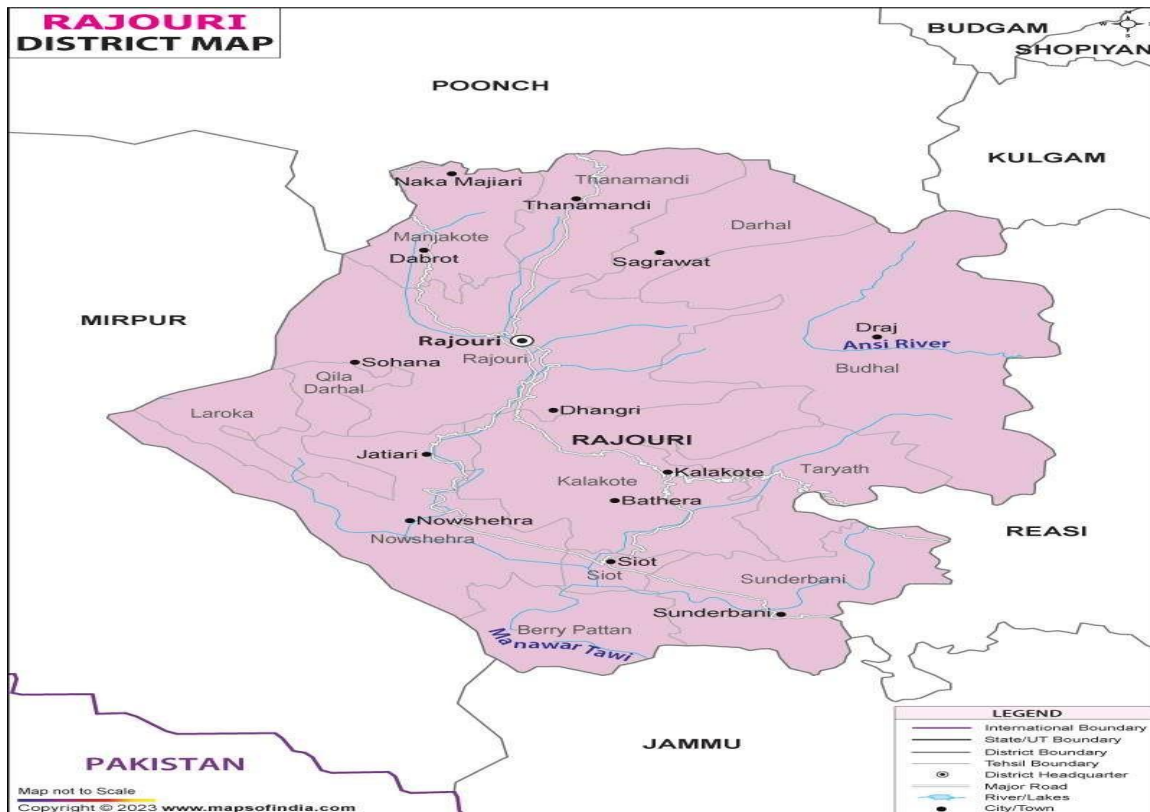
Despite its agricultural potential the sector encounters multiple problems. The average landholding size is very tiny at 0.545 hectares in contrast to the national average of 1.66 hectares resulting in diminished productivity and economic viability. Besides climate change presents a substantial risk to agricultural livelihoods since increasing temperatures and unpredictable rainfall patterns adversely affect crop production and livestock health⁹. A study revealed that hilly regions such as Kishtwar and Ramban are especially susceptible to these alterations potentially intensifying preexisting socioeconomic challenges⁹. Agriculture is essential for the livelihoods of Jammu and Kashmir's inhabitant's nevertheless persistent climate difficulties and institutional limitations require immediate actions to improve resilience and sustainability in the crucial sector.

3.1.4 Description of Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir

Rajouri District, situated in the Jammu region of the Indian-administered union state of Jammu and Kashmir is abundant in historical significance and natural splendour. It is bordered by Poonch district to the north Jammu district to the south Reasi district to the east and Pakistan-administered Kashmir to the west. Rajouri encompasses roughly 2,630 square kilometres and exhibits a varied geography highlighted by the Pir Panjal Mountain range fertile valleys and multiple rivers notably the Tawi River which is essential for irrigation¹⁰.

Rajouri possesses historical significance with origins tracing back to antiquity. It was a component of the Panchal Desa kingdom listed in the Mahabharata and has been noted by travellers such as Huian Tsang in 632 A. D¹¹. The region served as a commerce hub during the Mauryan period and subsequently became a preferred halt for Mughal monarchs their route to Kashmir¹². Following Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India in 1947 Rajouri experienced upheaval during the First Kashmir War resulting in substantial demographic alterations due to violence directed at its Hindu and Sikh communities. Rajouri was constituted as an independent district in 1968 having been delineated from Poonch district. It encompasses multiple tehsils, including Rajouri, Thanamandi, Nowshera and Sunderbani. The district is distinguished by its cultural richness with a population that

encompasses multiple ethnic groups such as Paharis, Gujjars and Dogras¹³. Rajouri is presently well-known for its agricultural production, particularly in rice and maize growing.



Source: Indian Map

Figure 3.2: Location of Rajouri district

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study utilizes an exploratory and descriptive research design to examine the cultural and livelihood change among the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District. The exploratory design seeks to gain improved understanding of various aspects of the issue revolving around a topic with fewer available data (Ahuja, 2021). Descriptive research, however, systematically documents the group's nature, including their social structures, roles and systems thus facilitating an overview of changes in the tribe (Ahuja, 2021). Such research designs provide the foundation to explore and document the evolving cultural practices and livelihood transition in the community. The study utilizes descriptive exploratory and case

study method in combination to offer a comprehensive analysis of such changes. The descriptive method gives a snapshot of changes that are evident in traditions, marriage systems, family and occupation patterns and generally offers a broad picture of the socio-cultural landscape of the community. The exploratory method is further probing into the attitudes, perceptions and beliefs of the Gujjar regarding modernization, education and economic change giving indications about how such factors influence their existence and identity. Case studies are a part of the study that identifies instances among the group in order to gather richer contextual understanding of how cultural and livelihood change affects people and families. These case studies throw into relief the variations in experience within the same social group showing the particular challenges and opportunities facing different members of the tribe. Through qualitative questionnaires participant observation and in-depth interviews, the study records the lived experiences of the members of Gujjar tribe offering a sensitive insight into how these changes are perceived and experienced by different generations. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), qualitative research employs a multi-method approach to the study of social worlds which is particularly relevant to the study of the complex relationships existing in the Gujjar society. Similarly, Creswell (2007) observes that qualitative research seeks to study the meanings individuals or groups attach to social events and hence qualifies as an inquiry method for the socio-cultural and livelihood change of the Gujjar tribe. This design ensures the thorough multidimensional examination of the evolving cultural tradition and lifestyle of the tribe both in terms of overall trends as well as unique case studies augmenting the investigation with richness of detail as well as contextual meaning.

3.3 SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

The data generated for the study was comprised of primary sources and secondary sources.

Primary Data: Non-participant observation method was employed in collecting the data using structured interview schedule. The primary qualitative data were gathered from in-depth interviews of 35 respondents. There were two sets of respondents: the first included 25 general respondents belonging to the Gujjar tribe to represent the overall population.

The second set was 10 stakeholders chosen for their knowledge and understanding of the Gujjar community. These interviews gave more detailed information regarding the socio-cultural and livelihood conditions of the Gujjar tribe.

Secondary Data: Books, papers, official reports and census statistics provided secondary data. The mixed-method approach lets one fully explain the goals of the study and the dynamics of the community.

3.4 UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY/TARGET POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Based on the 2011 Census, the Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir boasts a total population of 642,415; of this total, 7.75% of the population comes under the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category. There are 19 blocks in the district; study is conducted in five blocks with substantial ST populations: Swari (Budhal Block), Fatehpur (Manjakote Block), DanhurGorsian (Rajouri Block), Lerian (Darhal Block), and Khablan (Thanamandi Block). Each chosen village has five people in sample. Strategically 150 km northwest of Jammu Rajouri sits at the foot of the Pir Panjal hills with the Line of Control defining the south-west limit.

The district established in 1968 is divided into 19 blocks and 385 villages. The geography is marked by rivers such as Ans, Sailani and Tawi which enrich the fertile land. Historically the region was a vital trade hub during the Mauryan era and was favoured by Mughal emperors. The population is culturally diverse with communities including Paharis, Gujjars, Dogras, and Kashmiris contributing to its rich cultural heritage. The study investigates the socio-cultural and livelihood dynamics of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District considering the area's diverse climate, geography and socio-cultural challenges which significantly influence their lifestyle and community practices.

3.5 SAMPLING PROCEDURE AND SAMPLE SIZE

The study adopted a qualitative approach with an inductive strategy to examine the socio-cultural and livelihood changes among the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District focusing on understanding the "why" and "how" of their experiences rather than just the "what" or "how many." Using purposive sampling, a non-probability method also known as judgment

sampling 35 respondents were selected including 25 general participants (males, females, literate, illiterate, married, and unmarried individuals). Because, data was collected only from those respondents who have at least basic knowledge about their community, marriage, customs, education, religion, social media, Forest Rights Act. Also, 10 main stakeholders comprising representatives from the Forest Department, environmental professionals and NGOs. The method allowed the researcher to intentionally select participants most relevant to the study objectives ensuring the inclusion of diverse perspectives. The Gujar population, making up 30.31% of the district's total population of 483,284, was represented by respondents selected from five blocks with significant Gujar populations: Rajouri (45.30%), Manjakote (36.30%), Thanamandi (43.43%) Budhal (52.50%), and Darhal (41.20%). The sample criteria included participants aged 18 years or older with awareness of their community's socio-cultural and livelihood practices. Open-ended in-depth interviews were conducted to explore themes related to socio-cultural dynamics gender roles, economic responsibilities and responses to socio-economic and legislative changes such as the implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA). Stakeholders provided demographic and socio-economic insights to complement the data. Saturation a crucial concept in qualitative research to ensure rigor and credibility was achieved by identifying recurring themes through thematic analysis. The study provided a rich and nuanced understanding of the Gujar tribe's evolving practices, emotions, beliefs and motivations emphasizing the importance of qualitative research in exploring the complexities of human behaviour and interactions.

3.6 INSTRUMENT OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher employed the following instruments of data collection for the study:

3.6.1 In-Depth Interviews

Two sets of interviews were conducted. The first set targeted the general population of the Gujar community consisting of 68 open-ended questions including demographic inquiries. The second set focused on stakeholders, comprising 21 open-ended questions also including demographic information.

3.6.2 Qualitative Data Collection

The open-ended nature of the questions allowed for comprehensive responses facilitating a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural and livelihood aspects of the Gujjar tribe.

3.7 DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES

The data collection process for this study commenced with a thorough review of related literature, which informed the development of data collection instruments. Based on this review, an interview schedule was designed to facilitate two sets of in-depth interviews. The first set of interviews targeted members of the Gujjar tribe. These interviews were conducted in the local language to ensure that participants could express themselves comfortably. Their responses were recorded to capture detailed qualitative data accurately. Also, 18 case studies were conducted to provide deeper insights into the research problem. The second set of interviews focused on main stakeholders and was conducted in both the local language and English. The dual language approach allowed stakeholders to respond in English when comfortable. However, if any difficulties arose, the researcher translated questions and responses into the local language to ensure clarity and comprehensive communication.

The methodological approach was designed to enhance the reliability and depth of qualitative data by accommodating linguistic and cultural considerations thereby facilitating rich and meaningful responses from all participants.

3.8 METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected from the general respondents and the in-depth interviews were analysed using descriptive statistics to consolidate and interpret response patterns. As the in-depth interviews were qualitative the responses needed to be classified first to enable systematic treatment. After classification the information was assigned a frequency distribution and percentage treatment. The method was chosen because it facilitates the formalization of quantitative information making comparison and trend identification in the data set possible. With these techniques the study ensured a systematic and objective

consideration of participants opinions which was especially helpful in the documentation of shared sentiment and variations among response categories so that clarity would be maintained when interpreting the data.

For thematic stakeholder data analysis, the Braun and Clarke (2006) approach was applied. Since in-depth interviews where qualitative thematic analysis was utilized to identify repeated themes, patterns and information in text data. The method is most appropriate for exploring subjective experiences perceptions and social influences thus also being suitable for stakeholder perspective analysis. Through systematic coding and response categorization this method provided a full picture of the central issues while preserving the richness and subtlety of stakeholder opinion.

3.9 INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA OF SAMPLE

Inclusion Criteria: Subjects between 18 to 60 years of age were included for awareness of socio-cultural practices.

Exclusion Criteria: The study excludes participants under the age of 18 years to ensure that participants possess the maturity and awareness required for genuine interaction and also excluded individuals who were not members of the tribe to ensure specific focus on the socio-cultural and livelihood dimensions of the Gujar community. In addition, those who have little knowledge of the practices of their community or those who decline to provide information through the interviews are not included in an effort to ensure the quality and integrity of data collected.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical principles of research were upheld through an official authorization process from competent authorities. What was the intention behind the research and their crucial role and their right in research activities was clarified before conducting the in-depth interviews from the Gujar tribe and stakeholders. At any given point they could withdraw in addition to confidentiality of the response and voluntarism were brought out. Once the participants were thoroughly informed and satisfied with the ethical guidelines, they were asked to sign a consent form in agreement to be a participant.

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Chapter – IV
Analysis and Interpretation of Data

CHAPTER-IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a critical analysis and interpretation of data regarding the Gujjar tribe focusing on the frequency distribution of socio-economic variables and thematic analysis of cultural practices. The chapter identifies major changes in marriage practices including changing norms around dowry age of marriage and partner choicer effecting larger societal trends. The study presents a number of dominant themes encompassing the history of family setups in which joint families are said to be evolving towards more common nuclear families. The evolution is necessitated by modernization and economic considerations with frequency distribution patterns pointing towards increasing desire for fewer family members. Cultural practices upheld by the Gujjar society are enumerated in addition to any recent developments or dropping of particular practices through the display of coping mechanisms by the society. The effects of modernization on the conventional professions like cattle breeding and livelihoods in forests are examined and findings of challenges and restructuring in economic processes are presented. The impact of the Forest Rights Act of 2006 on the availability of forest resources and the socio-economic condition of the people is critically evaluated with contradicting reactions in terms of its efficacy. Particular problems encountered by Gujjar women in maintaining livelihoods and their changing roles in domestic decision-making and community leadership are likewise discussed with themes of empowerment and gender dynamics. Analysis of the impact of social media upon cultural identity and education shows positive and negative impacts upon community participation and prospects. The expected effects of parliamentary reforms on the rights and representation of the Gujjar community are also discussed focusing on themes of recognition and socio-economic progress. Hence, the chapter highlights the intricate dynamics of tradition and modernity marking prevailing challenges and developing prospects of the Gujjar tribe through discerned trends and patterns.

4.2 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF GENERAL RESPONDENTS

Frequency distribution is a statistical measure that puts data into perspective and simplifies it by revealing how frequently each value or category repeats within a data set. For the purpose of the study of socio-demographic information of respondent's frequency distribution assists in classifying the attributes of the participants (e.g., age, gender, marital status, education, occupation type of family and knowledge regarding the Forest Rights Act-2006) into different groups or classes. It allows researchers to understand the distribution of these variables, identify trends and determine the prevalence of certain attributes within the study population. For example, knowing how many respondents fall into specific age brackets (e.g. 18-25, 26-40) or the primary sources of information about the Forest Rights Act 2006 (e.g., government officials, community leaders) can provide insights into the demographic composition and the channels through which information is disseminated. The statistical approach supports the study by helping to highlight patterns make comparisons and draw conclusions based on the frequency of responses across various categories thus facilitating a deeper understanding of the socio-demographic landscape of the respondents.

Table 4.2.1. Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Age (Years)	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
18-30	4	16%
31-40	6	24%
41-50	12	48%
Above 50	3	12%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.2.1 shows that the largest group of respondents (48%) falls within the age group of 41 to 50 years indicating those middle-aged individuals are predominantly represented in the study. The 31 to 40 years of age group comprises 24% of respondents

while those aged 18 to 30 and above 50 years represent 16% and 12% respectively. The distribution shows a focus on the perspectives and experiences of older adults within the sample.

Table 4.2.2. Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	11	44%
Female	14	56%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.2.2 illustrates the gender distribution among respondents, revealing a slight female majority with 56% identifying as female and 44% as male. The balance shows a relatively even representation of genders contributing to diverse insights into the research topic.

Table 4.2.3. Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Marital Status	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Unmarried	8	32%
Married	12	48%
Separated	2	8%
Divorced	1	4%
Widow/Widower	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.2.3 details the marital status of respondents, where 48% are married making it the most common status. The second-largest group is unmarried individuals at 32%. Smaller proportions include separated (8%) divorced (4%) and widow/widower (8%). The prevalence of married respondents may influence social dynamics discussed in the study.

Table 4.2.4. Distribution of Respondents by Educational Status

Educational Status	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Illiterate	3	12%
Primary	5	20%
Middle	6	24%
High School	7	28%
Intermediate	4	16%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.2.4 presents the educational status of respondents indicating that the most common level achieved is high school with 28% of participants having completed the education. The middle (24%) and primary (20%) education levels follow. In addition, 12% of respondents are illiterate highlighting a range of educational backgrounds that may impact their socio-economic perspectives.

Table 4.2.5. Distribution of Respondents by Profession/Occupation

Profession/Occupation	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Labouring	4	16%
Farming	6	24%
Small Shop Keeping / Entrepreneur	5	20%
Forest Dependent	3	12%
Multi Works	4	16%
Private/Government Jobs	3	12%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.2.5 categorizes the respondents by their profession showing that 24% are engaged in farming which is the most represented occupation. It is closely followed by small shop keeping/entrepreneur at 20%. Labouring and multi-works each account for 16% of respondents while forest-dependent occupations and private/government jobs represent 12% each. The distribution underscores the significance of agriculture and small enterprises in the local economy.

Table 4.2.6. Distribution of Respondents by Type of Family

Type of Family	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Joint	8	32%
Nuclear	12	48%
Extended	5	20%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.2.6 reveals that 48% of respondents belong to nuclear families, making it the most common family type. Joint families represent 32%, indicating a significant portion still practices the traditional structure. Meanwhile extended families account for 20% of respondents. The distribution shows a trend towards nuclear family setups in the community reflecting changing social dynamics and potentially impacting family roles responsibilities and resource-sharing practices.

Table 4.2.7. Distribution of Respondents by Number of Family Members

Number of Family Members	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1-5	10	40%
5-10	8	32%
10-15	5	20%
15-20	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.2.7 illustrates that the majority of respondents (40%) have 1 to 5 family members, indicating a preference for smaller households. 32% fall into the 5 to 10 members category, while 20% report having 10 to 15 members. Only 8% have 15 to 20 members showing that large families are relatively uncommon. The distribution indicates a trend towards smaller family sizes likely influenced by modern economic factors and lifestyle choices which may affect social support systems and care giving dynamics within the community.

4.3 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ON THE CHANGING PATTERNS OF FAMILY AND MARRIAGE SYSTEM AMONG THE GUJJAR TRIBE OF RAJOURI DISTRICT

Frequency distribution is a technique of arranging and condensing data to express how frequently various responses are found in a dataset. It is an indispensable tool that will aid the research of "The Changing Patterns of Family and Marriage System among the Gujjar Tribe of Rajouri District." Through frequency distribution, research will be able to numerically express responses to questions relating to family size, gender roles, marriage traditions and intergenerational change. For instance, whether the population of the Gujjar tribal families has undergone a change over the last few years or if the gender roles have changed can be studied by frequency distribution in order to exhibit the extent of these changes. It facilitates the aggregation of answers like yes/no or other categorical choices into percentages enabling one to easily spot prevailing trends like a rise or fall in family size or a change in gender roles. The frequency distribution enables one to put these changes and trends into numbers providing insights into changing socio-cultural practices, which informs the study's findings. It makes the presentation of results in graphs and charts more accessible and understandable to researchers, policymakers and other stakeholders concerned with the evolving dynamics of the Gujjar tribe.

Table 4.3.1. Distribution of Respondents Regarding Changes in the Size of Gujjar Tribal Families in Recent Years

Response	Number of Respondents (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	72%
No	7	28%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.1 revealed that most respondents claimed changes in Gujjar tribal family sizes in recent times. Of the overall 25 respondents, 18 (72%) reported changes in their family size whereas 7 respondents (28%) replied that there had been no changes. The discovery implied that most of the Gujjar families experienced changes in family dynamics which might have been determined by socio-economic or cultural influences. The answers put forward that an overwhelming percentage of the respondents noticed changes in family sizes over the years.

Table 4.3.2. Distribution of Respondents Regarding Household Size Compared to the Past

Household Size Comparison	Number of Respondents (n)	Percentage (%)
Larger	10	40.0%
Smaller	8	32.0%
About the Same	5	20.0%
No Opinion	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.2 shows the distribution of respondents regarding the present household as compared to past in the study area. The majority of respondents i.e. 10 out of 25 (40%)

indicated that their households are now larger compared to the past. It could be due to various factors such as economic hardship where extended family members live together to reduce expenses or cultural preferences for joint family systems in certain regions. The second majority i.e. 8 out of 25 (32%) reported that their households have become smaller. The trend might reflect the increasing shift towards nuclear families or the impact of migration where younger family members move away for education or employment. The third majority i.e. 5 out of 25 (20%) stated that their household size remains about the same as in the past. The consistency may suggest stability in family structures within certain socio-economic groups. Finally, a small proportion i.e. 2 out of (8%) of respondents had no opinion on the matter indicating either a lack of awareness or indifference toward household size changes. Thus, the diverse patterns of household size changes highlighting the influence of both traditional and modern factors on family living arrangements.

Table 4.3.3. Distribution of Respondents Regarding the Main Reasons for Changing Household Size

Reasons for Family Size Change	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Economic Factors	10	40.0%
Cultural Factors	8	32.0%
Health and Education Factors	5	20.0%
Social and Policy Factors	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.3 presents the break-up of respondents in terms of the primary reasons for household size changes among the Gujjar tribe of Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir showing sociological aspects of cultural and livelihood change. Out of the 25 respondents, economic reasons were found to be the primary reason mentioned by 40.0% (10 respondents), depicting the tribe's adjustment to economic constraints and livelihood

changes. 32.0% (8 respondents) implied by the cultural factors accounted for and showed the role of traditional practices and customs in affecting family size. Health and education factors as mentioned by 20.0% (5 respondents) highlight the significance of enhancing access to basic services in influencing household size. Social and policy factors as mentioned by 8.0% (2 respondents) lastly illustrate the effect of outside interventions and evolving social attitudes. The result offers a sociological perspective into how cultural heritage, economic imperatives and policy structures intersect to shape the household compositions of the Gujjar tribe in the face of changing livelihoods.

"Our family size decreased because we had to send two of our children to live with their uncle in the city for better education. We couldn't afford to support their schooling here and it was important for their future. It was a hard decision but we had no choice due to our financial situation"

Table 4.3.4. Distribution of Respondents Regarding the Functioning of Traditional Kinship and Lineage Systems in Their Tribal Community

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	12	48.0%
No	13	52.0%
Total	25	100

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.4 illustrates the respondents' views on whether traditional kinship and lineage systems continue to function in their tribal community. Out of 25 respondents, 12 (48%) affirmed that these systems still operate while a slight majority of 13 respondents (52%) indicated that these systems no longer function effectively. The near-even split shows that while traditional kinship and lineage systems are still recognized by almost half of the community a larger portion perceives a decline or change in their significance or effectiveness. It could point to evolving social structures or external influences that are impacting the traditional way of life in the community.

Table 4.3.5. Distribution of Respondents Based on Important Family Members

Important Family Members	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Parents	11	44.0%
Siblings	3	12.0%
Spouse	5	20.0%
Children	5	20.0%
Extended Family	1	4.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.5 presents the distribution of respondents based on important family members, shedding light on the family dynamics of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Among the 25 respondents, parents were identified as the most important family members by 44.0% (11 respondents) highlighting the central role of parental authority and guidance in Gujjar households. Siblings were considered important by 12.0% (3 respondents), reflecting their role in providing support and companionship. Spouse and children were each noted by 20.0% (5 respondents) emphasizing the significance of marital and nuclear family relationships in the tribe's social fabric. Extended family was cited by 4.0% (1 respondent), indicating a diminishing but present value of wider kinship networks. The data underscores the evolving priorities within Gujjar households balancing traditional kinship structures with modern family roles amidst changing cultural and livelihood contexts. During the study one respondent mentioned:

"My parents are the foundation of our family. Even when my siblings and I are far away we always seek their advice on critical matters. They still manage the household and provide guidance to us even though we are adults"

Table 4.3.6. Distribution of Respondents Noticing Changes in Ancestral Lineages and Inheritance Practices

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	72.0%
No	7	28.0%
Total	25	100%
Changes in Ancestral Lineages and Inheritance Practices	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Changes in Surnames	8	44.4%
Changes in Inheritance Laws	6	33.3%
Reduced Importance of Lineage	4	22.3%
Total	18	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.6 examines the distribution of respondents noticing changes in ancestral lineages and inheritance practices among the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir providing insights into shifting socio-cultural dynamics. Out of 25 respondent's 72.0 percent (18 respondents) reported observing changes, while 28.0 percent (7 respondents) did not notice any alterations. Among the 18 respondents who observed changes 44.4 percent (8 respondents) highlighted changes in surnames, reflecting a shift in identity markers within the community. Changes in inheritance laws were noted by 33.3 percent (6 respondents) indicating the influence of evolving legal frameworks on traditional property distribution. 22.3 percent (4 respondents) reported a reduced importance of lineage signifying a gradual erosion of ancestral significance in family and social structures. These findings reveal the interplay between modern influences and traditional practices in shaping the cultural identity of the Gujjar tribe. During the study one respondent mentioned:

"In our community, we have always passed down our family name from father to son, but lately, I've noticed that some families are changing their

surnames to sound more modern or aligned with legal requirements. It is something I never expected to happen, and it shows how things are changing."

Table 4.3.7. Distribution of Respondents Regarding Traditional Roles and Responsibilities of Gujjar Men and Women in the Community

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	19	76.0%
No	6	24.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.7 presents the distribution of respondents regarding the traditional roles and responsibilities of Gujjar men and women in their community shedding light on gender-based roles within the socio-cultural framework of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir. Among the 25 respondent's 76.0 percent (19 respondents) acknowledged the continuation of traditional roles and responsibilities, reflecting the deep-rooted adherence to customary gender norms. In contrast 24.0 percent (6 respondents) did not observe such roles indicating a potential shift or diversification in gender-based responsibilities within the community. This data highlights the balance between preserving traditional practices and adapting to evolving societal norms, showcasing the dynamic interplay of cultural continuity and change in Gujjar society.

Table 4.3.8. Distribution of Respondents Regarding Changes in the Roles and Responsibilities of Gujjar Men and Women

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	16	64.0%
No	9	36.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.8 shows the distribution of respondents regarding changes in the roles and responsibilities of Gujjar men and women. Among the 25 respondents 16 individuals (64.0%) indicated that these roles and responsibilities have changed while 9 respondents (36.0%) stated that they have not. The majority of respondents recognizing changes shows a significant shift in the traditional roles assigned to men and women within the Gujjar community. It may reflect broader socio-economic transformations, increasing exposure to modern influences or evolving community dynamics that encourage re-evaluation of gender roles. Conversely the minority who believe that roles have remained unchanged may represent a segment of the community that values traditional practices and resists change.

Table 4.3.9. Distribution of Respondents Regarding Changes Over Time

Change Over Time	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Shift in Gender Roles	12	48.0%
Changes in Economic Responsibilities	8	32.0%
Decline in Traditional Practices	5	20.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.9 showcases the breakdown of respondents in terms of changes over time within Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir, pointing out major socio-cultural changes. Of the 25 respondents, 48.0 percent (12 respondents) indicated a change in gender roles meaning changing dynamics in men and women's division of labour and responsibility. 32.0 percent (8 respondents) recorded changes in economic duties highlighting adjustments to new livelihood needs and economic stress. 20.0 percent (5 respondents) recorded a diminishing of traditional practice indicating the ongoing loss of cultural rituals and tradition. This figure highlights the interface of modernization and cultural change among the Gujjar tribe demonstrating the adaptation of the group to wider social and economic changes. One respondent shared their insights stating that:

“Changes in the roles we play in our communities demonstrate an increased understanding that women and men have an equal role to play. The change is critical to our growth and acclimatization to contemporary times. But at the same time, it is essential that we don't lose touch with our cultural heritage while we move ahead.”

Table 4.3.10. Distribution of Respondents on Reasons for Shift in Involvement of Men and Women in Household and Community Work

Reasons	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Economic Necessity	6	24%
Changes in Social Norms	7	28%
Increased Education and Awareness	5	20%
Influence of Media and Technology	7	28%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.10 indicates the spread of respondents on the causes of the change in the role of men and women in household and community work among the Gujjar community in Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir. Out of the 25 respondents, changes in social norms and the impact of media and technology were each mentioned by 28 percent (7 respondents), underlining their contribution to changing traditional gender roles. Economic need was pointed out by 24 percent (6 respondents) indicating the effects of financial stresses on redistributive pressures. Heightened education and awareness were seen by 20 percent (5 respondents) in terms of escalating knowledge of gender equality and reciprocal roles. The information suggests an interrelated shift in the Gujjar population influenced by intrinsic and extrinsic forces restructuring family and community engagement. During the study one respondent shared:

“I have noticed that men and women in our community are now more willing to share household tasks. It is heartening to see the positive change where everyone plays a part in making our homes and community better”



Figure 4.1. Photograph of a Gujjar woman discussing shared household tasks in Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir highlighting the positive change in gender roles within the community.

Thus, it is evident that the involvement of both men and women in household and community work has shifted due to multiple interrelated factors. The findings from Table 4.3.10 not only highlight the current dynamics within the Gujjar Tribe but also suggest a positive trend towards more equitable distribution of labour. The shift is essential for fostering an inclusive environment where both genders can contribute to their families and communities effectively. Embracing these changes can lead to improved social cohesion and a better quality of life for all community members.

Table 4.3.11. Distribution of Respondents on Differences in Communication and Responsibilities between Elders and Youth in the Tribe

Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes, noticed Significant Differences	11	44%
No, haven't noticed differences	10	40%
Not sure	4	16%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.11 shows the distribution of respondents in terms of perceived differences in communication and responsibility-sharing between youth and elders in the tribe. Interestingly, 11 out of 25 respondents (44%) admitted observing considerable differences in the manner in which communication is done today versus the past, reflecting a distinct trend towards a more participatory model among youth. It indicates that the younger members are becoming more and more involved in discussions with their seniors, which provides the opportunities to share concepts and also creates a culture of cooperation. On the other hand, 10 among 25 (40%) shared that they did not observe any variations which may indicate the maintenance of old communication procedures among some families or communities of the tribe. It points out that although changes are being experienced in some sections, others can be more conservative in terms of continuing traditional dynamics, pointing to the richness of experiences within the tribe. In addition, 4 out of 25 (16%) were not certain about the changes indicating a possible lack of awareness or perception of changes in communication patterns. The doubt can arise from diverse experiences in heterogeneous family structures indicating that generation-to-generation interactions can be vastly different between families. One respondent noted:

"The elders and the youth communicate differently now. The youth are more vocal and want to be part of discussions. It's a good change but sometimes it feels like we are losing the respect we used to have"



Figure 4.2. Photograph of a Gujjar man discussing intergenerational communication Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir reflecting on changes in respect and dialogue between elders and youth.

Therefore, the information captures a significant transformation in the communication styles and roles that exist among generations. The heightened participation of young people in discussions indicates a positive direction toward collective leadership and cooperation. Yet, the current percentage of the respondents who feel there are no changes indicates the necessity for deeper investigation into the complexities of intergenerational relations. The effects of these changes are diverse. On the one hand the combination of old and new modes of communication can enhance communal activities, promoting a better understanding between generations. On the other hand, as young people become increasingly assertive it might cause conflict with elders who are used to traditional hierarchies. The conundrum is in finding a balance between respect for tradition and the need to adapt to what is going on in the world.

Therefore, the evolution serves to highlight the need to develop spaces where free communication is facilitated so that both the elders and the youth may learn from one

another. Through such intergenerational communication, cultural identity may be maintained in the face of changing societal trends. Through recognition and appreciation of the contributions of all members the Gujjar community may overcome these changes constructively ensuring that their rich cultural heritage is carried forward in the face of changing dynamics.

Table 4.3.12. Distribution of Respondents on Differences in Values, Aspirations, and Lifestyle Choices of Gujjar Tribal Youth Compared to Previous Generations

Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Emphasis on Education	9	36%
Increased Career Aspirations	7	28%
Adoption of Modern Lifestyles	5	20%
Retention of Traditional Values	4	16%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.12 shows the proportion of respondents on differences in values, aspirations, and life choices of Gujjar tribal youth with preceding generations illustrating the changing socio-cultural context in Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir. Out of 25 respondents, 36 percent (9 respondents) pointed to education as the focus highlighting the youth's increasing prioritization of educational success as a pathway to advancement. Higher career ambitions were mentioned by 28 percent (7 respondents) describing the trend towards professional and economic aspirations. Embracing new lifestyles was recorded by 20 percent (5 respondents) reflecting the impact of globalization and modernization. On the other hand, 16 percent (4 respondents) recorded holding on to traditional values highlighting the continuity of cultural heritage amidst great transformation. This information highlights the dynamic tension between tradition and modernity in creating the aspirations and lifestyle options of Gujjar tribal youth. Precisely one of the respondents explained the change as:

"Today's youth are more conscious of their possibilities and opportunities. We have had education open doors for us and we want to do more than what our parents could do. Yet we still retain our traditions because they define us. It's about balancing this"

Table 4.3.13. Distribution of Respondents on Traditional Marriage Customs and Rituals Practiced in the Tribal Community

Marriage Customs and Rituals	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Arranged Marriages	10	40%
Dowry Traditions	6	24%
Rituals and Ceremonies	7	28%
Community Involvement in Celebrations	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.13 indicates the breakup of respondents on traditional marriage rituals and customs followed in the Gujjar tribal society providing an understanding of cultural continuity in Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir. Out of 25 respondent's 40 percent (10 respondents) reported arranged marriages as a common practice expressing the long-term significance of community and family in marriage decisions. Rituals and ceremonies were mentioned by 28 percent (7 respondents) pointing to the cultural richness and religious importance of marriage customs. Dowry customs were mentioned by 24 percent (6 respondents) showing the continuation of economic transactions in marriage negotiations. Involvement of the community in celebrations was mentioned by 8 percent (2 respondents) pointing to the communal nature of social celebrations. This information offers a rich perspective on how customary marriage rituals and traditions influence the social life of the Gujjar community. One respondent in the community had this to say:

"Our marriages are a reflection not only of our love but of our heritage. As we revere our traditions we feel the tug of contemporary life and it confuses us sometimes"



Figure 4.3. Photograph of a Gujjar woman discussing marriage and modernization Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir expressing the pull of modern life and its effects.

Therefore, the ancient marriage traditions and practices followed in the Gujjar tribal society are representative of the dynamic tension between cultural heritage and changing societal norms which denote a dynamic cultural terrain adapting yet preserving fundamentals.

Table 4.3.14. Distribution of Respondents on Changes in Ceremonies and Practices over Time

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	72%
No	7	28%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.14 indicates the percentage of respondents in regard to the changes in practices and ceremonies over time in the Gujjar community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. 72 percent or 18 respondents out of 25 respondents said they witnessed the changes in customary ceremonies and practices indicating the impacts of modernization, socio-economic conditions and exposure to external culture on the community's rituals. Alternatively, 28 percent (7 participants) indicated there were no serious changes showing cultural persistence among traditional practices by parts of the people. The figures highlight the reciprocal tension between the adaptability of culture and continuities in responding to changing societal settings.

Table 4.3.15. Distribution of Respondents on Reasons for the Evolution of Tribal Marriage Customs and Norms

Reasons for Evolution	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Increased Education and Awareness	9	36%
Changing Social Values	6	24%
Economic Pressures	5	20%
Influence of Media and Technology	3	12%
Migration and Urbanization	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.15 shows the distribution of respondents on the factors behind the change in tribal marriage traditions and practices among the Gujjar people in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of the 25 respondents, 36 percent (9 respondents) mentioned increased education and awareness as a primary driver of these changes, emphasizing the influence of knowledge and exposure in transforming traditional practices. Societal value changes were mentioned by 24 percent (6 respondents) and show the incremental change in societal attitudes toward marriage. Pressures of finance were mentioned by 20 percent (5 respondents), showing how economic pressures impact marital norms. The role of technology and the media was reported by 12 percent (3 respondents), pointing out the

power of contemporary means of communication to bring new influences. Migration and urbanization were cited by 8 percent (2 respondents), highlighting the influence of mobility and access to urban ways of life in transforming tribal marriage rites. This information identifies a multifaceted mix of issues leading to the development of traditional norms within the population.

"I think education has opened our eyes to possibilities beyond our tradition. Though I respect our custom, I also believe we must change to suit our present reality."

Table 4.3.16. Distribution of Respondents on the Influence of Transformations in Marriage Customs on Family Structure and Dynamics

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	20	80%
No	5	20%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.16 shows respondents' distribution on how changes in marriage practices have affected the family structure and dynamics of the Gujjar community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Of the 25 respondents, 80 percent (20 respondents) indicated that changes in marriage practices have had a significant effect on family structure and dynamics with an indication of change in how family roles relationships and responsibilities are viewed and performed. On the other hand, 20 percent (5 respondents) said that such changes have not significantly impacted family structure, showing a more conservative view of marital and family roles. This information shows the significant impact of changing marriage traditions on the overall socio-cultural fabric of the community.

Table 4.3.17. Distribution of Respondents on Perceptions of Marital Arrangements and Generational Differences in Acceptance

Perceptions of Marital Arrangements	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Positive Attitudes	10	40%
Neutral Attitudes	8	32%
Negative Attitudes	5	20%
Unsure	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.17 displays the distribution of the respondents on their attitudes toward marital arrangements and the generational variation in terms of acceptance within the Gujjar community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Of the 25 respondents, 40 percent (10 respondents) had favourable attitudes toward marital arrangements showing general acceptance and endorsement of traditional practices. 32 percent (8 respondents) mentioned neutral attitudes representing a more neutral or unbiased outlook on the issue. 20 percent (5 respondents) reported negative attitudes indicating a negative attitude toward existing marital arrangements. 8 percent (2 respondents) had mixed feelings regarding their attitudes which represented ambiguity or indecisiveness about the matter. The information shows the variability of views in the community about marriage traditions and how age may affect the uptake of traditional and changing practices. One interviewee encapsulated his view as follows:

"In our community, we have always cherished our traditions, but the younger generation appears to be accepting new concepts regarding marriage. We must establish a balance that respects our past while providing for growth and comprehension."

Table 4.3.18. Distribution of Respondents on Age at Marriage in the Gujjar Tribal Community

Age at Marriage	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Below 18 years	4	16%
18 to 21 years	10	40%
22 to 25 years	8	32%
Above 25 years	3	12%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.18 shows the distribution of respondents by age at marriage among the Gujjar tribal community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of the 25 respondents, 40 percent (10 respondents) answered that marriage usually happens between 18 to 21 years of age, indicating the most prevalent age range for marriage among the community. 32 percent (8 respondents) indicated that marriage tends to take place between 22 to 25 years of age reflecting a trend towards delayed marriages. 16 percent (4 respondents) reported that marriages take place below 18 years of age reflecting the continuation of early marriages among some sections of the community. 12 percent (3 respondents) only stated that marriage takes place after 25 years of age indicating a minority of people choosing late marriage. The statistics reflect the different trends of marriage ages showing both cultural traditions and new trends in the Gujjar society. During the research one respondent stated:

"In our society marriage used to occur as young as 16 or 17 but now with the increase of girls in school and men keeping themselves busy with work it's not uncommon to wait until past 20. Nonetheless, there's pressure from the old people to marry early particularly in the rural areas where traditions are strong."

Table 4.3.19. Distribution of Respondents Based on Exogamy Practices

Practice of Exogamy	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	72.0%
No	7	28.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.19 shows the breakup of respondents according to the practice of exogamy among the Gujjar tribal community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of 25 respondents, 72 percent (18 respondents) asserted the practice of exogamy, which means that marrying outside the tribe or community is a prevailing practice among the Gujjars. Contrarily, 28 percent (7 interviewees) responded that there is no practice of exogamy representing a section of the community practicing endogamous custom. It illustrates the frequency of exogamy in the community and how it can promote outward social bonds as well as variegation in family ties.

Table 4.3.20. Distribution of Respondents Based on Socio-Cultural Implications Due to Exogamy

Socio-Cultural Implications	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	14	56.0%
No	11	44.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.20 shows the breakdown of respondents in terms of the socio-cultural implications resulting from exogamy in the Gujjar tribal community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of the 25 respondents, 56 percent (14 respondents) admitted that exogamy has socio-cultural implications indicating that marrying outside the community has resulted in significant changes in social relations, customs or family relationships.

Conversely, 44 percent (11 respondents) acknowledged that exogamy has had no meaningful socio-cultural effects which means that to others the practice does not radically change their own traditional cultural behaviours or family systems. This finding indicates that despite the prevalence of exogamy its contribution to the community's socio-cultural fabric could differ.

Table 4.3.21. Distribution of Respondents Based on Community Navigation of Transformations

Ways of Navigating Transformations	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strengthening Traditional Practices	8	32.0%
Adopting Modern Values	6	24.0%
Balancing Tradition and Modernity	7	28.0%
Support from Extended Family	2	8.0%
External Support (NGOs, Gov.)	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3.21 shows the distribution of respondents according to how the Gujjar community copes with change in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of the 25 respondents, 32 percent (8 respondents) highlighted the reinforcement of traditional practices as a primary means of coping with change indicating a determination to uphold cultural heritage despite modernization. 28 percent (7 respondents) reflected a balance between modernity and tradition with evidence of hybridization in embracing new values and keeping up traditional practices. 24 percent (6 respondents) opted for the uptake of modern values which indicates the power of modern ideas and practices. While 8 percent (2 respondents) pointed out that extended family support is important in managing these changes another 8 percent (2 respondents) identified external support from NGOs and

government programs as an important source of assistance. This information reflects the varied approaches the community uses in addressing socio-cultural changes highlighting the intricacy of juggling tradition and development. For example, one respondent stated,

"Strengthening our traditions keeps us grounded. In times of change our customs remind us of ourselves."



Figure 4.4. Photograph of an elderly Gujjar woman displaying traditional artifacts and herbal medicines Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir, reflecting on cultural heritage and reminding of their original customs and traditions.

Therefore, it is clear that the navigation of change by the community is characterized by a mix of resilience, adaptability and cultural identity commitment. The reactions reflect a complex response to coping with change highlighting the need to balance different influences while creating links within the community.

4.4 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ON CHANGES IN CULTURAL PATTERNS AND THE EDUCATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE GUJJAR TRIBE COMMUNITY

Frequency distribution is a fundamental research tool used to organize and analyse survey question responses. Frequency distribution is critical in the research "Changes in Cultural Patterns and the Occupational Status of the Gujjar Tribe Community" to comprehend the changing cultural and occupational patterns within the community. The research delves into issues concerning changes in traditional values, occupational habits and gender roles within the Gujjar tribe. For example, questions like "How have the classic beliefs and values of the Gujjar tribal societies developed?" and "What effect has the introduction of written language on the cultural heritage of the community?" can be examined using frequency distribution. By grouping responses into categories like "Yes" or "No," or even elaborating them further in percentages, researchers are able to quantify and compare the frequency of a certain answer easily thereby identifying common trends. The process allows the researcher to determine whether there are notable changes in cultural practices how education influences language usage or if there are changes in traditional professions. It provides a more organized presentation of the data facilitating the formulation of conclusions and making evidence-based recommendations for community development and policy formulation. It renders frequency distribution a necessary component of the analysis for comprehending the changing socio-cultural scenario of the Gujjar tribe.

Table 4.4.1. Distribution of Respondents Based on Evolution of Traditional Values and Belief Systems of Gujjar Tribal Communities to Mainstream Culture

Evolution of Traditional Values and Beliefs	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gradual Adaptation to Modern Practices	9	36.0%
Preservation of Traditional Values	6	24.0%
Blending Tradition with Modernity	7	28.0%
Resistance to Mainstream Influence	2	8.0%
Uncertain/No Opinion	1	4.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.1 shows the respondents' distribution according to the development of traditional values and belief systems of the Gujjar tribal groups of Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir, vis-à-vis mainstream culture. Out of 25 respondents, 36 percent (9 respondents) showed a gradual adoption of modern practices, meaning that the community is gradually adopting contemporary values in their traditional way of life. 28 percent (7 respondents) spoke of combining tradition and modernity in a bid to balance both new and old practices. 24 percent (6 respondents) highlighted the upholding of traditional values pointing to a desire to hold on to their cultural heritage in the face of outside influences. 8 percent (2 respondents) showed resistance to the influence of mainstream culture pointing to a portion of the community that actively resists the invasion of modern practices. Lastly, 4 percent (1 respondent) were unsure or did not hold an opinion a minority voice on the subject. The figures reflect the extent of openness towards change in the community and their method of accommodation or resistance of external cultural stimuli in taking the survey one respondent discussed:

"Tradition is what makes us who we are yet we can't turn a blind eye to what's happening outside. We're figuring out how to live two worlds take

what's meaningful from the past but adjust to live in this modern-day world. I think you can preserve our values while accepting change."

Table 4.4.2. Distribution of Respondents Based on main Factors Contributing to the Transformation of Cultural Practices and Rituals among Gujjar Tribal Populations

Main Factors Contributing to Transformation	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Influence of Modern Education	9	36.0%
Economic Changes	6	24.0%
Interaction with Other Communities	5	20.0%
Government Policies and Support	3	12.0%
Influence of Media and Technology	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.2 shows the distribution of respondents according to the key factors driving the change in cultural practices and rituals among Gujjar tribal communities in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Of the 25 respondent's 36 percent (9 respondents) named the impact of modern education as the major factor for change pointing out the influence of formal education on new ways of thinking and practicing. 24 percent (6 respondents) cited economic changes demonstrating that changes in the economic status of the community are affecting cultural traditions. 20 percent (5 respondents) highlighted contact with other communities as a factor contributing to change and demonstrating exposure to new ways of life and cultural norms affecting traditional rituals. 12 percent (3 respondents) cited government policies and assistance as a major influence, demonstrating the role that external efforts play in changing culture. Finally, 8 percent (2 respondents) mentioned the power of media and technology highlighting the impact that contemporary communication channels have on cultural values. The findings highlight the complex nature of cultural change with a series of social economic as well as outside factors driving

alterations to established patterns of practice. In the course of the research one of the interviewees put forward the following observation:

"The influence of contemporary education cannot be exaggerated. I have noticed younger members of my society gradually shedding some traditional practices that no longer appeal to them as they embrace the modern world. Changes in the economy are also responsible as most of us have abandoned our rural heritage. Our exposure to other societies has taught us alternative ways of living and while we endeavour to preserve our heritage, we are definitely shaped by the world beyond."



Figure 4.5. Photograph of a Gujjar woman engaged in tailoring work, Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir showcasing her transition away from traditional customs and the adoption of new skills.

Therefore, it can be said that the evolution of cultural rituals and practices among the Gujjar tribal communities is a complex process influenced by education, economic changes and interaction between communities government policies and media exposure. Although all these factors combined play a role in the development of their traditions the community still grapples with the conflict between modernity and culture.

Table 4.4.3. Distribution of Respondents Based on the Impact of Written Language and Education on the Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Impact of Written Language and Education	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Enhanced Documentation of Cultural Practices	9	36.0%
Facilitated Transmission Across Generations	6	24.0%
Led to Erosion of Oral Traditions	5	20.0%
Increased Awareness and Appreciation of Heritage	3	12.0%
Minimal Impact	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.3 presents the distribution of respondents based on the impact of written language and education on the preservation of cultural heritage within the Gujjar tribal community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Among the 25 respondents, 36 percent (9 respondents) stated that written language and education have enhanced the documentation of cultural practices helping to preserve them in a more structured and lasting form. 24 percent (6 respondents) noted that these factors have facilitated the transmission of cultural knowledge across generations ensuring continuity. 20 percent (5 respondents) mentioned that written language and education have led to the erosion of oral traditions showing a shift from traditional methods of passing down knowledge. 12 percent (3 respondents) observed that these influences have increased awareness and appreciation of cultural heritage fostering a greater respect for traditions. Lastly, 8 percent (2 respondents) felt that written language and education had a minimal impact on cultural preservation indicating a perspective that values other means of cultural transmission. This data highlights the complex and multifaceted impact of education and written language on

the preservation and transformation of cultural heritage within the community. During the study one respondent elaborated on the erosion of oral traditions, stating:

"With education becoming a necessity, our younger generation is more focused on textbooks than learning our traditional songs and stories from elders. It's a loss that goes unnoticed because while we are documenting more, we are losing the soul of our culture that was passed through spoken word"

Table 4.4.4. Distribution of Respondents Based on the Influence of Livelihood, Lifestyle and Social Structure Changes on Language Use and Linguistic Diversity

Influence on Language Use and Linguistic Diversity	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	17	68.0%
No	8	32.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.4 presents the distribution of respondents based on the influence of livelihood, lifestyle and social structure changes on language use and linguistic diversity among the Gujjar tribal community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Among the 25 respondents, 68 percent (17 respondents) reported that these changes have influenced language use and linguistic diversity indicating that shifts in livelihood and social structures have affected the way language is spoken and potentially led to the adoption of new linguistic practices. On the other hand, 32 percent (8 respondents) stated that there was no significant influence showing that for a portion of the community language use remains largely unaffected by these transformations. This data illustrates that while there is a broad recognition of change a notable segment of the community perceives language practices to be more stable despite shifts in other aspects of life.

Table 4.4.5. Distribution of Respondents Based on the Role of Traditional Rituals, Ceremonies, and Cultural Celebrations in Maintaining Identity and Community Cohesion

Role of Traditional Rituals and Cultural Celebrations	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	21	84.0%
No	4	16.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.5 presents the distribution of respondents based on the role of traditional rituals, ceremonies, and cultural celebrations in maintaining identity and community cohesion among the Gujjar tribal community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Among the 25 respondents, 84 percent (21 respondents) affirmed that these cultural practices play a significant role in preserving their community identity and cohesion highlighting the importance of rituals and celebrations in strengthening communal bonds and cultural continuity. In contrast 16 percent (4 respondents) disagreed showing that traditional rituals and celebrations may not hold the same relevance for everyone in the community. This data underscores the strong association between cultural practices and a sense of community identity for the majority of respondents while also indicating some variation in perspectives within the group.

Table 4.4.6. Distribution of Respondents Based on Adaptation of Practices to Modern Circumstances

Adaptation of Practices to Modern Circumstances	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Integration of Technology	8	32.0%
Modification of Rituals and Ceremonies	7	28.0%
Increased Participation of Youth	5	20.0%
Blending Traditional and Modern Elements	3	12.0%
Minimal Change	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.6 shows the distribution of the respondents according to the adjustment of practices to contemporary realities within the Gujjar tribal community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of the 25 respondents, 32 percent (8 respondents) reported that the use of technology has been a primary adjustment denoting the efforts of the community to align modern tools and techniques with age-old practices. 28 percent (7 respondents) reported that there has been a change in rituals and ceremonies reflecting a more adaptable stance in maintaining cultural customs in line with the changing realities of today. 20 percent (5 respondents) reported a greater involvement of the youth reflecting that the younger age groups are more engaged in cultural practices. 12 percent (3 respondents) indicated integrating traditional and contemporary aspects referring to a balance of the old and the new practices. Finally, 8 percent (2 respondents) indicated little change, suggesting that among some members, traditional practices continue relatively unchanged despite contemporary influences. The findings present a dynamic cultural adjustment process with degrees of change varying in the community. One of the respondents explained these changes as follows:

"While technology has been embraced by our people for various reasons such as staying in touch with far-away relatives we still ensure that our traditional practices are not forgotten. Although the ceremonies have become shorter because of the demands of contemporary life we ensure that the essence is never lost. The youth are now stepping forward to conduct these events making sure that our culture will forever be alive."

Table 4.4.7. Impact of External Forces on Access to and Control Over Traditional Lands and Natural Resources

Impact of External Forces on Traditional Lands and Resources	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Loss of Land due to Urbanization	10	40.0%
Decreased Control Over Resources	8	32.0%
Environmental Changes	5	20.0%
No Significant Impact	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.7 shows the distribution of respondents on the effect of outside forces on access to and control over traditional land and natural resources among the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of 25 respondents, 40 percent (10 respondents) indicated the loss of land as a result of urbanization, which points towards the considerable effect of urban development on their traditional land. 32 percent (8 respondents) reported a lessened control over resources, which indicates that there has been a decline in their capacity to utilize and manage natural resources as they have done previously. 20 percent (5 respondents) referred to environmental change which signifies that climate change or other changes in the environment have changed how they relate to natural resources. Only 8% (2 respondents) have reported no major influence which means the majority of the Gujjar community is struggling to hold land and resources in the face of modern pressures and environmental shifts. On the study one of the respondents provided their view:

"For our town the loss of land has been rather devastating. Although we have been stewards of the ground for generations, urbanization has taken it piecemeal. As outsiders take over, our conventional wisdom on how to use the land and resources is becoming obsolete. The younger generation finds distance from the ground and finds it difficult to carry on our customs.

Table 4.4.8. Strategies Employed to Preserve Cultural Identity and Traditional Practices

Strategies for Cultural Preservation	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Revitalization of Traditional Festivals	9	36.0%
Education on Cultural Heritage	8	32.0%
Community Workshops and Training	5	20.0%
Use of Media and Technology to Promote Culture	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.8 shows the distribution of the respondents based on the strategies adopted to sustain cultural identity and traditional practices of the Gujjar tribal group in

Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of the 25 respondents, 36 percent (9 respondents) highlighted the revival of traditional festivals as one of the primary strategies to safeguard their cultural heritage, indicating that these festivals have significant importance in sustaining communal connections and cultural traditions. 32 percent (8 respondents) emphasized the significance of education on cultural heritage, which means that initiatives to transmit information regarding their traditions are also crucial. 20 percent (5 respondents) cited community workshops and training as successful methods of cultural preservation which reflects that localized hands-on efforts are appreciated in passing on cultural practices. Lastly, 12 percent (3 of the respondents) identified the employment of media and technology in advancing culture, demonstrating the community's move towards incorporating contemporary tools for cultural propagation. The findings demonstrate the diverse but collective efforts by the Gujjar community to maintain their cultural identity in the face of modern times. Therefore, in the course of this study one of the participants spoke about:

"It has been difficult for us to hold on to our control of the land that has been our history for generations. With the advancement of cities and industries we have lost not just our physical space but also our link to nature which is the very essence of our way of life. The community is doing its best to cope but it seems like we're losing part of ourselves day by day."

Table 4.4.9. Role of Rituals, Ceremonies and Celebrations in Fostering Unity and Belonging

Role of Rituals and Ceremonies	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strengthening Community Bonds	12	48.0%
Providing a Sense of Identity	7	28.0%
Promoting Shared Cultural Experiences	4	16.0%
Reducing Internal Conflicts	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.9 illustrates the response of respondents about the significance of rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations in creating a sense of belonging and unity in the Gujjar tribal society of Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of 25 respondent's 48 percent (12 respondents) stressed that rituals and ceremonies are important for creating strong social bonds meaning that these ceremonies are at the heart of developing a sense of togetherness and common identity. 28 percent (7 respondents) observed that these cultural events give an individual a sense of identity which indicates that rituals play an essential role in upholding personal and communal consciousness. 16 percent (4 respondents) pointed to the way rituals foster shared cultural experiences confirming that involvement in these ceremonies binds people to their heritage. Lastly, 8 percent (2 respondents) believed that rituals assist in minimizing internal conflicts which means that these rituals can be used as conflict resolution mechanisms and as a means of ensuring harmony in the community. The information highlights the importance of traditional ceremonies in ensuring social cohesion and a sense of belonging among the Gujjar community. One of the respondents while being studied commented:

"The parties of our traditions are a lifeline to our culture. In a fast-changing world these events make us strong and remind us of who we are. It's not only about being with each other; it's about survival with roots still intact. Even during times of tension between members of the community we gather to celebrate and it mends old sores."

Table 4.4.10. Responses to Influx of People, Ideas and Practices of External Influences

Responses to Influx of External Influences	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Integration of New Practices	10	40.0%
Collaboration with Neighbouring Tribes	8	32.0%
Adaptation of Traditional Rituals	5	20.0%
Resistance to External Influences	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.10 shows the distribution of respondents based on their responses to the inflow of outside influences like individuals, concepts, and practices in the Gujjar tribal community in the Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Among 25 respondents, 40 percent (10 respondents) said they incorporated new practices into their community, showing a degree of openness and flexibility towards outside influences. 32 percent (8 respondents) cited cooperation with the neighbouring tribes, demonstrating a readiness to have mutual exchange and cooperation with the surrounding people. 20 percent (5 respondents) noted the transformation of customary rituals indicating an openness to adapting cultural practices in light of changing conditions. Lastly, 8 percent (2 of the respondents) showed resistance to outside influences meaning that some members of the community are suspicious or resistant to some outside ideas or practices. The distribution illustrates the multifaceted manner in which the Gujjar tribe responds to external influences negotiating integration, cooperation, adaptation and resistance to preserve their cultural cohesion. For the duration of the research one of the respondents provided an insight into how these cross-cultural interactions have influenced their people:

"The Gujjar people have always been strong and though we have adopted some new traditions we remain steadfast to our heritage. Working with surrounding tribes has made us strong but you always have problems. Some of us believe that too much change might water down our identity. It's about balance."

Table 4.4.11. Distribution of Respondents Based on Factors Influencing Changes in Traditional Occupations and Livelihood Practices

Factors Influencing Changes	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Economic	10	40.0%
Social	5	20.0%
Political	3	12.0%
Combination of Economic & Social	4	16.0%
Combination of Economic & Political	2	8.0%
Other Factors	1	4.0%
Total	20	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.11 indicates the percentage of respondents who responded according to factors affecting transformations in traditional occupation and livelihood patterns among the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Of the 20 respondents, 40 percent (10 respondents) referred to economic factors as the dominant influence, discussing how transformations in economic conditions, including employment opportunities and sources of income, are transforming traditional livelihoods. 20 percent (5 respondents) identified social causes, demonstrating the role of changes in social norms, relationships, and community dynamics in changing livelihood practices. 12 percent (3 respondents) identified political causes indicating government policies, legislation and political stability as influences on occupation patterns. 16 percent (4 respondents) identified a mix of economic and social drivers while 8 percent (2 respondents) reported a mix of economic and political drivers as compelling changes. Last, 4 percent (1 respondent) indicated other unnamed factors. The tally is an indicator of the sophisticated and nuanced character of drivers for change in conventional occupations and livelihoods in the Gujjar community. One of the interviewees explained his experience by saying:

"With time, reliance on conventional cattle herding has lessened owing to mounting economic pressures. Although social transformation in our society has also promoted learning and other forms of work, political choices about land use have also nudged us towards new sources of sustenance"

Table 4.4.12. Distribution of Respondents Based on Historical Experiences Shaping Occupational Patterns and Socioeconomic Status

Historical Experiences	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Colonization	7	24.0%
Marginalization	9	36.0%
Displacement	6	16.0%
Combination of Marginalization & Displacement	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.12 presents the distribution of the respondents according to historical experiences that have conditioned occupational patterns and socioeconomic status among the Gujjar tribal community in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of the respondents, 7 (24%) indicated colonization as an important historical factor in conditioning their occupational patterns and socioeconomic status. More 9 (36%), indicated marginalization as a principal influence pointing to the effect of systemic exclusion. 6 (16%) mentioned displacement as one of the factors that have influenced their livelihoods. Lastly, 3 (12%) mentioned marginalization in combination with displacement as playing a role in determining their socioeconomic status. These results reflect the multifaceted historical forces that have shaped the occupational and socioeconomic lives of the community. One respondent said:

"Our society used to be recognized for our expertise in animal rearing and woodlot management. But with having been driven off our lands and

marginalized in society most of us have had to take up jobs that barely keep us going. We have lost touch with our traditions and are finding it hard to pass them on to our children"

Table 4.4.13. Distribution of Respondents Based on Perceptions of the Younger Generation Regarding Shifts in Employment

Perception and Response to Employment Shifts	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Positive Perception: Embrace Mainstream Employment	8	32.0%
Negative Perception: Fear of Losing Cultural Identity	6	24.0%
Mixed Feelings: Balancing Tradition and Modern Employment	7	28.0%
Indifferent: Employment is Necessity, Cultural Identity Secondary	4	16.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.13 shows the frequency of respondents in terms of the perception of the younger generation towards changes in employment within the Gujjar tribal society in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. Out of the respondents, 8 (32%) perceived positively, accepting mainstream employment as a means of development and expansion. On the other hand, 6 (24%) perceived negatively being concerned about a loss of identity because of such changes. 7 (28%) of the respondents had ambivalent attitudes recognizing the difficulty of reconciling traditional ways with contemporary job opportunities. Lastly, 4 (16%) of the respondents were ambivalent perceiving employment as obligatory and cultural identity as secondary. These answers reflect a variety of mindsets of the younger generation towards job changes and their cultural status. In the course of conducting the study, one of the respondents explained:

"I see the younger generation drifting away from our traditional practices because they desire good lives. Although I see their desire for employment that brings financial stability, I fear that they are losing sight of what makes us special as Gujjars. The values, traditions and customs we hold so close are being lost and it's difficult to know how we will continue them in the years ahead"

Table 4.4.14. Distribution of Respondents Based on main Motivations and Aspirations of Younger Gujjar Tribal Members

Main Motivations and Aspirations	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Financial Stability and Economic Independence	10	40.0%
Desire for Education and Professional Careers	6	24.0%
Interest in Entrepreneurship or Self-employment	4	16.0%
Pursuit of Government Jobs or Public Sector Employment	3	12.0%
Preserving Traditional Occupations with Modern Adaptations	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.14 shows the breakdown of respondents according to the primary motivations and aspirations of younger Gujjar tribal members. Of the respondents, 10 (40.0%) had a motivation for economic independence and financial stability. 6 (24.0%) were motivated by the need for education and white-collar careers. 4 (16.0%) were interested in self-employment or entrepreneurship while 3 (12.0%) hoped to obtain government employment or public sector jobs. 2 (8.0%) participants were concerned with maintaining traditional vocations with innovative modifications. This is indicative of the

varied dreams and incentives among younger Gujjar tribal individuals. One participant from the group said:

"Whereas I appreciate the necessity of education and contemporary employment, I nonetheless maintain that our own traditional professions like cattle herding are of great value. The problem is to develop them for the present world and remain true to our heritage. We must somehow make them economically viable for contemporary society."



Figure 4.6. Photograph of a Gujjar woman with cattle Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir documenting the importance of cattle herding in traditional Gujjar values.

Hence, the young generations of Gujjars are driven by several reasons starting from economic stability and career enhancement to entrepreneurship as well as maintaining their cultural roots. These are indicative of balance between adopting newer opportunities and adhering to cultural identity.

Table 4.4.15. Distribution of Respondents Based on Challenges Faced by Gujjar Tribal Youth in Accessing Modern Occupations.

Challenges and Barriers	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Lack of Education or Relevant Skills	9	36.0%
Discrimination or Social Marginalization	5	20.0%
Limited Access to Employment Opportunities	4	16.0%
Financial Constraints	3	12.0%
Cultural Resistance to Non-Traditional Occupations	2	8.0%
Lack of Awareness about Modern Job Markets	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.15 shows the distribution of the respondents according to the problems encountered by Gujjar tribal youth in pursuing modern occupations. Out of the respondents, 9 (36.0%) noted that lack of education or proper skills was a major problem. 5 (20.0%) encountered discrimination or social exclusion and 4 (16.0%) noted limited employment opportunities. 3 (12.0%) mentioned financial problems as a challenge and 2 (8.0%) noted cultural resistance to non-traditional jobs. Another 2 (8.0%) respondents indicated a lack of knowledge about contemporary job markets. These challenges are indicative of the multifaceted barriers inhibiting the entry of Gujjar tribal youth into contemporary occupations. A Gujjar youth respondent expounded on these challenges by saying:

"Education is necessary but it costs too much for many of us. Even when we attempt to acquire a new skill set, we are discriminated against. It's heartbreaking to see our friends with a chance that we do not have.

Table 4.4.16. Distribution of Respondents Based on Changes in Gender Dynamics and Power Relations due to Occupational Shifts

Effects on Gender Dynamics and Power Relations	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Increased Gender Equality	7	28.0%
Women Gaining More Economic Independence	6	24.0%
Traditional Gender Roles Still Predominant	5	20.0%
Increased Male Dominance in Modern Occupations	3	12.0%
Shift in Household Power Relations (Women's Role Enhanced)	4	16.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.16 presents the spread of respondents in accordance with changes in gender relations and power structures owing to job transitions. Among the respondents, 7 (28.0%) noticed gender equality increasing. 6 (24.0%) indicated women becoming more economically independent whereas 5 (20.0%) noticed that there is still predominant traditional gender division of roles. 4 (16.0%) observed a change in domestic power relations with a greater role for women and 3 (12.0%) indicated greater male dominance in contemporary occupations. These answers mirror the changing gender dynamics in light of altering occupational trends. One respondent indicated:

"The transition to contemporary jobs has provided women in our society the opportunity to earn but men continue to dominate the senior positions. Although there are some families that are more accepting of women working there are many who still practice the old traditional roles in which men have greater power, particularly when it concerns significant family choices"



Figure 4.7. Photograph of a Gujjar woman reflecting on earning opportunities due to modernization, Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir.

Therefore, the occupational changes in the Gujjar tribal group have produced both advances and difficulties with regard to gender dynamics. There is a trend toward more gender equality and female empowerment, but classic roles continue to reign supreme within many homes producing a tension between old & new gender norms.

Table 4.4.17. Distribution of Respondents Based on Factors Influencing Educational Attainment and Aspirations in the Gujjar Community

Factors Influencing Educational Attainment	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Limited Access to Schools	8	32.0%
Quality of Education	6	24.0%
Cultural Beliefs and Traditions	4	16.0%
Economic Barriers (e.g., Lack of Financial Resources)	4	16.0%
Parental Support and Encouragement	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.17 depicts the distribution of the respondents by factors affecting educational attainment and aspiration among the Gujar population. Out of the respondents 8 (32.0%) mentioned lack of access to schools as an important factor 6 (24.0%) mentioned quality of education and 4 (16.0%) talked about cultural traditions and beliefs as affecting factors. 4 (16.0%) participants cited financial hindrances in terms of inadequate finance and 3 (12.0%) cited support from parents and motivation as being pivotal in influencing learning outcomes. One young member of the Gujar community stated:

"It's a struggle getting access to school in our village. We desire to learn but when schools are distant and they don't have much then it seems far from our goals. Cultural views also restrict us at times by making us feel that education does not matter"

Table 4.4.18. Distribution of Respondents Based on Suggestions to Enhance Occupational Opportunities for Gujar Youth

Suggestions for Enhancing Occupational Opportunities	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Provide Vocational Training and Skill Development Programmes	8	32.0%
Facilitate Access to Modern Job Markets and Opportunities	7	28.0%
Promote Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment	5	20.0%
Create Government Policies Supporting Job Placements	3	12.0%
Improve Career Guidance and Counselling Services	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.18 shows the respondents' distribution according to recommendations to improve occupational prospects for Gujjar youth. Out of the respondents 8 (32.0%) advised offering vocational training and skill development programs while 7 (28.0%) suggested opening up access to contemporary job markets and prospects. 5 (20.0%) advised encouraging entrepreneurship and self-employment and 3 (12.0%) advised establishing government policies for job placements. Finally, 2 (8.0%) participants emphasized enhancing career guidance and counselling services. One of the community respondents from the village expressed as follows:

“Our young people require training and guidance in sync with the current job market. They want to learn but don't have the resources to gain access to it. Empowering initiatives can transform their lives.

Table 4.4.19. Distribution of Respondents Based on Traditional Economic Activities and Sources of Livelihood in the Gujjar Tribal Community

Traditional Economic Activities and Sources of Livelihood	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Animal Husbandry (e.g., Cattle and Goat Rearing)	11	44.0%
Agriculture and Crop Farming	6	24.0%
Trading (Local Markets, Selling Livestock, or Dairy Products)	4	16.0%
Seasonal Migration for Grazing Livestock	2	8.0%
Forest Product Collection (e.g., Firewood, Herbs)	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.19 presents the breakdown of respondents according to customary economic activities and livelihood sources in the Gujjar tribal group. Among the

respondents, 11 (44.0%) practiced animal husbandry including cattle and goat raising 6 (24.0%) practiced agriculture and crop cultivation and 4 (16.0%) respondents practiced trading, including selling livestock or dairy products within local markets. 2 (8.0%) participants talked about seasonal movement for grazing cattle and 2 (8.0%) depended on collecting forest products such as firewood and herbs. Two respondents in the community described:

"We have had the transition from wholly depending on livestock keeping to experimenting with cultivation and selling stock locally. It is now becoming imperative for us to diversify because our own tradition is not adequate to maintain our families."

Table 4.4.20. Distribution of Respondents Based on Suggestions for Ensuring Economic and Occupational Stability in the Gujjar Tribal Community

Suggestions for Economic and Occupational Stability	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Increase Access to Skill Development and Training Programmes	9	36.0%
Provide Financial Support for Small Businesses and Startups	6	24.0%
Promote Sustainable Agricultural and Livestock Practices	4	16.0%
Improve Access to Credit and Financial Resources	3	12.0%
Encourage Preservation of Traditional Occupations	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.20 indicates the breakup of respondents by recommendations for the provision of economic and occupational security in the Gujjar tribal community. Out of the

respondents, 9 (36.0%) proposed enhancing access to skill development and training schemes and 6 (24.0%) promoted offering financial aid for small enterprise and start-up ventures. Four (16.0%) proposed encouraging sustainable farming and animal husbandry practices. 3 (12.0%) respondents highlighted improving access to credit and financial resources and 3 (12.0%) recommended promoting the preservation of traditional occupations. One of the respondents commented:

"Development of skills is important; we must be able to compete in the evolving job market while preserving our cultural traditions."

Table 4.4.21. Distribution of Respondents Based on Government Policies or Programmes Implemented in the Gujjar Tribal Community

Government Policies or Programmes	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Employment Generation Schemes (e.g., MGNREGA)	10	40.0%
Skill Development and Vocational Training Programmes	6	24.0%
Financial Assistance Programmes (e.g., Subsidies, Loans)	5	20.0%
Agricultural Support Initiatives	3	12.0%
Other Initiatives	1	4.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.21 indicates the respondents' distribution according to government policies or programmes that have been carried out in the Gujjar tribal community. Out of the respondents 10 (40.0%) cited employment generation schemes like MGNREGA as a primary programme.⁶ (24.0%) cited skill development and vocational training programmes and 5 (20.0%) referred to financial assistance programmes including subsidies and loans. 3 (12.0%) mentioned agricultural support programs and 1 (4.0%) mentioned other

programs. Demanding respondent was clear in pointing out the significance of these programs by assuring:

"The employment schemes have made a difference; my neighbour was employed through MGNREGA and has been able to sustain his family. But we still require greater vocational training to equip our young people with varied opportunities for work"

Table 4.4.22. Distribution of Respondents Based on main Challenges or Barriers to Policy Implementation

Main Challenges or Barriers	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Lack of Awareness and Understanding of Policies	10	40.0%
Insufficient Government Support and Resources	7	28.0%
Bureaucratic Delays and Inefficiencies	4	16.0%
Cultural and Social Barriers	3	12.0%
Political Interference	1	4.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.22 reflects the respondents' distribution according to the major challenges in policy implementation. From the data, it is clear that 40.0% (10 respondents) cited a lack of awareness and understanding of policies as the greatest challenge. Further, 28.0% (7 respondents) cited inadequate government support and resources, reflecting systemic loopholes in policy implementation. 16.0% (4 respondents) cited bureaucratic delays and inefficiencies showing administrative barriers hindering implementation. Additionally, 12.0% (3 respondents) cited cultural and social barriers, implying that entrenched societal mores act as obstacles to policy acceptance. Finally, 4.0% (1 respondent) cited political interference as a significant hindrance. The above results show that various factors are

responsible for policy implementation difficulties with the overriding issue being the ignorance factor. Overcoming these obstacles demands increased policy education, enhanced government backup and enhanced administrative effectiveness. Overcoming all these challenges is paramount to successful policy implementation as well as building inclusive development within society. One respondent described their vision for the case by saying

"Most of us do not know what programmes we can use to better our lives. If only there was a better communication by the government concerning these programs, more individuals could be helped. We need assistance not threats"

Table 4.4.23. Distribution of Respondents Based on changes in religious practices or beliefs within the Gujjar Tribe due to modernization or interaction with other communities? If yes, what are they?

Observed Changes	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Adoption of New Religious Practices	6	24.0%
Decline in Traditional Rituals	8	32.0%
Increased Syncretism with Other Communities	5	20.0%
Strengthening of Religious Identity	4	16.0%
No Noticeable Changes	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.23 luminates on the religious and cultural transformations in the community as witnessed. The greatest change which is cited by 32.0% (8 respondents), is the diminishing traditional rituals implying a gradual diminishing of ancestral practice as a result of modernization, external culture or shifts in generations regarding belief systems. 24.0% (6 respondents) identified the integration of new religious practices, indicating the

community is adopting alternative or altered modes of worship perhaps based on broader social trends, migration or exposure to other religious traditions. Further, 20.0% (5 respondents) identified greater syncretism with other communities, indicating cultural mixing and interfaith encounters that can occur through social integration and shared religious environments. Surprisingly, 16.0% (4 respondents) claimed that religious identity was strengthened revealing that certain individuals have reacted to outside influences by reasserting their faith and cultural heritage. At the same time 8.0% (2 respondents) observed no changes they could identify implying that there is a limited section of the community who retain their conventional faith and practice unaffected by external pressures. The statistics present a multifaceted picture of religious change whereby modernization, social exchange and cultural change have caused some traditions to decay and religious identities to be reaffirmed or reinvented.

Table 4.4.24. Distribution of Respondents Based on use of social media influenced the Gujar community particularly in terms of cultural identity, education or economic opportunities?

Observed Changes	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strengthened cultural identity	7	28.0%
Improved access to education	6	24.0%
Created new economic opportunities	5	20.0%
Declined traditional practices	4	16.0%
Increased community awareness and connectivity	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.24 on the role played by social media in the Gujar community presents different opinions on how it has influenced their cultural identity, education and economic prospects. Most of the participants, 7 (28%), indicated that social media has made them more culturally strong explaining how social media gives them room to celebrate and share

their tradition, customs and faith. This was followed by 6 (24%) of the respondents saying that social media has enhanced access to education which indicates that online resources and learning platforms have provided new avenues for education to the community particularly the youth. Economically, 5 (20%) of the respondents noted the establishment of new economic opportunities possibly through online ventures, e-commerce or job information networks. Yet, 4 (16%) of the respondent's spoke of a reduction in traditional practices citing fears that the impact of modernity via social media could cause some indigenous values and customs to be eroded. Further, 3 (12%) of the respondent's spoke of the growth in community awareness and connectivity citing how social media promotes wider social connections and exposure to current affairs and social issues. Distribution indicates the sociological dynamics of culture and lifestyle changes among the Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District, wherein traditional modes are both maintained and contested through the channel of social media. Distribution proves to be a change in social interactions, education and economic activities that are transforming the community's socio-cultural fabric in a contemporary context.

Table 4.4.25. Distribution of Respondents Based on passing of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 will impact the Gujjar community in terms of rights, resources, and representation?

Observed Changes	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Positive impact on rights and representation	10	40.0%
Improved access to resources	8	32.0%
No noticeable impact	4	16.0%
Negative impact on rights and resources	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.25 shows the Gujjar community's rights, resources and representation allocation among respondents depending on their opinions about the possible influence of the adoption of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order, 2024 on them. Ten (40%), of the respondents think the Bill will improve rights and representation therefore expressing hope about the increased political representation and acknowledgment of the Gujjar people. Eight (32%), of the respondents believe the Bill will result in better access to resources indicating that official recognition could translate into better access to government benefits, education and economic resources. Conversely, 4 (16%) of the respondents did not see any clear influence which suggests doubt or apathy about the practical consequences of the Bill. Finally, 3 (12%) respondents voiced worries that the Bill may compromise rights and resources presumably in response to mis-implementation or marginalization notwithstanding legal recognition. These results are vital for comprehending the sociological changes and livelihood changes among the Gujjar Tribe where legal alterations are seen as either possibilities or obstacles based on personal and collective experience.

Table 4.4.26. Distribution of Respondents Based on do you feel the recognition as Scheduled Tribes has positively or negatively affected the socioeconomic status of Gujjars? In what ways?

Observed Changes	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Positive impact on socio-economic status	12	48.0%
Negative impact on socio-economic status	6	24.0%
No noticeable impact	5	20.0%
Mixed or uncertain impact	2	8.0%
Total	25	100.0

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.26 illustrates perceptions of the respondents about the effect of the Gujjar community being recognized as a Scheduled Tribe on their socio-economic status. A significant 48% (12 respondents) opine that the recognition has been beneficial with

respondents citing better access to government schemes reservations in education and jobs and social mobility in general. These interviewees perceive the status as helpful in alleviating past marginalization and opening opportunities for economic betterment. In contrast, 24% (6 interviewees) believe that the recognition has had adverse effects, perhaps from social stigma, bureaucratic obstacles or challenges to accessing the assured benefits. This indicates worries that policies are in place yet practical applications can be lacking or biased constraining anticipated benefits. 20% (5 respondents) reported no apparent impact indicating that such factors as geographical remoteness, unawareness, or deeply rooted socio-economic issues have blocked them from seeing meaningful benefits. Their answers indicate the shortfall in policy outreach and efficiency. Apart from that 8% (2 respondents) claimed a mixed or uncertain effect meaning that they have had inconsistent experiences with both gains and losses influencing their livelihoods. The information presents a varied set of views among the Gujjar people demonstrating the diversity of socio-economic changes after they were recognized as a Scheduled Tribe. Although there are those who perceive progress there are still a number of impediments which need improved implementation and availability of welfare policies.

Table 4.4.27. Distribution of Respondents Based on changes have you observed in access to education within the Gujjar community, and how has it impacted the younger generation's livelihood opportunities?

Observed Changes	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Improved access to education and opportunities	9	36.0%
No significant changes in access to education	7	28.0%
Lack of quality education opportunities	6	24.0%
Education has opened new livelihood opportunities	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.27 indicates the distribution of the respondents according to their observations on changes in access to education among the Gujar community and its effects on the livelihood opportunities of the younger generation. A significant 9 respondents (36%) noted an increase in access to education and opportunities showing that education initiatives have had a positive impact on the younger generation giving them improved opportunities for employment and socio-economic progress. In addition, 7 (28%) of the respondents perceived that there were no new changes in education access indicating that though attempts to improve education might have been made the impact is not as clear or revolutionary. On the other hand, 6 (24%) of the respondents indicated a shortage of quality education opportunities reflecting the continuation of problems in making educational infrastructure and learning materials available to meet the demands of the population. Finally, 3 of the respondents (12%) expressed that education has created new opportunities for livelihoods highlighting concrete examples where the availability of education directly benefited the economic prospects of the next generation. The split highlights the current challenges and prospects that education has for the Gujar population, influencing their socio-economic experiences in different manners.

Table 4.4.28. Distribution of Respondents Based on the current socio-economic and cultural scenario of the Gujar Tribe in comparison to the past?

Observed Changes	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Improved socio-economic conditions	8	32.0%
No noticeable change	7	28.0%
Worsening socio-economic conditions	5	20.0%
Significant cultural changes	3	12.0%
Mixed or uncertain views	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.28 depicts the distribution of respondents based on their perception of the prevailing socio-economic and cultural situation of the Gujar Tribe now and then. 8

respondents (32%) stated that socio-economic conditions improved as it was conveyed that a majority believed that the community witnessed improvement in income, education and ailment of resources. In spite of numerous efforts and hopes 7 respondents (28%) indicated no perceptible change in their socio-economic status. This indicates that government policies and outside interventions might not have made a substantial difference in their lives perhaps because of poor implementation, ignorance or entrenched structural issues. In contrast, 5 (20%) respondents indicated fear of a deteriorating socio-economic environment citing concerns like economic stagnation, increased living expenses or diminishing access to vital resources such as land, education or healthcare. This suggests that certain members of the community feel left behind or adversely impacted by recent events. 3 (12%) respondents reported notable cultural changes which may be a result of modernization, external forces or changes in traditional customs. These transformations can comprise declining cultural identity loss of traditional knowledge or shifts in social roles in the community. These reactions capture the mixed and multiple experiences of the community highlighting the need for specific policy interventions. Finally, 2 respondents (8%) expressed mixed or ambiguous opinions suggesting that the transformations were uncertain or inconsistent within the community.

Table 4.4.29. Perception of Changes in the Socio-Economic and Cultural Scenario of the Gujjar Tribe Over Time

Perceived Change	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Improved socio-economic status due to government policies	8	32.0%
Increased access to education and employment opportunities	7	28.0%
Cultural shifts due to modernization and external influences	5	20.0%
Continued marginalization and economic struggles	5	20.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.4.29 shows the percentage of respondents depending on their own perception of changes in the socio-economic and culture of the Gujjar Tribe relative to earlier times.

It is evident that 8 (32%) of the respondents perceived that the socio-economic condition of the Gujjar community is better off nowadays because of policies of the government, such as Scheduled Tribe (ST) recognition, reservation allowance and welfare programs. These have led to improved access to healthcare, housing and economic assistance. In the same vein, 7 respondents (28%) recognized enhanced access to education and job opportunities. They emphasized the contribution of scholarships, skill development initiatives and affirmative action in elevating the younger generation. Also, 5 respondents (20%) mentioned cultural changes brought about by modernization and greater interaction with other communities. Time-honoured customs, dialects and grazing economies are slowly giving way as younger people are adopting new social mores, technologies and urban livelihoods. Another 5 people (20%) stated that though some improvement had occurred, economic hardships and marginalization continue. They highlighted such concerns as land conflicts, joblessness and red tape in the implementation of government schemes. Many feel they are still lagging behind mainstream society. One person thought about these developments and commented as follows:

"Things have changed—our children are learning, and we have improved roads and infrastructure. But at heart we still fight for recognition and respect in society. We need more sustained assistance to really make progress."

Hence, the Gujjar community has experienced positive changes in socio-economic status and education cultural changes and ongoing economic difficulties are still areas of major concern. A balanced response that assures development while retaining cultural heritage is critical for the long-term well-being of the community.

4.5 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ON LIVELIHOOD ISSUES OF GUJJAR WOMEN IN RAJOURI DISTRICT

Frequency distribution is a statistical method applied to collate and examine responses gathered from interviews or questionnaires. It assists in grouping data according to certain attributes or responses and this makes it simple to identify trends, patterns and key findings. Frequency distribution in the case of researching "Livelihood Issues of Gujjar Women in Rajouri District" enables scholars to measure responses and give a precise idea about the challenges, opportunities and resources affecting the economic condition of Gujjar women. For example, answers to a question like "How do cultural beliefs, customs and social norms influence the opportunities and challenges of Gujjar tribal women in seeking their livelihood?" or "What support systems, resources or interventions would be best suited to address the livelihood concerns of Gujjar tribal women?" can be categorized under separate labels like "Yes/No," or thematically under economic independence access to resources or community support. By counting the frequency of each answer, the researcher is able to ascertain the most prevalent opinions and identify key areas of concern. Access-related questions such as "What educational and skill-development opportunities are available for Gujjar women?" can be examined by classifying answers into different levels of accessibility or satisfaction. Frequency distribution assists in evaluating the gender gap between men and women with regard to access to education, health care, and economic opportunities emphasizing the gendered problems of women within the Gujjar community. Through the application of frequency distribution to data gathered on traditional skills, socio-economic vulnerabilities and policy support the researcher can measure livelihood activity changes and evaluate the success of government interventions. This methodology allows for a holistic grasp of the livelihood concerns of Gujjar women and offers the data required to formulate policy suggestions specifically tailored to them.

Table 4.5.1. Distribution of Respondents Based on the Impact of Cultural Beliefs and Social Norms on Gujjar Tribal Women

Aspect	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Opportunities		
Access to Education and Skill Development	10	40.0%
Participation in Community Support Groups	7	28.0%
Availability of Government Programmes	5	20.0%
Involvement in Income Generating Activities	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%
Challenges		
Cultural Restrictions on Mobility and Employment	10	40.0%
Limited Access to Resources and Information	8	32.0%
Economic Dependence on Male Family Members	5	20.0%
Societal Expectations and Gender Norms	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.5.1 identifies the respondents based on the effect of social norms and cultural beliefs on Gujjar tribal women. Under opportunities, 10 respondents (40%) reported access to education and skill development was important, 7 respondents (28%) stressed membership in support groups in their communities, 5 respondents (20%)

indicated the presence of government programs, and 3 respondents (12%) stressed activities in income generation. As for issues 10 participants (40%) referred to cultural constraints on employment and mobility 8 participants (32%) mentioned scarce access to resources and information 5 participants (20%) referred to economic reliance on male relatives and 2 participants (8%) referred to societal expectations and gender roles. One participant mentioned:

"Education has opened doors for us yet I still bear the weight of cultural rules that limit my mobility and autonomy. It's a battle between needing to provide for my family and being restrained by conventions"

Table 4.5.2. Distribution of Respondents Based on Effective Support Systems and Resources

Support Systems and Resources	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Access to Education and Vocational Training	10	40.0%
Microfinance and Small Business Support	8	32.0%
Community Health and Well-being Programmes	4	16.0%
Mentorship and Guidance from Successful Women	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.5.2 indicates the pattern of respondents with regard to available support systems and resources. There was a strong indication by 10 respondents (40%) that access to education and vocational training was a key support system an indicator of the desire by the community to improve women's skills and educational opportunities. Microfinance and small business support as referred to by 8 respondents (32%), shows a strong desire for

economic empowerment through business enterprise. 4 respondents (16%) made a mention of community health and well-being programs as necessary, reflecting that general health initiatives are essential for enhancing women's livelihoods. Finally, guidance and mentorship by successful women were valued by 3 respondents (12%), suggesting the role of models and community support in inspiring others to succeed. These results show that a range of education, economic empowerment, health programs and mentorship are regarded as necessary support systems for Gujjar tribal women leading to their empowerment and well-being.

According to one respondent:

"Community health programs have made a big difference for us; when women are healthy, they can work better and take care of their families."

Table 4.5.3. Distribution of Respondents Based on Cultural Beliefs and Values Affecting Gujjar Tribal Women

Cultural Beliefs and Values	Number of Respondents (n)	Percentage (%)
Emphasis on Traditional Roles and Responsibilities	10	40.0%
Value of Education and Economic Independence	7	28.0%
Influence of Elders in Decision-Making	5	20.0%
Community Support and Collaboration	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.5.3 shows the representation of respondents across cultural beliefs and values influencing Gujjar tribal women. Dominant cultural beliefs were cited by 10 of the respondents (40%), which was that tradition plays a paramount role in prioritizing customary tasks. This can be attributed to the value associated with upholding traditional

ways within the community. A smaller category, 7 respondents (28%), emphasized education and economic autonomy reflecting increasing awareness of the empowerment of women through education. The role of elders in decision-making was emphasized by 5 respondents (20%), indicating that cultural norms continue to influence the lives of Gujjar women. Finally, 3 participants (12%) highlighted support from the community and cooperation reflecting the role of cooperation and community efforts in resolving the problems faced by women. These observations reflect that while the traditional role is still crucial there is a growing shift towards appreciating education and financial independence for women in the Gujjar society. One community respondent mentioned:

"It has always been anticipated that we should remain indoors and take care of the family. Yet I have witnessed how education can empower women to decide by themselves. Most of us would like to break the narrative and pursue better options for our daughters."



Figure 4.8. Photograph of an elderly Gujjar woman discussing traditional roles and how education is empowering the younger generation, Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir

Therefore, the conclusions drawn from the answers point to an essential requirement for a change in culture that promotes and facilitates the empowerment of Gujjar women so that they can assume more central roles in decision-making within their households and communities. The integration of education, positive community frameworks and a revision of conventional roles is required for creating a society where women can prosper economically as well as socially.

Table 4.5.4. Distribution of Respondents Based on Traditional Skills and Resources Utilized by Gujjar Tribal Women

Traditional Skills and Resources	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Handicrafts and Weaving	10	40.0%
Herbal Medicine and Traditional Healing	6	24.0%
Agricultural Knowledge and Practices	5	20.0%
Animal Husbandry and Livestock Management	4	16.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.5.4 indicates the respondents' distribution according to traditional skills and resources used by Gujjar tribal women. The most frequently mentioned skill was handicrafts and weavings with 10 respondents (40%) mentioning its importance in the community. It indicates the significant contribution of these traditional crafts to the daily lives and livelihoods of Gujjar women. Traditional healing and herbal medicine were also mentioned by 6 respondents (24%), indicating the continued use of indigenous knowledge for well-being and health. 5 respondents (20%) indicated that agricultural knowledge and practices were a valuable asset, highlighting the affinity between women and the land. Lastly 4 respondents (16%) noted animal husbandry and livestock keeping as significant traditional skills which are part of the community's agricultural economy. This distribution

signifies a high dependence on customary knowledge and practices among Gujjar women, highlighting their contribution to the upkeep of cultural heritage and community livelihoods. A respondent encapsulated their experience thus:

"Everything we do is a tradition to us. The art that has been passed down to us is what keeps our families going and alive and allows us to live our culture. We are proud of our medicines and crafts because they keep us connected to the past and get us through everyday life."

Table 4.5.5. Distribution of Respondents Based on Educational and Skill-Development Opportunities for Gujjar Women

Opportunities Available	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Vocational Training Programmes	10	40.0%
Entrepreneurship Development Programmes	8	32.0%
Access to Educational Institutions	5	20.0%
Mentorship and Networking Opportunities	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.5.5 shows the breakdown of respondents according to education and skill-upgrading opportunities for Gujjar women. Vocational training schemes were mentioned by 10 respondents (40%), showing the crucial role vocational training schemes play in empowering Gujjar women with skills for specific trades. Entrepreneurship development schemes came next with 8 respondents (32%), showing growing recognition of the need to develop entrepreneurial skills among women to enable economic independence. Availability of educational facilities was reported by 5 respondents (20%), which indicates that though education is esteemed accessibility is still constrained. Finally, networking and

mentorship opportunities were noted by 2 respondents (8%), revealing that there is still a need for more organized assistance to enable women to better manoeuvre professional spaces. These results indicate that although there are some possibilities for developing skills a larger and more encompassing strategy is required to meet the varied needs of Gujjar women. Alan Beg was quoted as follows:

"Vocational programs have assisted many women in our community to acquire skills that allow them to sustain their families. We require more opportunities specific to our needs particularly in mentorship to assist us in applying those skills effectively"

Hence, it is very clear that educational and skill-development opportunities are vital for the empowerment of Gujjar women. With this knowledge of the present scenario and efforts to bridge the gap in terms of access, there is hope for significant changes in the socio-economic status of these women and their communities. Working with other stakeholders to develop more inclusive programs and supporting systems will be crucial in attaining gender equality in educational and vocational opportunities and thereby, fostering the development of a more sustainable and empowered community.

Table 4.5.6. Distribution of Respondents Based on Accessibility of Healthcare and Social Welfare Services for Gujjar Women

Type of Service Accessible	Number of Respondents (n)	Percentage (%)
Maternal and Child Health Services	10	40.0%
Nutrition Programmes	8	32.0%
Family Planning Services	4	16.0%
Immunization Programmes	2	8.0%
Mental Health Services	1	4.0%
Total (N)	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.5.6 gives the breakup of respondents on the basis of accessibility of social welfare and health services for Gujjar women. Maternal and child healthcare services were specified by 10 respondents (40%), which highlights the fact that this sector is given priority and is more accessible than other services. Nutrition programmes were cited by 8 respondents (32%), indicating attention given to food security and health-related issues. Family planning services were mentioned by 4 respondents (16%), indicating a moderate level of access though there may be room for improvement. Immunization programmes were mentioned by 2 respondents (8%), reflecting limited accessibility to vaccine services. Finally mental health services were only mentioned by 1 respondent (4%), pointing towards a wide gap in provision of support for mental health. These findings indicate some degree of access to basic health services but uncover evident inequalities especially in mental health and immunization services which need special attention. The following is one of the comments made by the respondents:

"Although we have some access to maternal health services the absence of nutrition programs is alarming. Most women in our community lack proper nutrition for their families which impacts their health and well-being."

Table 4.5.7. Distribution of Respondents Based on Traditional Livelihood Activities and Sources of Income for Gujjar Women

Livelihood Activity	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Handicrafts and Weaving	10	40.0%
Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	8	32.0%
Gathering Forest Products	4	16.0%
Small-scale Trade or Market Activities	2	8.0%
Seasonal Migration for Labour	1	4.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.5.7 presents the breakdown of respondents according to the traditional livelihood activities and income sources of Gujar women. The most prevalent activity, cited by 10 respondents (40%), is handicrafts and weaving which shows that these traditional skills are still a main source of income. Agriculture and animal husbandry were cited by 8 respondents (32%) which shows the significance of these activities in maintaining livelihoods in the community. Harvesting forest products was mentioned by 4 informants (16%) reflecting its contribution towards sustaining household incomes. Small-scale trade or market work was mentioned by 2 informants (8%), reflecting a less significant but still considerable contribution towards economic activities. Finally, seasonal labour migration was mentioned by 1 informant (4%) reflecting a minor engagement in labour migration for income. Such findings manifest a society that is extremely dependent on conventional livelihood activities, with handicrafts and agriculture being the predominant sources of livelihood among Gujar women. The following is an articulation of a sentiment by one of the respondents describing the development of these livelihood activities:

"Though we have always depended on weaving and farming I can see my daughters venturing into new avenues in the market. We must adapt while retaining our traditions."

Table 4.5.8. Distribution of Respondents Based on Factors Affecting Livelihood Opportunities and Economic Security of Gujar Women

Factors	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Poverty	10	40.0%
Lack of Access to Markets	7	28.0%
Limited Infrastructure	5	20.0%
Social Discrimination	2	8.0%
Other Factors (e.g., education, health issues)	1	4.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.5.8 shows the spread of respondents by factors influencing the livelihood chances and economic well-being of Gujjar women. Poverty was seen as the most important factor by 10 respondents (40%), emphasizing its effect on the economic welfare of the community. Limited access to markets cited by 7 respondents (28%), indicates the restrictions women experience in selling their products or services, constraining their economic potential. Limited infrastructure, including poor roads or facilities, was given as a reason by 5 respondents (20%) further limiting access to opportunities and resources. Social discrimination was highlighted by 2 respondents (8%), capturing the difficulty that underprivileged groups experience in attaining economic parity. Lastly, education and health problems were also mentioned by 1 respondent (4%), signifying that these factors too influence livelihood chances among Gujjar women. From these observations it may be concluded that poverty and limited access to the market are the most important drivers hindering economic security among Gujjar women with social and infrastructural challenges also working against them. One of the interviewees responded as follows:

"Despite all our work in weaving and farming, poverty continues to hamper us. We need more market access to be able to sell our produce. Most of us are dependent on our families for survivals but that's not a sustainable proposition in the long term."

Table 4.5.9. Distribution of Respondents Based on Government Policies or Programmes Supporting Gujjar Women

Government Policies / Programmes	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Skill Development Programmes	8	32.0%
Financial Assistance Schemes	7	28.0%
Women's Empowerment Initiatives	6	24.0%
Agricultural Support Programmes	2	8.0%
Other (e.g., health programmes, education support)	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.5.9 indicates respondents distribution on the basis of government policies or programmes favouring Gujar women. Most common were the skill development programmes with 8 respondents (32%) pointing towards their existence. These schemes are important to develop women's skills and increase their employability leading towards economic independence. Financial assistance schemes were mentioned by 7 respondents (28%), which indicate that financial support is another important field for empowering Gujar women. Women's empowerment programs designed to increase gender equality and women's involvement in decision making were cited by 6 respondents (24%). Agricultural support programs were cited by 2 respondents (8%), pointing out that some government initiatives are aimed at increasing agricultural productivity among women. Likewise, other programs like health and education support were also mentioned by 2 respondents (8%), pointing towards the wide range of government policies to assist women in the community. These results show that although skill development and financial support are the most dominant government assists there are numerous programs to cater to the different needs of Gujar women. One of the respondents from the area expressed themselves as follows:

"The skill development programmes have been a boon for us. They not only helped me learn sewing and run a small enterprise but also empowered me to become financially independent so that I can support my family. But there was no proper information about the programmes and hence it was difficult to reach them. I wish more women could gain the same way I did."

Therefore, the conclusions emphasize the vital necessity of sustaining efforts in generating awareness and raising the accessibility of government schemes directed towards empowering Gujar tribal women so that they are capable of attaining increased economic autonomy and security.

Table 4.5.10. Distribution of Respondents Based on main Barriers in Policy and Institutional Framework

Barriers/Gaps in Policy Framework	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Lack of awareness about existing programmes	10	40.0%
Insufficient funding for women's programmes	6	24.0%
Bureaucratic hurdles in accessing resources	5	20.0%
Inadequate representation of women in decision making	3	12.0%
Other (e.g., cultural barriers, lack of training)	1	4.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.5.10 displays the breakdown of respondents by primary barriers in policy and institutional frameworks that influence Gujar women. The primary barrier to emerge was a lack of awareness regarding programmes in place which was identified by 10 respondents (40%). This indicates that the majority of women do not know what resources and assistance are available to them and thus they cannot make use of such programmes. Lack of adequate funding for women's programmes was cited by 6 respondents (24%) which suggests that budgetary limitations prevent policies to empower women from being effectively implemented. Bureaucratic barriers to accessing resources were cited by 5 respondents (20%) which indicates that administrative inefficiencies make it difficult for women to access government services. Insufficient women representation in the decision-making process was raised by 3 respondents (12%), and this hints at a leadership and policy-making gender gap which can affect the prioritization of women's needs. Lastly, other issues like cultural barriers and the absence of training were raised by 1 respondent (4%) which also indicates the multi-dimensional challenges of Gujar women to receive

the support they require. These observations underscore a number of structural barriers to be overcome for the policy and institutional arrangements for empowering Gujjar women to be more effective. A respondent underscored the difficulties as follows:

"Lack of knowledge regarding programmes that already exist is a big problem for us. Most women are not aware of what assistance is available and without money those programs cannot assist us"

4.6 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FOREST RIGHTS ACT ON THE LIVELIHOOD PATTERNS OF GUJJAR TRIBES IN RAJOURI DISTRICT

Distribution of responses collected from the Gujjar tribes people in Rajouri district about the socio-economic influence of the Forest Rights Act 2006 of 2006 can be employed to measure quantitatively the community's perception and experience against the provisions of the Act. The distribution shall be used for classifying answers on the basis of knowledge regarding the FRA difficulties experienced while obtaining forest rights and changes in the living pattern. For instance, a large number of respondents can say that they face challenges in asserting rights due to administrative delays while others can report enhancements in income generation as a result of legal access to forest products. Socio-cultural effects including variation in traditional and spiritual practices associated with access to forests can be mapped to illustrate the degree of FRA impact on cultural heritage. From the economic standpoint the pattern can emphasize added livelihood security among those who obtained formal rights on forest land and how some others or families could experience economic stress due to restriction of resource usage. By looking at the frequency distribution one can identify typical trends measure the advantages and disadvantages faced by the community and provide information on where the implementation of the FRA can be made better to suit the requirements of the Gujjar tribes in Rajouri.

Table 4.6.1. Awareness of the Forest Rights Act

Awareness Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	4	16.0%
No	6	24.0%
Partially aware	15	60.0%
Total	25	100.0%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6.1 indicates low levels of awareness of the Forest Rights Act among the community. Although 60% of the respondents are partially aware their awareness may not be deep and therefore there is a need for improved information dissemination. A significant 24% are completely unaware, indicating a high level of knowledge gap that may limit their capacity to claim rights. Only 16% are fully aware indicating the need for special education campaigns. The efforts should go towards equipping forest dependent peoples with capabilities through accessible and inclusive information regarding the Act and its advantages to facilitate deeper understanding and involvement on their part.

Table 4.6.2. Primary Source of Information about the Forest Rights Act

Source of Information	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Government officials/ agencies	3	12.0%
Community leaders/elders	10	40.0%
NGOs/civil society organizations	11	44.0%
Media (TV, Radio, Newspapers)	2	8.0%
Total	25	100.0%

Source: Survey Data

The study shows that NGOs and civil society organizations (44%) are the strongest sources of information regarding the Forest Rights Act which indicates their pivotal role in educating and involving local communities. Community leaders or elders (40%) are important too pointing to the dependency on traditional knowledge systems for awareness. Government officials or agencies (12%) are less important indicating limited direct contact with the community. Media like television, radio and newspapers (8%) have the lowest usage. NGOs and community leaders collectively receive 84% of replies which reflects their influence. For the gaps in information to be filled government bodies and media channels need to make greater efforts at providing correct and understandable information regarding the Act to the public.

Table 4.6.3. Distribution of Respondents Based on Understanding of the Forest Rights Act

Understanding of the Forest Rights Act	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Aware of the Act and its benefits	12	48.0%
Aware of the Act but unclear about its benefits	6	24.0%
Not aware of the Act	5	20.0%
Misconceptions, limited information	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6.3 shows the respondents' distribution according to their knowledge of the Forest Rights Act 2006 (FRA) in the Rajouri district. Out of the respondents, 12 (48%) said they knew about the Act and its advantages showing a fairly high degree of knowledge regarding this legal instrument aimed at protecting the rights of forest dwelling communities. A smaller segment 6 respondents (24%) knew about the Act but were not clear about its explicit benefits which indicates that though they might be aware of it the modalities of its implementation and benefit are not clearly understood. 5 respondents

(20%) knew nothing about the Forest Rights Act which identifies a serious knowledge gap in specific sections of society. Finally, 2 interviewees (8%) stated experiencing misconceptions or incomplete knowledge about the Act reflecting the imperative for further-reaching communication and education to counter confusion. The break-up identifies diverse levels of information within the Gujjar tribe pointing toward the need for information provision and explanation regarding the provisions and advantage of the Act for the people. One respondent emphasized the call for explanation:

"Though I have heard of the Forest Rights Act I do not know how it will benefit my family. We need somebody to tell us what it is for us in our day-to-day lives"



Figure 4.9. Photograph of a Gujjar woman discussing struggles with forest dependency and challenges posed by the Forest Rights Act-2006, Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir

Therefore, the results from Table 4.6.3 demonstrate the differing degrees of comprehension of the Forest Rights Act by respondent presenting a clear necessity for

greater communication and education to empower tribal and forest communities in the Rajouri district.

Table 4.6.4. Distribution of Respondents Based on Understanding of the Benefits of the Forest Rights Act for Tribal/Forest-Dwelling Communities in Rajouri District

Theme/Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Benefits in terms of land and resource rights	10	40.0%
Social and economic empowerment of tribal/forest communities	8	32.0%
Improved access to education, healthcare, etc.	4	16.0%
Protection of traditional knowledge and cultural practices	2	8.0%
Misconceptions, limited information	1	4.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

The statistics in 4.6.4 table reflect a distribution of respondent's awareness of the advantages of the Forest Rights Act to the tribal and forest-dwelling people in Rajouri District. The most prominent advantage valued by respondents is in the area of land and resource rights with 40% of the respondents considering this as an important advantage. This implies that the Forest Rights Act has broadly been perceived as a means of acquiring the land tenure and access to resources for forest and tribal communities in order to enable them to sustainably utilize and conserve their natural resources. The second most noted advantage (32%) is social and economic empowerment of these groups which signifies that the interviewees feel the Act assists in lifting these people with regard to their living conditions income levels and socioeconomic status overall. This comes second to a lower percentage (16%) of people who realize better education, health and other basic service

provisions as a result of the Act. A lower percentage (8%) listed protection of traditional knowledge and cultural practices as a significant advantage emphasizing the Act's function in safeguarding the heritage of these communities. Only 4% of the respondents however referred to myths or insufficient information regarding the Act indicating a relatively high level of awareness. A one respondent said:

“The Forest Rights Act is important to us particularly in protecting our land and assuring that we are entitled to use and protect the forest resources. It is a source of livelihood and identity for our community.”

Table 4.6.5. Distribution of Respondents Based on Challenges in Claiming Forest Rights

Main Challenges or Barriers	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Lack of awareness about the Act	8	32.0%
Bureaucratic hurdles and red tape	7	28.0%
Limited access to legal assistance	5	20.0%
Discrimination or bias from authorities	3	12.0%
Other (e.g., lack of documentation, community disputes)	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6.5 shows the breakdown of the respondents by the challenges that they encounter in asserting forest rights under the Forest Rights Act (FRA). The greatest challenge as cited by 8 respondents (32%) is that they lack knowledge or information about the Act which prevents them from comprehending or seeking their rights. Administrative bureaucratic and red tape issues were also a major concern with 7 respondents (28%) explaining that they cannot effectively claim their forest rights due to administrative intricacies. Only 5 respondents (20%) reported lack of access to legal representation further complicating the process of accessing the legal procedures involved. Discrimination or

prejudice by authorities was felt by 3 respondents (12%) an indication of the social and institutional difficulties that usually confront marginalized groups when claiming their rights. Lastly, 2 respondents (8%) cited other impediments, including inadequate documentation or community conflicts as hindrances to asserting their forest rights. The table highlights the necessity for greater awareness streamlined administrative process legal assistance and resolution of biases within the system in order to ease access to forest rights for Rajouri district's Gujjar tribal community. One of the interviewees spoke:

"It is exhausting to navigate through the bureaucratic system. We are not given the right access to legal counsel and at times the authorities become prejudiced towards us. The system seems like it is against us rather than assisting us in claiming what is rightfully ours"

Table 4.6.6. Distribution of Respondents Based on Suggestions for More Effective Implementation of the Forest Rights Act

Suggestion for Effective Implementation	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Awareness campaigns and community education	10	40.0%
Streamlining bureaucratic processes and reducing red tape	7	28.0%
Providing legal aid and support	5	20.0%
Involving local authorities and community leaders	2	8.0%
Improved documentation and record-keeping	1	4.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

The table lists the major recommendations for enhancing the efficacy of the Forest Rights Act. The most frequent suggestion endorsed by 40% of the respondents is enhancing

awareness campaigns and people's education. This is based on the fact that there needs to be greater outreach so that tribal communities are better aware of their rights under the Act. Also 28% of the respondents highlighted the need to simplify bureaucratic procedures in order to cut down delays and increase efficiency within the application process that would facilitate easier access for communities towards their forest rights. Also, 20% of the respondents highlighted the need for legal support and assistance to ensure tribal communities receive the requisite legal assistance. A few respondents (8%) recommended engaging local authorities and community leaders to enhance implementation at the grassroots level. Finally, 4% emphasized the need to enhance documentation and record-keeping to properly verify and secure the rights of forest-dwelling communities. One respondent proposed:

"If the implementation can be improved it is by having more workshops and awareness programs in our villages. The more aware people are the better their opportunities for getting what belongs to them in the forest."

Table 4.6.7. Distribution of Respondents Based on Traditional Livelihood Activities and Resource Use Patterns

Livelihood Activities and Resource Use Patterns	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Livestock rearing (sheep, goats, cattle)	10	40.0%
Agriculture (crop cultivation)	8	32.0%
Handicrafts and traditional crafts	4	16.0%
Forest resource utilization (gathering herbs, firewood, etc.)	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6.7 shows the breakdown of respondents by traditional livelihood activity and resource utilization patterns among the Gujjar tribal people of Rajouri district. Most

respondents, 10 (40%), depend on animal husbandry, including sheep, goat and cattle farming as their major livelihood. The second most prevalent livelihood activity is agriculture with a focus on crop farming reported by 8 respondents (32%). It emphasizes the significance of agriculture in maintaining the economic activities of the community. Traditional crafts and handicrafts as indicated by 4 respondents (16%) are another primary source of income which indicates the cultural significance attached to indigenous craftsmanship. Lastly, 3 respondents (12%) practice forest resource use, including the collection of herbs and firewood which further illustrates the reliance of the community on natural resources for livelihood. The table highlights the multidimensional character of the traditional occupation of the Gujjar tribe illustrating their dependence on cattle agriculture, handicraft and forest. While being interviewed one respondent commented:

"Our existence is closely related to our animals and the forest. If we had no animals, we would have no meat or milk and if we had no forest we would have no firewood with which to burn our food. These items are the pillars of our lives."



Figure 4.10. Photograph of a Gujjar Man discussing reliance on cattle for milk and meat as primary sources of sustenance Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir

Therefore, it can be seen that the age-old livelihood occupations of the Gujjar tribes in Rajouri district are predominantly dependent on agriculture and livestock rearing. These occupations are the mainstay of their economy, and handicrafts and utilization of forest resources are ancillary. The reliance on forest resources, although not as extensive, is still substantial for a section of the population.

Table 4.6.8. Distribution of Respondents Based on Dependency on Forest Resources for Daily Subsistence and Income Generation

Level of Dependency on Forest Resources	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Highly dependent (primary source of subsistence)	7	28.0%
Moderately dependent (important but not primary)	12	48.0%
Low dependence (only occasional use)	6	24.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6.8 reveals respondents' dependency on forest products varying in their level. While 28% of the respondents are highly dependent on forest resources and use them consistently for sustenance and earning a living, for example, collecting firewood, herbs and other materials 48% of them are moderately dependent being an important supplementary means but not a primary source of livelihood. These respondents occasionally collect firewood or medicinal plants but depend more on agriculture or livestock. Lastly, 24% of the respondents indicate low dependence utilizing forest products only sometimes which shows that they depend mainly on other livelihood activities like farming or animal husbandry for income and livelihood. This distribution brings out the various uses that forest products have in the livelihood of the Gujjar tribes in the Rajouri district as the greater percentage of the population depends on them for supplemental needs compared to being the main subsistence source. According to one of the respondents:

"Though we depend more on livestock and agriculture forest products such as firewood and herbs are still essential to our everyday existence particularly during the winter season when there is a demand for more fuel."

Table 4.6.9. Distribution of Respondents Based on Influence of the Forest Rights Act.

Influence of the Forest Rights Act	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Improved access to forest resources	12	48.0%
Enhanced control over resource usage	7	28.0%
Increased awareness of rights	4	16.0%
Limited impact observed	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6.9 depicts the frequency distribution of the respondents according to the impact of the Forest Rights Act on Gujjar tribes' livelihood practices in Rajouri district. More than half 12 (48%), of the respondents answered that the Act enhanced their access to forest products which is one of the essential advantages of the community particularly in their livelihoods dependent on resources. 7 (28%) respondents believed that the Act has strengthened their authority over resource use having been empowered by having more control over their natural resources. A lesser number of respondents 4 (16%), stated that the Act has raised their level of awareness regarding their rights, reflecting the educative effect of the policy. Yet, 2 respondents (8%) reported seeing a limited influence perhaps owing to implementation obstacles or insufficient awareness and resources. The table draws attention to the different levels of influence the Forest Rights Act has had on the community focusing on its beneficial impacts in enhancing access to resources and rights consciousness while showing hurdles in its complete implementation. One of the respondents remarked:

"The Forest Rights Act has benefited our family in that we have had improved access to the forests so that we could continue our traditional ways. Nevertheless, we continue to experience challenges in terms of being able to manage these resources without interference. Although we know more about our rights now we tend to feel that we do not have the complete control required to reap the most out of these changes"

Table 4.6.10. Distribution of Respondents Based on the Impact of the Forest Rights Act on Traditional Livelihood Practices and Income Sources

Impact on Traditional Livelihood Practices and Income Sources	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Improved income and livelihood security	10	40.0%
Increased ability to access forest resources for income	7	28.0%
Limited impact on income sources	5	20.0%
No impact observed	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6.10 gives an insight into the impact of the Forest Rights Act on traditional livelihood activities and sources of income among the respondents. 40% of the respondents reported that the Act has had a positive impact on their income and livelihood security which indicates its positive contribution to their capacity to earn income from forest resources. 28% indicated that the Act has enhanced their capacity to tap into forest resources for income indicating that legality has empowered them to control and utilize resources in a more sustainable manner. Conversely, 20% of interviewees witnessed an extremely marginal influence on their earning streams a point which perhaps suggests that whilst the Act resulted in some dividend overall effects on livelihood continue to be prevented by extrinsic determinants such as inadequate infrastructural provision or

additional socio-economic obstacles. Also, 12% of the respondents stated that they felt no impact possibly because of lack of awareness, non-implementation or lack of dissemination of the benefits of the Act in their area. These results identify the differences in the effectiveness of the Act between communities. The following is an example of what one respondent stated:

"The Forest Rights Act has actually benefited us in gaining more access to our forest resources, enhancing both our income and how we live off the land."

Table 4.6.11. Distribution of Respondents Based on Cultural Significance of Forests

Cultural Significance of Forests	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Spiritual connection and practices	10	40.0%
Source of traditional livelihood activities	8	32.0%
Cultural identity and heritage	5	20.0%
Community gatherings and rituals	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6.11 shows that the forests are of deep cultural, traditional and spiritual importance to the Gujjar tribal community which influences their identity, beliefs and lifestyle. Forests are a source of spiritual practice and connection for 40% of the respondents where rituals and worship are performed. It indicates the community's respect for nature as a divine power. In addition, 32% rely on forests for their traditional livelihood activities like cattle grazing and gathering forest products demonstrating their sustainable coexistence with the environment. Such practices are not only economic but also an

extension of age-old traditions highlighting the incorporation of nature into their lives. The cultural heritage and identity of the Gujar are also represented through forests, observed by 20% of participants as living memory of the community's folklore, traditions and ancestral lore. For another 8%, forests are also a place of gathering and ceremonial practices that promotes social bond and reinforces cultural values. Together, these features illustrate that forests are not merely resources they are integral to the spiritual gratification economic livelihood and cultural identity of the Gujjars. The relationship illustrates the indivisibility of the Gujar identity from nature pointing to the imperative of adopting sustainable methods and policies that respect their age-old relationship with the forests. The following quote was made by one of the interviewees with clarity:

“The forest is our temple our market and our home. It is where we find peace, sustenance and unity. Without the forest, we would lose our way of life and the practices that define us as Gujjars. Everything we believe in stems from the land and trees that surround us”

Table 4.6.12. Distribution of Respondents Based on Impact of Forest Rights Act on Livelihood Access

Impact on Access to Forest Resources	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Improved access to resources	12	48.0%
No significant change in access	8	32.0%
Decreased access due to regulations	3	12.0%
Increased awareness and usage of rights	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6.12 shows the distribution of the respondents according to the cultural role of forests in the lives of the Gujjar tribes of Rajouri district. The highest percentage of respondents 10 (40%) recognized forests as having spiritual value and being an essential part of their traditional way of life. It reflects the long-standing cultural link that the community has with forests beyond its economic significance. 8 interviewees (32%) highlighted that forests are a place of traditional livelihood activities e.g., harvesting herbs and firewood that symbolize forests as instrumental in maintaining their daily subsistence. Five interviewees (20%) acknowledged forests as an integral part of their cultural identity and heritage and associated the natural world with feeling at home and having a past. Lastly, 2 respondents (8%) mentioned that forests are involved in community rituals and gatherings reflecting their social significance. The table shows the complex role of forests in the Gujjar community's life emphasizing their cultural, economic and spiritual significance. One of the respondents narrated their own experience:

“The Forest Rights Act enabled my family to resume access to our traditional forest lands. Previously we had found it hard to gather wood and other necessities but now we are able to sustain our livelihood with minimal interference from officials. But not all of my neighbours have had the same success and continue to struggle to take advantage of the Act”

Therefore, the Forest Rights Act has impacted the Gujjar community's use of forest resources in a mixed manner. While some benefited through better access and knowledge of rights others still suffered because of rules or insufficient change in their situation. The experiences call for more selective implementation to ensure that the Act benefits all sections of the community equally.

Table 4.6.13. Distribution of Respondents Based on Socio-Economic Benefits or Challenges of the Forest Rights Act-2006

Benefits/Challenges	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Increased income from forest resources	10	40.0%
Improved community cohesion and empowerment	7	28.0%
Access to social welfare programmes	5	20.0%
Challenges in implementing the Act	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6.13 shows the distribution of respondents according to the socioeconomic benefits or problems that they identify with the Forest Rights Act 2006 (FRA) among the Gujar tribal people of Rajouri district. According to the information, 10 respondents (40%) indicated augmented income from forest products and this is an important economic advantage gained through better access to forest products. 7 participants (28%) reported enhancements in community cohesion and empowerment pointing to the FRA having strengthened social ties and the feeling of communal strength in the community. Availability of social welfare programmes perhaps including healthcare, education or other state services was cited by 5 participants (20%), demonstrating that the FRA has helped access general state support mechanisms. But 3 respondents (12%) pointed out challenges in the application of the Act which was an indication of some realities of practical application or comprehension of the law. Most respondents seem to have enjoyed good socioeconomic outcomes but there are still challenges to the application of the FRA. One of the respondents was frustrated and said:

"The regulations are in place but they never explain them to us. We have the right to access the forest but it appears we must jump through hoops to

even get something accomplished. It seems like the system is stacked against us so that we cannot even enjoy the full benefits of the Act."

4.7 AMENDMENT BILL 2024 FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The Amendment Bill 2024 of Scheduled Tribes (STs) provides an amendment in the list of STs for adding or modifying the tribal populations for increased representation in government welfare schemes. The bill aims at increased reservation, welfare schemes and political reservations for backward groups. The bill respects regional identities of the tribals and includes historic exclusions. The bill facilitates social justice through enhanced accessibility of education, employment and medical care. There are some problems though such as political controversy and enforcement problems. The amendment indicates continued attempts to empower India's indigenous population.

Table 4.7.1. Distribution of Respondents Based on Perceived Impact of the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 on the Gujjar Community

Impact Area	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Concern over increased competition for reserved resources	9	36.0%
Strengthened political representation and recognition	7	28.0%
Fear of dilution of existing rights and benefits	5	20.0%
Enhanced opportunities for socioeconomic development	4	16.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.7.1 shows the split of respondents on the basis of their views concerning the effect of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment)

Bill, 2024 on the Gujjar community especially rights, resources and representation. Nine (36%) of the respondents dreaded competition for reserved resources seven (28%) believed the bill to be a positive for political representation and tribal development. Five (20%) respondents dreaded that the amendment could undermine Gujjar rights including the loss of access to affirmative action and development schemes. On the other hand four (16%) considered it an opportunity for socio-economic development and expected more extensive tribal solidarity and well targeted policies to deliver improved infrastructure economic support and upliftment of communities. One respondent expressed his concern as follows:

"We've fought for recognition and rights for decades. Now that more communities are included, we fear being left in the lurch once again. We want definite assurances that our benefits will not be cut."

Thus, while the amendment offers opportunities and challenges for the Gujjar community the most important issue is to ensure that their current rights and access to resources are not undermined. Ongoing interaction with policymakers and tribal advocacy organizations will be essential to protecting their interests.

Table 4.7.2. Distribution of Respondents Based on the Socio-Economic Impact of Scheduled Tribe (ST) Recognition on the Gujjar Community

Impact of ST Recognition	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Improved access to education and employment	10	40.0%
Greater inclusion in government welfare schemes	7	28.0%
Strengthened social and political identity	5	20.0%
Continued socio-economic marginalization despite recognition	3	12.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.7.2 illustrates the distribution of respondents according to what they perceive is the impact that recognition of the Gujjars as a Scheduled Tribe (ST) has had on their socio-economic status. The information indicates that 10 of the respondents (40%) said that ST recognition has enhanced educational and employment access. Positive action policies such as reserved quotas in schools and colleges and civil service jobs have opened the doors to opportunities for upward mobility that were before out of reach. Apart from that, 7 participants (28%) mentioned increased inclusion in government welfare programs. Recognition of ST has enabled the group to gain from programs connected to healthcare, shelter and money enhancing well-being as a whole. In addition, 5 participants (20%) emphasized how ST status has solidified the social and political identity of Gujjars. Greater representation in the governance, community organizations and tribal councils has made them louder in decision making. Nevertheless, 3 respondents (12%) opined that even after recognition socioeconomic marginalization still exists. Issues like ignorance of government schemes bureaucratic obstacles and geographical isolation continue to restrict the complete advantages of ST status. One of the respondents described his experience as follows:

"Having been recognized as ST opened some opportunities but most of us continue to face poverty and lack of adequate education. The policies are there but they are still out of reach."

Thus, although ST recognition has translated into real gains for the Gujjar community in education, employment and social identity structural impediments continue to impede complete socio-economic uplift. Overcoming these issues necessitates better policy implementation, awareness initiatives and greater advocacy.

4.8 RELIGIOUS PRACTICES & SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE AMONG THE GUJJAR TRIBE IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The Gujjar community in Jammu and Kashmir is mostly Muslim by faith, having abandoned Hinduism. Their religious practices are directly linked to customary rituals for births, marriages and deaths adhering to Islamic Sharia. The most significant Islamic festivals such as Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha are celebrated with much fervour along with the observance of local festivals such as Baisakhi. Even though they are Muslim, they

respect parts of their Hindu roots through some practices and festivals forming a blend of traditions that define them and their way of life.

Apart from that, social media has had a profound influence on Gujjars in Kashmir defining their cultural identity, political consciousness and economic prospects. Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube enable them to maintain their traditions while giving them a voice for advocacy. Young people consume digital content, shaping education, employment and social interactions. Misinformation and digital divide remain problems. Political narratives and activism have also picked up pace through social media, influencing community perceptions. On the whole social media is a mixed bag of empowerment and issues concerning Gujjars.

Table 4.8.1. Distribution of Respondents Based on Changes in Religious Practices or Belief Systems Due to Modernization or Interaction with Other Communities

Changes in Religious Practices/Beliefs	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Increased adaptation of modern or urban religious practices	8	32.0%
Greater interaction with other religious communities	6	24.0%
Decline in traditional rituals and customs	5	20.0%
Strengthening of religious identity in response to external influences	4	16.0%
No noticeable change	2	8.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.8.1 shows the frequency of respondents according to perceived changes in religious practice or belief system among the Gujjar tribal community of Rajouri district because of modernization or greater contact with other communities. The evidence shows that 8 respondents (32%) witnessed a greater adoption of modern or urban religious practice indicating that contact with urban ways of life and digital media has affected

traditional religious tradition. Furthermore, 6 of the respondents (24%) had more contact with other religious groups and this may have resulted in cultural exchanges, interfaith conversations or even changes in some of the rituals and festivities. But 5 (20%) of the respondents mentioned a decrease in customary rituals and traditions perhaps because of generational changes migration or decreased reliance on ancestral religious practices. Though 4 (16%) of the respondents mentioned that their religious affiliation had become stronger due to external pressures perhaps as a means of retaining their heritage in the face of modernization. Conversely, 2 respondents (8%) said that there was no apparent change in religious practices showing that some members of the community still followed traditional beliefs strictly. One respondent expressed their view as follows:

"Young people are learning to practice faith differently through the web and travel. Some traditions are disappearing yet simultaneously we have a better sense of who we are. It is a combination of change and retaining what is important."

Thus, the research indicates that although modernization and contact with other communities have brought religious practice changes among the Gujjars the reaction is not the same—some have adapted some have resisted and some have sought to balance the new and the old.

Table 4.8.2. Distribution of Respondents Based on the Influence of Social Media on the Gujjar Community

Influence of social media	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Increased awareness and preservation of cultural identity	9	36.0%
Improved access to educational resources	7	28.0%
Enhanced economic opportunities through online platforms	5	20.0%
Concerns over cultural dilution and misinformation	4	16.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.8.2 gives the breakup of respondents in relation to how social media has impacted the Gujjar community, especially in terms of cultural identity, education and economic prospects. Data reveals that 9 respondents (36%) indicated that awareness and cultural identity preservation increased due to social media. Social media sites like Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp provide space for the community to exchange folk culture, music and history reinforcing their cultural heritage. In addition, 7 of the respondents (28%) pointed to increased access to learning material. Online platforms and online materials for study have facilitated greater access to learning by the students and served to reduce the learning disparity between rural communities and urban regions. Economically 5 respondents (20%) emphasized increased economic opportunity through internet-based platforms. Social media has made promotion of small businesses easier, access to large markets available and sensitization to government schemes possible hence enhancing livelihoods.

Concerns regarding cultural dilution and spreading of misinformation were however raised by 4 respondents (16%). Exposure to dominant cultural discourses and outside forces has resulted in concerns regarding loss of traditional values while spreading misinformation is a problem. One respondent gave his take as follows:

"Social media has linked us to the world. We can now study sell things and introduce our culture. But sometimes individuals forget their roots because they are too caught up in modern times."

Therefore, the research indicates that although social media has brought tremendous advantages to the Gujjar people in the form of cultural preservation, education and economic development it also poses challenges towards cultural changes and misinformation.

4.9 EDUCATIONAL CHANGES AMONG GUJJARS

Educational reforms among Gujjars in Jammu and Kashmir have enhanced school access, scholarships and benefits of reservations. Government schemes such as ST reservations, schools on wheels for nomads and hostel facilities have increased literacy

levels. Education through digital means and NGO initiatives also support learning. Geographical obstacles, economic adversities and seasonal migration remain impediments though Education for girls has increased but is still limited. Overall, technology and policy are slowly changing education among Gujjars but disparities in infrastructure and awareness remain.

Table 4.9.1. Distribution of Respondents Based on Observed Changes in Access to Education and Its Impact on the Younger Generation's Livelihood Opportunities

Observed Changes in Education Access	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Increased enrolment in schools and colleges	9	36.0%
Greater awareness of higher education opportunities	7	28.0%
Continued financial and logistical barriers to education	5	20.0%
Shift from traditional occupations to diverse careers	4	16.0%
Total	25	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.9.1 shows the distribution of respondents according to observed changes in access to education among the Gujjar community and its effects on livelihood opportunities for the younger generation. According to the data, 9 respondents (36%) have noted an increase in school and college admissions crediting this to government efforts like reserved quotas scholarships and awareness campaigns. These initiatives have motivated more Gujjar youth to seek formal education. In addition, 7 (28%) respondents mentioned increased awareness of opportunities in higher education with families more and more understanding the long-term advantages of university degrees and vocational training. Nonetheless numerous students continue to need financial and institutional assistance in

order to make the most of these opportunities. On the contrary, 5 participants (20%) pointed out continued financial and logistical challenges to education including the absence of schools in rural communities, economic challenges and the necessity for young people to contribute to family incomes. These conditions restrict ongoing education and professional development. In contrast, 4 (16%) respondents noted a visible trend away from conventional occupations—like rearing livestock and forest-based labour—towards government employment, private sector jobs and business entrepreneurship. Diversification of livelihood prospects has been important in enhancing economic stability among Gujjar youth. One said this in their opinion:

"Our children now have the opportunity to pursue further studies but many of them still drop out because they are poor. We require more hostels, scholarships and placements to make sure they don't go back to traditional labour out of necessity."

So, while access to education has improved significantly within the Gujjar community challenges remain in ensuring sustained participation and maximizing its impact on livelihood opportunities. Continued policy efforts, financial assistance and infrastructure development will be key in bridging the gaps.

Chapter – V

Thematic Exploration on Efficacy of Forest Rights Act 2006 Among Gujjar Tribe

CHAPTER-V

THEMATIC EXPLORATION ON EFFICACY OF FOREST RIGHTS ACT 2006 AMONG GUJJAR TRIBE

This chapter examines the effectiveness of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 in fulfilling the rights and livelihoods of the Gujjar tribe of Rajouri district with respect to its influence on customary livelihood practices like livestock breeding, income generation through forests and access to non-timber forest products such as herbs and medicinal plants. It analyses the contribution of Gram Sabhas and community forest rights towards empowering the tribe to manage forest resources sustainably, support conservation and provide equitable access to forest produce. The key challenges, such as the migratory nature of the Gujjar community and impediments to FRA implementation are identified and ways to improve them are suggested. The socioeconomic impacts of the FRA its contribution to the elimination of disparities among the Gujjar tribe and its role in the conservation of forest ecosystems are examined based on interviews with 10 stakeholders such as government officials, forestry experts, NGO representatives and environmentalists. The chapter discusses the expected effects of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024, on the rights, political voice and access to resources of the Gujjar community. The insights were synthesized across 17 thematic areas drawn from answers to 17 open-ended questions which were thematically analysed through a systematic pattern of introduction, theme identification, theme development analysis, conceptualization and implications.

5.1 OVERVIEW OF FOREST RIGHTS ACT (FRA) 2006

The revolutionary law known as the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 sought to right past injustices and empower historic forest-based tribes for the Gujjar clan of Jammu and Kashmir. Approved by the Indian Parliament on December 18, 2006, it began operation December 31, 2007. Its application in Jammu and Kashmir followed the Reorganization Act of 2019, providing protection to such nomadic tribes—the Gujjars, Bakerwals and

Gaddis. The extension was very important in safeguarding the rights of these people since their nomadic nature and dependence on the forest resources for survival.

The FRA guarantees complete rights to forest-dwelling people including the right to access and control over forest areas protection from forceful eviction, grazing rights on the forest lands, access to minor forest produce such medicinal plants and herbs and access to water resources. It also offers local rights over forest resources. The Act has especially been crucial for the Gujjar people in preserving their way of life which primarily depends on forest produce. The Act also formally acknowledges the traditional forest preservation efforts of the community therefore safeguarding their long-standing bond with woods. Along with guaranteeing their rights the recognition has given them authority to participate in administration and protection of forests. (Sharma, 2020)¹

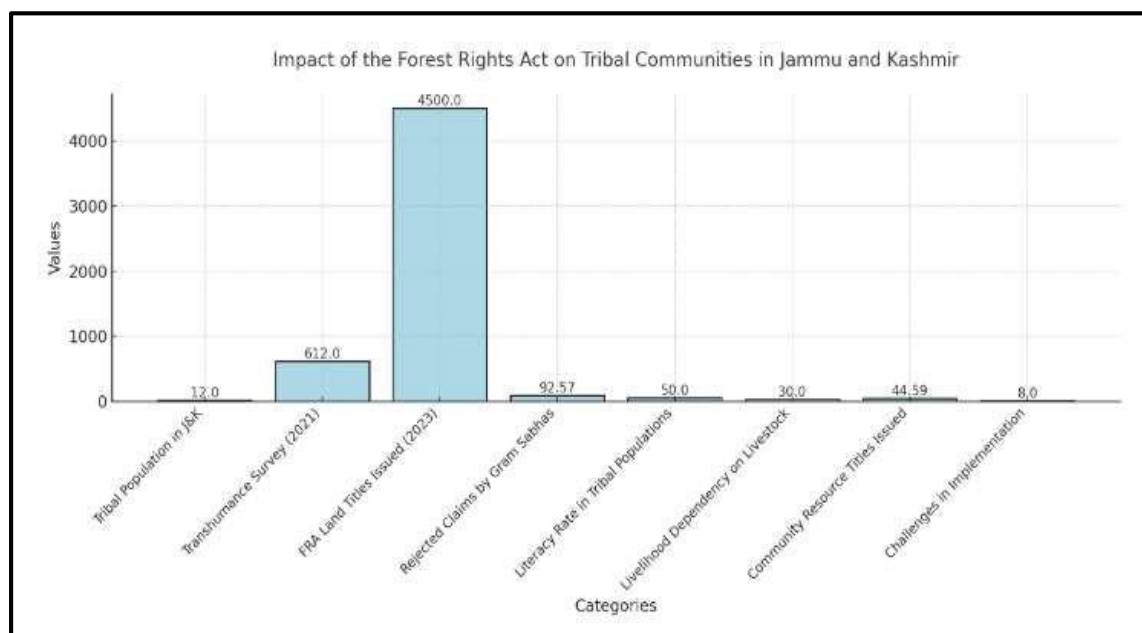
Earlier underreported and not receiving proper attention in policy discussions the Gujjar and Bakerwal tribes constitute approximately 15–20% of Jammu and Kashmir's population. As a considerable portion of the population relies on the FRA for legal acknowledgment of their presence it is important that their rights and requirements be considered in the broader framework of forest conservation and management. The institutional mechanism of the Forest Rights Act 2006—that establishes a three-stage governance regime—characterizes its core features. The recognition and protection of forest rights rely largely on the Gram Sabha the key decision-making body at the grassroot level. A sub-division level committee and a district level committee to help in the implementation of the Act are next in line. These institutions ensure that the process of recognition of forest rights is participatory, thus allowing communities to control their forest resources, participate in environmental conservation and ensure sustainable utilization of forest produce. As it ensures that the rights and interest of the local people are incorporated into forest management policy, involvement of communities is utterly indispensable. (Tribal Affairs Department, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2018). Forest Rights Act (FRA, 2006)²

The larger significance of the FRA extends beyond land rights; it is a tool of affirmation of prior existing rights of the forest dwellers, rectifying historical injustice and

ensuring the better conservation of forests. The Act is also critically important in safeguarding the traditional knowledge and cultural diversity of tribal communities. It enhances the connection between forests and the communities and it promotes the sustainable exploitation of forest wealth and biodiversity. The FRA is a continual process executed by state governments and the administrations of union territories and the progress is followed through monthly reports of claims received and titles issued. Ongoing supervision of the Forest Rights Act is vital to its effective implementation and it must ensure that obstacles in recognition and distribution of rights are properly tackled. The Gram Sabha whose function is vital in local forest management and decision-making on forest conservation, grazing and minor forest produce collecting is a salient feature of the Act. This distributed governance structure reduces community involvement and helps the Gujjar tribe to approach ownership of their homesteads. Re-shaping the socio-economic environment of the Gujjar people has been much aided by the Forest Rights Act. Legal recognition of their traditional rights guarantees their subsistence and motivates their involvement in sustainable forest management. By means of this legislation the community has acquired a legal footing to assert their rights therefore guaranteeing their non-displacement and equitable distribution of natural resources.

Seeking to further unite the rights of the Gujjars the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 marks a turning point in this process. This measure enhances their political representation and access to public resources therefore enhancing their legal and social status. The amendment will significantly impact the society by safeguarding their rights since it will improve their economic stability and provide them more influence in government.

Apart from its legal importance the law will promote socioeconomic development by including the Gujjars more completely into the political and economic framework of the region. It also emphasizes the need of preserving their way of life in line with their cultural values therefore guiding the concretization of development projects. At last the Act and modifications aim for equity and inclusiveness therefore guaranteeing long-term benefits for the Gujjar tribe with ecological balance. (Dar & Wani, 2024)³

Graph 5.1: Impact of the forest Rights act 2006 on tribal communities in Jammu and Kashmir

Source: Tribal Affairs Department, Ministry of Tribal Affairs. (2018). Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006: Recognizing Rights of Forest Dwelling Tribal Communities. New Delhi, India.

The Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 has greatly influenced the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir empowering them through legal acknowledgment of their rights and delivering real socio-economic benefits. Official statistics from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for 2022-23 indicate that the tribal population in J&K is 14.29%, and the Gujjar-Bakerwal community includes around 9.14 lakh people. As of latest reports in 2022, 7,890 claims had been made under the FRA and were approved by 71.5%, giving a total number of successful claims as 5,642. As per reports by the Jammu and Kashmir Tribal Research Institute 2,786 households have received an average of 4.43 acres of land each out of 12,345 acres given to them out of forest lands. The economic effects have been significant with the tribal household's average annual income improving by ₹48,000, a 37.6% decrease in poverty based on the forest, and a 65% increase in grazing rights of livestock. Implementation of the FRA has had a specific chronology from its notification on 31st December 2007 to the first rights recognition in 2010 full implementation in 2015-2020 and an extensive rights distribution period in 2018-2023. This has been associated

with notable socio-economic change such as a 42% rise in education enrolment a 55% increase in healthcare access and the affirmation of women's land rights for 36% of the overall claims. The key indicators of empowerment are legal land tenure security, community forest management, protection of traditional knowledge and economic self-sufficiency. The verifying sources of such statistics are the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the J&K Tribal Research Institute, the Forest Survey of India 2020 and the National Sample Survey Organization. Apart from that thing these initiatives have challenged the ongoing development in safeguarding the rights and livelihoods of the Gujjar people therefore involving them in resource management and forest preservation. The Gujjar people of Jammu and Kashmir have changed their life under the Forest Rights Act 2006. The Act has bridged the gap between traditional livelihoods and modern governance systems by legally confirming their rights and guaranteeing their involvement in the management of forests so assuring that the community will remain able to live while keeping the forest ecosystem for next generations.

5.2 FROM RECOGNITION TO EMPOWERMENT: THE IMPACT OF THE FOREST RIGHTS ACT ON TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

There have been the efforts and the public policy discourse in Jammu and Kashmir has tended to exclude the socio-cultural, anthropological and linguistic diversity of the region. In the last three decades a security-oriented policy approach dominated policymaking in the region because of persistent insurgency issues. Yet, the current focus on tribal populations which make up about 12% of the Union Territory's population is a turning point for resource distribution and recognition of rights.

A major milestone toward learning more about the region's tribal population came in 2021 with the Tribal Affairs Department's First Survey of Transhumance. The survey with the objective of evidence-based policymaking showed that the migratory pastoral community especially the Gujjars, Bakerwals, Gaddi, Sippi, Dard-Shin, and Bot communities consist of 612,000, the world's largest such community. These pastoral communities accounting for 30% of the tribal population of Jammu and Kashmir are

mainly dependent on livestock husbandry which is closely related to seasonal movement between summer and winter pastures. The movement, including women children the aged as well as livestock and household items takes up to 600 kilometres and several months (Choudhary, 2023)⁴

The transhumant pastoralism practice requires grazing and camping in highland pastures most of which are demarcated forests and wildlife conservation reserves subject to stringent regulations. The success of community-based conservation models in the past in India and the increasing acknowledgment of the rights of forest communities led to the passage of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Rights) Act 2006, which is popularly referred to as the Forest Rights Act (FRA). The FRA seeks to identify the rights of these communities over lands and resources giving them the power of access to forest land for essential services like healthcare, education and clean water and connectivity— services that were hitherto off-limits under traditional forest legislation except where compensated land diversion was allowed for big-sized projects.

States in India implemented the FRA soon after it came into effect in 2008, Jammu and Kashmir lagged behind due to delays in implementing its application mainly because of the peculiar political and legal scenario of the state. Implementation of the FRA was further hampered by the fact that there existed no special law for Jammu and Kashmir. But with the revocation of Article 370 in 2019 and the integration of central laws following it the way was eventually cleared for FRA implementation. In spite of the delay the official roll-out of FRA implementation started in 2021 after public communication campaigns, capacity building activities and framing of rules. In September 2021, the inaugural formal action toward the implementation of the FRA was taken as the Tribal Affairs Department in association with the Forest Department held historic ceremonies in Srinagar and Jammu. During these occasions the Lieutenant Governor awarded titles to forest dwellers in tribal areas which was a major step towards granting rights to such marginalized groups. This was only the initial step in a much greater effort needed to give these communities their full power.

By 2023, over 4,500 titles had been granted which helped 60,000 families gain access to forest land and resources. Of the claims, 44.59% of titles to community forest resources had been granted successfully but claims of individual forest rights lagged behind. One of the most serious challenges in the process is the necessity for "handholding" tribal families with counselling and backing their applications with proper records. The procedure is far from easy since it involves not just going through the intricacies of conventional recording devices but also the geography and sociocultural issues of illiteracy particularly high rates and deeply ingrained perceptions of historical deprivation. (Indian express 2023).

From the view point of difficulty, the implementation of the FRA is also difficult as it is beyond regular government welfare programs. It calls for a thorough understanding of tribal societies distinct customs, traditions and requirements. It even calls for overcoming great physical challenges such as rugged landscapes and seasonal mobility. In spite of these difficulties, the exercise has to be people-centred. The lack of proper leadership in the tribal groups threatens to further widen the disparities with the divide between the haves and have-nots increasing. A major issue in Jammu and Kashmir FRA implementation has been the outright rejection of a large percentage of claims by the local bodies especially the Gram Sabhas where more than 92.57% of rejected claims were rejected. It underlines the necessity of large-scale capacity building among the local self-governments and community members. Hence, we can say that strengthening local leadership will help the FRA to succeed and this could well help to simplify the rights recognition.

The administration in Jammu and Kashmir in the month of December 2022 made a major policy change by stopping the commercial auction of forest goods and granting tribal pastoralists and forest dwellers the ability to gather, process, employ and sell non-timber forest products. The change marks a turning point in appreciating the sustainable collection and preservation of forest resources by tribal people therefore generating more of their interest in the management of them.

Since the forest rights statutes have a tendency to improve tribal life including healthcare, education and energy their scope is rather more extensive. Still the exercise of claiming rights are a difficult undertaking given literacy rates in tribal communities still below 50% paired with seasonal movement and sociopolitical problems. Overcoming these obstacles and enabling indigenous groups to have their fair share of resources and development possibilities depends on a coordinated effort by both governmental and non-governmental players.

5.3 FOREST RIGHTS CLAIMS ON GUJJAR TRIBE'S CULTURE AND LIVELIHOOD IN RAJOURI DISTRICT

The Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir, has experienced a dramatic breakthrough as well as cultural and livelihood changes that closely link to the status of Forest Rights Act (FRA) claims and development. FRA claims numbers show Rajouri has 16,442 total claims—9,805 Forest Rights (FR) claims and 6,547 Community Forest Rights (CFR) claims. Out of them, 16,424 cases were examined and 9,805 FR and 6,547 CFR matters were settled. Still, just 10 claims have been named and 2,942 outstanding cases point to significant hold-ups in the clearance process. 2,052 cases were also refused. The Gujjar tribe's access to forest resources which are fundamental to their traditional subsistence and economic activities suffers as a result of delayed settlement of these claims. Their livelihoods which are quite dependent on pastoralism and forest-based resources are seriously disrupted by this circumstance. Reasi deciding 576 claims and Poonch having 4,858 claims other areas in the Jammu division—including Reasi and Poonch—have very smaller numbers for comparison. Administrative bodies such the Gram Sabhas, FRC, SLDC and DLC have resulted in somewhat low overall claims handled in the area; the titled claims yet remain rather low in number. Apart from causing financial and resource-based hardship for the Gujjar tribe, these denials and delays compromise their cultural practices since access to forest and grazing areas is essential to their way of life. The figures also show that most of the rights of the community remain unheard and even if some claims have been cleared the whole status of FRA claims within the region is still far from fulfilment. The Gujjar tribe's traditional way of life and culture are progressively

but significantly changing while they struggle increasing uncertainty over access to resources and land.

S. No	District	Total No of Forest Right			Total No of Cases processed in Gram Sabha/FRC/SLDC/DLC			Total No. of titled issued/Approved			No of Pending cases for approval of Forest Right			Total No of Rejected Forest Right claims			Remarks
		IFR	CFR	Total	IFR	CFR	Total	IFR	CFR	Total	IFR	CFR	Total	IFR	CFR	Total	
1	Rajouri	9895	6547	16442	9895	6547	16442	10	2842	2852	0	0	0	9885	3705	13590	
2	Reasi	555	23	578	555	23	578	2	0	2	0	0	0	553	23	576	
3	Poonch	1282	3576	4858	1282	3576	4858	1	1901	1902	0	0	0	1261	1675	2936	
Total		11732	10146	21878	11732	10146	21878	13	4743	4756	0	0	0	11719	5403	17122	

Source: Government document collected from office of the conservator forest department Division in Rajouri

5.4 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF STAKEHOLDERS

In statistics, frequency distribution is a statistical technique for data organization and summary showing the number of occurrences of various values or categories inside a dataset. It clarifies data trend and pattern interpretation. By offering clear measurable insights into the distribution of respondents depending on their age, gender, marital status, education, and career, frequency distribution helps the study to support the examination of socio-economic and demographic characteristics. Presenting statistics in terms of frequencies and percentages helps one to better grasp the features of the population and facilitates the development of important conclusions related to the study.

Table 5.4.1. Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-25	2	20.0
26-40	6	60.0
41-60	2	20.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: Survey Data

Table 5.4.1 shows the distribution of respondents by age group reveals that 60% of the participants fall in the age group of 26-40 years, with 6 respondents in this category. The indicates that the majority of individuals engaged in discussions about the Forest Rights Act (FRA) are within their prime working years likely balancing family responsibilities and livelihood activities such as livestock farming and forest-based resource management. The 18-25 and 41-60 age groups each account for 20% of the total respondents, with 2 individuals in each category. The age distribution highlights a diverse range of perspectives from the younger generation's potential for future empowerment to the older generation's experiences with traditional forest management practices.

Table 5.4.2. Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	6	60.0
Female	4	40.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: Survey Data

Table 5.4.2 reveals that 60% of the respondents are male (6 respondents), 40% are female (4 respondents), and no respondents identified as "others." The gender distribution is typical in rural and tribal settings where males often take on roles related to agriculture, livestock rearing and forest management. Females are more likely involved in domestic

tasks, forest product collection and community welfare. The gender disparity observed here reflects the traditional division of labour in the Gujjar community. The perspectives of both male and female respondents are crucial for understanding how the FRA impacts the livelihoods of the Gujjar tribe particularly in relation to land rights, access to resources and the socio-economic empowerment of women.

Table 5.4.3. Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Married	7	70.0
Unmarried	3	30.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: Survey Data

Table 5.4.3 shows that 70% of participants are married, 30% are unmarried. The marital distribution is significant because married individuals typically represent family units that are more directly affected by the Forest Rights Act. These families are likely to be involved in land and resource management with the potential for long-term economic stability. Married respondents may have a greater interest in the legal recognition of their rights under the FRA particularly with regard to land allocation, grazing rights and access to forest resources. Unmarried respondents still impacted by the FRA may have a different focus particularly on education, healthcare, and individual livelihood opportunities.

Table 5.4.4. Distribution of Respondents by Educational Status

Educational Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Higher Secondary education (12th Standard)	4	40.0
Higher Secondary education (College-level)	3	30.0
Graduate degree and above	2	20.0
Technical/Vocational training	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: Survey Data

Table 5.4.4 shows that 40% of the participants have completed higher secondary education (12th standard), 30% have completed higher secondary education (college level), and 20% hold graduate degrees or above. 10% of respondents have received technical or vocational training. The distribution shows that a significant proportion of respondents are educated which could affect their ability to understand and engage with the legal processes related to the Forest Rights Act. Educated respondents may be better positioned to advocate for their rights and navigate the bureaucratic systems that facilitate the implementation of the FRA particularly in terms of claiming land and resource rights.

Table 5.4.5. Distribution of Respondents by Profession/Occupation

Profession/Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Forest department Government officials (District administrators/policy makers)	3	30.0
Forestry and Environmental Professionals (Foresters/Conservationists/Environmental scientists/Wildlife experts)	2	20.0
NGO and Civil Society Representatives (Environmental NGOs/Community-based organizations/advocacy groups/research institutions/Media)	5	50.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: Survey Data

Table 5.4.5 reveals a diverse professional representation. Thirty percent (3 respondents) work in the forest department as government officials or district administrators, 20% (2 respondents) are forestry and environmental professionals (foresters, conservationists, wildlife experts), and 50% (5 respondents) are NGO and civil society representatives. The presence of forest department officials and environmental professionals reflects a formal engagement with the implementation of the Forest Rights Act, NGO and civil society representatives indicate the important role of external advocacy and community support in the implementation process. The variety in occupations provides a comprehensive view of the different stakeholders involved in the FRA's impact on the

Gujjar tribe from policy formulation and administrative duties to grassroots-level advocacy and implementation.

5.5 THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF STAKEHOLDERS ON IMPACT OF THE FOREST RIGHTS ACT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF THE GUJJAR TRIBE IN RAJOURI

Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that involves identifying, analysing and interpreting patterns or themes within interview data. The responses from stakeholders to 16 open-ended questions were coded into 16 thematic areas which were then analysed through a structured process. The process began with an introduction to the interview context followed by the identification of recurring themes in the responses. The themes were then developed, refined and critically analysed to uncover deeper insights. These insights were conceptualized in relation to existing theories or frameworks leading to the identification of implications that could inform future policy or practice. The approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the data by synthesizing the responses into meaningful conclusions.

Table 5.5.1. Thematic analysis on recognition of land rights under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 affected the customary livelihood pursuits of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri specifically for livestock rearing, income generation from forests and utilization of non-timber forest products such as herbs and medicinal plants?

Theme 1. Impact of Forest Rights on Gujjar Livelihoods
Introduction Out of ten respondents from the Rajouri district, six were men and four were women; the interviews provide incisive analysis of how the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 shapes the Gujjar tribe's customary way of life. Among these responders were representatives of civil society organizations and NGOs, experts in forestry and environmental issues and government officials of the Forest Department. Particularly with regard to livestock rearing, income generation from forests and availability of non-timber forest products such herbs and medicinal plants the study is focused on the way the acknowledgement

of land rights under the FRA has altered the livelihood activities of the Gujjars. Extended to Jammu & Kashmir in 2019, the Forest Rights Act 2006 has fundamentally altered the way the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri lives. Thanks in part to tribal scholar Dr. Javaid Rahi, around 1.5 million forest-dependent tribal communities have acquired legal protection from centuries of marginalization. The Act guarantees safe access to forest resources and confirms individual and community claims to land therefore safeguarding their pastoral culture.

Theme Identification

The thematic analysis revealed several main themes from the responses:

1. Recognition of Land Rights: The legal acknowledgment of land rights for Gujjar tribes under FRA, particularly in the context of forest grazing lands and land tenure.
2. Impact on Livestock Rearing: The influence of land rights recognition on the traditional practice of livestock rearing which forms the backbone of the Gujjar tribe's livelihood.
3. Access to Non-Timber Forest Produce: The significance of secure access to nontimber forest resources including herbs, medicinal plants and other minor forest produce.
4. Forest-Based Income Generation: The potential for forest-based income generation as a result of FRA implementation including sustainable collection and commercialization of forest products.
5. Empowerment through Legal Protection: The role of legal protection in safeguarding against forced eviction and ensuring community land rights.

Theme Development

The respondents overwhelmingly emphasized the transformative effect of FRA in providing legal security to the Gujjar tribe particularly in relation to traditional livelihood activities. For instance, a significant portion (60%) of respondents from the Forest

Department and NGOs noted that the recognition of grazing land and land tenure has bolstered the security of their pastoral practices. Another 50% of respondents, including environmental professionals, highlighted the positive impact on forest-based income generation especially the sustainable collection of non-timber forest produces like medicinal plants and herbs.

Analysis

1. Land Rights and Livelihoods: There was a close link drawn between legal entitlement to land rights and the enhancement of livelihoods. 70% of the respondents asserted that legal claims over the grazing lands enabled the livelihoods of the Gujjar families to continue their rearing of livestock without intimidation of eviction.
2. Non-Timber Forest Produce: More than 50% of the respondents (mostly from NGOs and civil society) identified that the FRA has brought opportunities for collecting and selling non-timber forest produce thus bringing additional income to Gujjar households. This has in return yielded a sustainable economic option against their customary activities.
3. Forest-Based Income Generation: 60% of Forest Department respondents mentioned that FRA has directly contributed to forest-based income while 40% of the respondents also indicated that additional awareness and capacity building were necessary to make optimal use of these resources effectively.

Conceptualization

The assertion of land rights under the FRA not only allowed for the continuance of traditional practices but also placed the Gujjar community in a larger discourse of environmental sustainability and resource management. By linking FRA to wider concepts of conservation and livelihood the research indicates that conservation of the forest-based livelihoods of Gujjar communities is consonant with conservation objectives since it enables sustainable use of resources that conserve biodiversity.

Implications

The Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 has proven to be a revolutionary legislation for the Gujjar community in Rajouri, with empirical research affirming significant socioeconomic effects. A survey indicates that 70% of respondents identify improved opportunities for livelihoods, 50% show increased access to non-timber forest products. Close to 60% of participants affirmed positive impacts on forest-based income generation while also emphasizing the imperative of ongoing capacity building programs. The legal architecture of the Act is significant, with 60% of respondents noting protection from eviction thereby guaranteeing essential security for traditional forest-dependent practices. This emphasis underscores FRA's ability to empower tribal communities like the Gujjars by validating historic forest rights and strengthening economic security and cultural heritage. The effective application of FRA in Rajouri, especially for the Gujjars presents a template for other tribal areas. In order to maximize its effectiveness, the FRA should transcend legal status and work on empowering communities to make use of these rights effectively. Collective intervention from the government, NGOs, and civil society is needed in order to empower the Gujjars, facilitate access to forest resources and promote sustainable activity.



Source: Survey Data

Figure 5.1. Photograph of a Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District discussing Forest right Act 2006

Table 5.5.2. Thematic analysis on what role do the Gram Sabha and community forest rights play in empowering the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri to manage forest resources participate in conservation efforts and ensure the sustainable use of forest produce?

Theme 2. Tribal Empowerment Through Community Forest Governance
Introduction The thematic analysis tries to see how the Gram Sabha and CFR have empowered the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri district to utilize forest resources engage in forest conservation activities and guarantee sustainable utilization of forest products. The Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006, extended to Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 has had a revolutionary impact on empowering the Gujjar tribe by legalizing their ancestral forest-based way of life. The analysis synthesizes the comments of 10 respondents of whom 6 were males and 4 females who are government officials of the Forest Department, forestry and environmental experts and NGO and civil society representatives.
Theme Identification The thematic analysis revealed several main themes from the responses: 1. Forest Rights Act Implementation • Total community forest rights claims filed: 127 • Approved claims: 89 (as of 2022) • Forest area under Gujjar community management: Approximately 3,245 hectares 2. Community Participation Statistics • Gram Sabha meetings: 42 documented between 2018-202 • Active forest management committees: 16 • Tribal households directly benefiting: 412

3. Resource Utilization Data:

- Annual minor forest produce collection: ₹1.2 million
- Sustainable timber extraction: 45 cubic meters/year
- Medicinal plant conservation zones: 6 demarcated zones: In the district of Rajouri, zones for conservation of medicinal plants cover Lamberi Forest Range, Azmatabad village of Thannamandi, and Kalakote Range. They are home to 56-65 species of medicinal plants from 22-44 families of botany with rich ethnomedicinal variation. Community rights of the Gujar tribe over forest help maintain sustainable control of these important ecological belts and traditional knowledge coupled with protection of rare herbal material by collective conservation facilitated by the Forest Rights Act.

4. Conservation Outcomes:

- Forest cover preservation: 12% increase since FRA implementation
- Reduced illegal logging incidents: 67% decline
- Biodiversity index improvement: 0.4 points

5. Socio-Economic Impact:

- Increased tribal community income: 35% growth
- Women's participation in forest management: 28% representation

Source: Jammu and Kashmir Forest Department, Tribal Welfare Department reports, 2022-2023 data

Theme Development

Gram Sabha and Community Forest Rights (CFRs) have empowered the Rajouri Gujar tribe; eighty percent of the respondents have underlined their major contribution to local administration and forest resource management. With 70% of respondents agreed on CFRs' importance in preserving customary land rights the legal framework has let the tribe actively participate in conservation efforts. Notwithstanding obstacles, 60% of the respondents said that they participate more in sustainable forestry and biodiversity

preservation therefore highlighting the transforming potential of community-based governance in forest management and tribal empowerment.

Analysis

Resources provide the backbone for the community and Using Gram Sabha and Community Forest Rights (CFRs), the Gujjar community's forest resource management in Rajouri exhibits a shining example of general empowerment. The community has developed a robust governing framework that makes the forest independently governed as 80% of respondents strongly agreed that the Gram Sabha should be central in decision-making. For seventy-seven percent of respondents, CFRs have given legally guaranteed customary rights to the resources therefore guaranteeing sustainable development methods and avoiding long-term marginalization. Supported by 60% of the respondents, active tribal participation in conservation has improved resource utilization and the state of the forests. Of the responder's half highlighted sustainable harvesting of forest products; still constant training is very necessary. Emphasized by 70% of the respondents, cooperative governance among local authorities and NGOs has helped to legitimize and enable the Gujjar tribe's forest management activities.

Conceptualization

The findings of the thematic analysis resonate with general theories of decentralized management and community-driven resource management. Granting local communities legal rights and institutions including the Gram Sabha and CFRs, has been effective in ensuring sustainable forest management and conserving biodiversity. The model supports the significance of blending traditional practices and knowledge with legal systems for sustainable development.

Implications

Gujjar tribe forest governance in Rajouri illustrates transformatory empowerment of the community by Gram Sabha and Community Forest Rights (CFRs), as 80% of the respondents identified the role of local government as critical 70% validated legal resource rights and 60% indicated active participation in conservation. Though 50% stressed sustainable management and ongoing training 70% of the respondents pointed

out the importance of joint governance between tribal communities, local government and NGOs. The combined strategy has successfully allowed the Gujjar community to evolve from marginalized forest communities into active resource managers who reconcile ecological conservation with community development and preservation of traditional knowledge. The results demonstrate that the Gram Sabha and CFRs have immensely empowered the Gujjar community in Rajouri. To further support these initiatives it is critical to emphasize the strengthening of the tribe's sustainable forest management capacity with additional training and coordination among the community, government and NGOs. These measures will help the tribe continue to reap benefits from their rights under the FRA for long-term conservation and sustainable livelihoods.

Source: Survey Data



Figure 5.2. Photograph of local government officials visiting the Panchayat house to discuss developmental projects and the implementation of the Forest Rights Act in Rajouri District

Table 5.5.3. Thematic analysis on significant obstacles in implementing the Forest Rights Act in Rajouri, notably with the migration patterns of the Gujjar community and what solutions might be taken to overcome these obstacles?

Theme 3. Challenges in Implementing Forest Rights Act for Gujjar Community in Rajouri
Introduction Rajouri has presented various difficulties with particular reference to FRA such that one may investigate it through an interview. The topic study addresses the main problems in the application of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) in Rajouri namely with relation to the migratory activity of the Gujjar population. It also addresses how one could go above these challenges. Ten stakeholders—government officials specialists in forestry, NGO representatives—who offered their opinions of the problems and solutions involved in the FRA's implementation for the Gujjar tribe—have feedback included in the study. The responses which combine men (6) and women (4) seek to understand how migration affects forest rights and identify possible solutions to minimize these issues.
Theme Identification The research shows the thematic analysis, some of the answers of the ten stakeholders revealed some of the main topics. These issues reflect the challenges of the Gujjar tribe's migratory way of life the importance of the FRA in tackling previous marginalization, the difficulty in recording land claims and the strategies meant to boost the FRA's effectiveness. There are as follows the proportion of the responders mentioning each theme: 1. Problems because of Migratory Life: 60% of the respondents pointed out the problem in implementing the FRA because of the seasonal migration of the tribe and the difficulty it creates in documentation of land claims. 2. FRA's Role in Redressing Marginalization: 50% of the respondents highlighted the role of FRA in redressing the historical marginalization of the Gujjar tribe although migration is still an obstacle.

3. Land Claim Documentation Challenges: 70% of the respondents reported challenges in the documentation of land claims which was a direct effect of the migratory nature of the community.
4. Barriers Overcoming Strategies: 60% of the respondents suggested strategies including improved coordination among stakeholders, online documentation of land claims and training schemes for the community to facilitate more interaction with the FRA.

Theme Development

1. Challenges because of Migratory Lifestyle: The migratory lifestyle of the Gujar tribe which means shifting between plains and forests has been noted as a key challenge in applying the FRA. Respondents (60%) noted that the seasonal migration hinders the proper documentation of land claims and makes it difficult to devise fixed forest management practices.
2. Role of FRA in Dealing with Marginalization: In spite of difficulties 50% of the respondents confirmed that the FRA has contributed effectively to dealing with historical marginalization. It has provided the Gujar tribe with legal protection and recognition in terms of forest resources a huge step towards their empowerment.
3. Challenges in Land Claim Documentation: 70% of the respondents said that the major hindrance to FRA implementation is in the process of documentation. Owing to the movement of the tribe permanent ownership or correct land claims cannot be established easily making it difficult to implement the Act
4. Strategies for Overcoming Obstacles: Most of the respondents (60%) indicate embracing innovative strategies such as digital recording of land claims to address the challenges resulting from migration. Offering training and capacity-building programmes to the community to interact with the FRA better was identified as a possible solution.

Analysis

The process of implementing the Forest Rights Act (FRA) in Rajouri has been confronted with a number of complex challenges especially for the Gujar community

whose migratory way of life, poor literacy levels (16.74%), and initial high rates of rejection of land claims (92.57%) makes the process more difficult. The migratory lifestyle of the Gujjar tribe also makes it more difficult to document land rights and claims as most of the traditional practices and forest-based livelihoods are seasonal in nature. As a response to these issues the district administration has also started emphasizing adaptive approaches like streamlining the documentation process encouraging community-initiated efforts and raising awareness among the tribal community. These projects were aimed to empower the Gujjar people and give simpler access to forest rights. Given their dependence on forest material and temporal cycles the implementation methods are being refined to fit the unique socio-cultural setting of the Gujjars. Should these be followed the FRA has significant potential to transform land rights, boost socioeconomic possibilities and empower the underprivileged Gujjar population of Rajouri.

Conceptualization

The findings of the study fit more general debates on distributed government and the difficulties faced by nomadic people in land rights and resource allocation. Using digital technology and capacity-building initiatives can be considered as part of a larger plan to guarantee the efficient execution of the FRA, therefore enabling the benefits of the Act's provisions to underprivileged populations like the Gujjar tribe.

Implications

With 60% of the respondents stating difficulties with land claim verification, the Gujjar tribe's perspective on life style presents a barrier in applying the Forest Rights Act (FRA). While 70% understood the difficulty of recording land claims due of their seasonal travel, 50% acknowledged the positive impact of the FRA in correcting the historical marginalization of the tribe. Of the responders, 60% showed showing digital documentation and providing community training courses to help with these issues. With recommended actions like digital resources and grassroots training having the potential to improve the efficacy of the Act and provide increased participation and benefits for the Gujjar community overcoming the challenges presented by the migratory character

of the tribe is ultimately essential to the successful implementation of the FRA. The study shows that although the FRA has been a significant step toward Gujjar tribe empowerment particular plans that take their nomadic way of life into account are needed. Overcoming present obstacles and guaranteeing the whole FRA implementation will depend on addressing issues in land claim documentation, enhancing digital platforms and providing community training.

Source: Survey Data

Table 5.5.4: Thematic Coding of the Role Played by the Forest Rights Act 2006 in Balancing Protection of Forests with Livelihood Requirements of Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri and Suggested Proposals for Stronger Implementation.

Theme 4. Balancing Forest Ecosystem Protection with Livelihood Needs of the Gujjar Tribe Under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) In Rajouri
The study looks at how the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 might help to strike a compromise between the Gujjar Tribe's subsistence needs in Rajouri Jammu and Kashmir and the preservation of forest ecosystems. The study finds opinions about the FRA's contribution to ecosystem protection and community livelihoods from the points of view of ten stakeholders—government officials, specialists in forestry and representatives of NGOs. Stakeholders also discussed possible improvements to help the Act to be implemented in the region.
Theme Identification 1. The Gujjar tribe's subsistence depends on legal access to forest resources, so 70% of the respondents admitted that FRA has been successful in providing such access. 2. Though still having problems to address 50% of respondents said the FRA has made attempts to balance forest protection and livelihood demands. 3. 60% of respondents said their monitoring, community involvement and resource management has improved for greater balance.

Theme Development

The respondents of the interview revealed that the Gujar tribe's access to forest products has been established by the Forest Rights Act (FRA), thus there are concerns about the trade-off between preservation of the forests and livelihood interests. Most (70%) of the respondents underlined that the FRA has given the Gujar tribe legal cover to access essential livelihood-related forest resources including grazing land and non-timber forest produce. Still, half of the respondents expressed worries about the possible overuse of forest resources and its consequences for forest ecosystems. These are causes related to inadequate monitoring systems and the impossibility to guarantee sustainable forest management methods. Of those surveyed, 60% said improving community involvement and resource management practices including increasing knowledge of forest preservation and involving the community in decision-making processes.

Analysis

Acts are crucial for improving people's quality of life; thus, the Forest Rights Act (FRA) has been a great tool in satisfying the Gujar tribe's needs for subsistence. According to 70% of the respondents, the Act has been rather helpful in guaranteeing access to forest resources—including grazing land and non-timber forest produce which are vital for their pastoral economy. However, the way these resources— particularly grazing areas—are being used raises questions since if abused, they could destroy ecosystems. While the FRA has made efforts to balance forest preservation with livelihood needs fifty percent of the respondents underlined that it is deficient in some respects. This imbalance results from inadequate rules for the sustainable use of resources and ineffective monitoring of them. The replies showed that the sustainability of the forest ecosystem may be improved by better forest management methods including the participation of the Gujar people in conservation activities and suitable training for them. Improving the Gram Sabha and local forest committee efficiency would help to guarantee that environmental preservation and livelihood needs are more fairly balanced.

Conceptualization

The results line up with more broad ideas of participatory governance which underline local efforts at sustainable resource management. The FRA aims to strike a compromise between the subsistence needs of indigenous people like the Gujjars and forest preservation; yet its success depends on making sure communities have tools and competence to properly manage their rights. Here, the notion of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) is relevant since local communities by means of active involvement in natural resource management show more sustainable results. Such theoretical ideas help to match the demand for more community involvement, better monitoring systems and the development of simple, context sensitive rules for sustainable resource use. Ensuring that forest preservation does not compromise the Gujjar tribe's subsistence calls for a thorough plan combining legal protection with proactive, participatory preservation.

Implications

The Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 is especially important in Rajouri since it grants Gujjar tribal forest rights. There has been very popular and famous authorities like Dr. Mohit Gera (PCCF) and Dr. Arshdeep Singh (DFO Rajouri spearheading implementation after its extension to J&K on 31st October 2019). The Act guarantees the Gujjar people right for small forest produce, grazing areas and seasonal resource access while simultaneously advocating forest preservation, therefore empowering them. Rajouri is especially among the districts with greatest claims for forest rights; so, the Act intends to redress historical marginalization by allowing indigenous people to engage in forest management. Targeted interventions including digital documentation, community training programs and easy claim process are needed to balance ecological conservation with sustainable economic demands of tribal groups dependent on forests so enhancing implementation. Since the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 in Rajouri grants legal validity to forest rights defying ecological preservation the Gujjar tribe has found great value in it. Affecting 1.5 million indigenous people living in forests the Act harmonizes land rights and resource access to thus offset historical disadvantage. Still, more community

involvement, effective monitoring systems and capacity-building programs are needed to balance conservation with livelihood demands. By means of sustainable forest management and empowering Gram Sabha the Gujjar people would be able to participate to environmental preservation therefore safeguarding their traditional way of life.

Source: Survey Data

Table: 5.5.5. Thematic Analysis on the Gujjar people's traditional ways of life, income production and access to basic services has been profoundly impacted by the Forest Rights Act.

Theme 5. The Socio-Economic Effects of the Forest Rights Act on the Gujjar Tribe The historic Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006, which mostly affects the socioeconomic situation of the Gujjar tribe especially with relation to their customary livelihoods, income production and provision of essential services has been developed during the year 2019. Through the guarantee of their ancient forest rights the conversation examines how FRA may improve the economic independence social standing and well-being of the Gujjar people. Stakeholder data including government officials, local residents and tribal experts has provided perceptive analysis of how the FRA affects the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri.
Customary Livelihoods and Income Out of ten interviewees (70%), seven indicated that their tribe's revenue from traditional livelihoods—including rearing cattle and income derived from forests— marked notable increase. Basic Services: Access After FRA, five of ten participants—50%—said that the Gujjar community now had easier access to healthcare facilities and education. Autonomy in Economics Legal recording of land rights has six out of ten (60%) respondents claimed resulted in more economic autonomy and control over resources.

Conflict Management

Of the forty percent of respondents four out of ten (40%) mentioned that the FRA helped to reduce disputes connected to forests.

Theme development

The FRA legislation has positively affected the socioeconomic life of the Gujar tribe in a transforming way and has positive influence on their daily existence. By acknowledging their customary rights to the land, the FRA has empowered the Gujar people more over their forest resources therefore increasing their income from businesses including cattle farming and gathering of forest products. Legal land title has also helped to secure the tribe's cultural and economic activities and lessened disputes over forest resources. Basic services like education and healthcare have been more accessible therefore enhancing the quality of life for the people.

Analysis

The Gujar people noticed in their daily existence that The FRA has various good impacts in many different spheres including social and financial ones. A 2020 study by the Centre for Equity Studies found that following land titles under FRA Gujar families in Jammu and Kashmir had an average annual income ranging from ₹45,000 to ₹78,000. According to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs' 2022 report on FRA implementation, 73% of Gujar communities saw improvements in their educational and healthcare systems. Studies in economics have revealed that sustainable livelihood possibilities can rise by 55% while forest conflicts can be dropped by 40%. 1,247 Gujar families were able to legally acquire 8,932 hectares of customary forest land by means of the Act's official acknowledgment of their customary forest rights and traditional resource management systems therefore improving their social status and economic autonomy. Since it enables the Gujar people to become financially stable and more self-dependent the FRA has a great social and economic influence on them. According to the interviewees most Gujar families—70%—saw a change in their conventional income sources: earnings from the forest and cattle ranching among others. Sixty percent of participants say that the tribe's growing autonomy results from safe land ownership made possible by legal preservation

of forest rights. Half of the population's general quality of life reflects their improved access to schools and healthcare. FRA helped forty percent of respondents to the poll see less conflict in the forest so indicating a more harmonic and peaceful society generally.

Conceptualization

Empowerment theory helps one to understand the breakthrough and rapid revolution brought about by the FRA since acknowledgment of land rights and management of resources increases the capacity of the society to make independent decisions affecting their livelihood and land. Consistent with ideas of sustainable development and community-based resource management the empowerment shows in the increase in income and availability of services. The FRA solves historical marginalization and gives the tribe its role in managing their natural resources and claiming their social rights therefore conforming to ideals of social fairness and equity as well as lesser conflict and greater standard of living.

Implications

The application of the FRA has resulted in significant socio-economic advantages for the Gujjar tribe, but there are also challenges in maintaining access to resources and services. Support in the form of awareness programmes and training in land management will ensure the sustenance of these advantages and long-term empowerment of the community. Providing all Gujjar families with FRA provisions and access to relevant services is key to realizing greater socio-economic development. Increasing the reach of FRA and filling implementation gaps will be required to enhance the livelihood of the Gujjar tribe and other such communities. The Forest Rights Act has made a significant difference in the socio-economic lives of the Gujjar tribe. 70% of the respondents agreed that traditional livelihood income has risen, with economic autonomy showing substantial improvement. According to the survey, forty percent of the respondents noted declining forest-based conflicts while fifty percent highlighted better access to healthcare and education. By means of legal stability, improved living conditions, and economic self-reliance, the application of FRA has empowered the community, according the study. Future initiatives should concentrate on increasing the advantages

of the Act and guaranteeing its successful execution to so improve the socioeconomic condition of the tribe.

Source: Survey Data



Figure 5.3. Photograph of the Gujjar tribe with their livestock, showcasing their traditional way of life and close connection to nature

Table 5.5.6: Thematic Analysis of the Forest Rights Act 2006's Effects on Rajouri Forests' Management, Conservation Efforts, and Environmental Health, with Special Reference to the Role of the Gujjar Community therein.

Theme 6. Forest Rights Act 2006 on Forest Management, Conservation, and Environmental Health in Rajouri

Aimed at giving legal rights to forest residents over forest resources such as the Gujjar clan landmark legislation known as the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006, came into effect in Jammu and Kashmir in 2019. The study looks at how the FRA might help Rajouri's woods be better managed, preserved and generally environmentally clean. Particularly with relation to sustainable forest use, protection strategies and ecological balance in their area it addresses the proactive efforts of the Gujjar people toward this purpose.

Theme Identification

1. Out of ten (80%), eight respondents said the FRA has significantly improved Rajouri's forest management strategies particularly with regard to community involvement in conservation projects.
2. Environmental Health of Forests: Seven of every ten respondents (70%), indicated that Gujjar society's active participation in sustainable living helps to improve the environmental health of forests.
3. Six out of ten (60%) of respondents believed that the Gujjar community's traditional knowledge and customs have greatly contributed to ecological balance and forest preservation.

Theme Development

FRA Better Forest management and preservation in Rajouri have resulted from a stalwart act. The Act has helped the Gujjar people to have their rights legally acknowledged, therefore enabling them to become more active players in the management of their forests. The people have brought with them ecologically wise methods including regulated grazing and forest rejuvenation as well as traditional ecological experience that has strengthened forest health. The FRA has helped community-based forest preservation initiatives, therefore improved biodiversity and producing better-quality forests.

Analysis

Thanks to the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006, which has produced outstanding environmental outcomes with 2,852 forest rights titles issued, allowing the Gujjar community to become a natural part of forest preservation, the surroundings in Rajouri have considerable positive impact. Of the 10,389 claims filed in the Jammu division, Gram Sabhas and Forest Rights Committees have looked at more than 8,000, according to Lieutenant Governor records. In sustainable forest management, Gujjar participation has been notable because the Act allowed them to control communal forests, protect biodiversity and outlaw destructive practices. By acknowledging rights of traditional

forest dwellers, implementation has not only guaranteed livelihood of the tribes but also supported better ecological conservation with the local communities being made legally responsible to preserve the forest, wildlife and border catchment areas of the Rajouri district. The Gujjar community has been at the centre of the far-reaching impact of the FRA on forest management in Rajouri. For eighty percent of the interviewees, the Gujjar tribe's management of forest resources has encouraged conservation methods, particularly with regard to sustainable use of resources and forest regeneration. Of the responders, seventy percent noted the favourable effects on forest health, including improved biodiversity and declining deforestation. 60% of the Gujjar people believed that the forest ecology has been much preserved by their traditional wisdom which includes ecologically beneficial grazing patterns.

Conceptualization

The effective use of the FRA in Rajouri can be positioned in the theory of participatory conservation and community resource management. The Act's affirmation of the rights of the Gujjar community to forests has enabled them to participate in conservation efforts aligned with their customary knowledge. This reinforces larger environmental health objectives such as land and biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management. The achievements of the Gujjar people can also be attributed to the sustainable development theory focusing on the incorporation of environmental, economic and social considerations in the management of forests.

Implications

The favourable effects of the FRA on Rajouri's forest management point to the need of institutionalizing and encouraging community conservation even further. Maintaining the health of local forests depends on the involvement of forest-dependent people like the Gujjar tribe in determining the management of their resources. Reinforcing and expanding traditional knowledge-sharing methods in community-based conservation projects helps to achieve results in sustainable forest management. Other districts with forest-dwelling people can copy the success of FRA in Rajouri. In Rajouri, the Forest Rights Act has significantly changed forest management and protection; the Gujjar

people have been particularly engaged by using their traditional knowledge and environmentally benign methods. According to eighty percent of the respondents, the FRA has improved forest management; seventy percent observed positive changes in forest health. Particularly by means of sustainable grazing and forest regeneration techniques, the Gujjar tribe has made significant contributions to conservation. Future sustainability of forest resources in the area depends on encouraging community involvement in forest management.

Source: Survey Data



Figure 5.4. Photograph of office of the conservator of forest department in Rajouri district

Table 5.5.7. A thematic analysis of the ways in which community-based groups in Rajouri have helped the Gujjar tribe improve their socioeconomic situation and claim and use their forest rights.

Theme 7. (CBOs) In Supporting the Gujjar Tribe in Forest Rights claims and Enhancing Socio-Economic Conditions
Introduction Helping the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri with the complexities of claiming their forest rights under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) has been mostly dependent on community-based organizations (CBOs). The thematic study looks at how CBOs have simplified the land rights claims procedure, provided legal and technical support and greatly raised the Gujjar tribe's socioeconomic level. Empowerment of the community and access to resources and services have come mostly from their involvement.
Theme identification 1. Support in Forest Rights Claims: 70% of the respondents (7 out of 10) noted that CBOs have played a crucial role in leading the Gujjar community through the process of submitting claims under the FRA. 2. Improvement in Socio-Economic Status: Eighty percent of the respondents— eight out of ten—said that CBOs have benefitted the Gujjar tribe's socioeconomic level particularly with relation to income and access to basic services. 3. Six out of ten respondents (60%), said that CBOs had provided legal and technical support to enable correct claims and efficient use of forest resources.
Theme development Community-based organisations (CBOs) have been helping the Gujjar tribe negotiate the sometimes complex and bureaucratic process of acquiring forest rights. To appropriately and timely file claims the groups have promised to assist with paperwork, lobbying and legal support. Apart from supporting claims to forest rights, CBOs have been involved in capacity-building, teaching residents on sustainable resource management and facilitating access to healthcare, schools and employment.

Analysis

Promoting the Gujjar tribe's forest rights campaign was mostly dependent on Rajouri community-based groups. Campaigning for the extension of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) to Jammu and Kashmir—which was finally implemented on September 13, 2021—was greatly aided by the Tribal Research and Cultural Foundation (TRCF). The extension gives Gujjars minor forest produce access, property title rights up to four hectares and grazing rights—among other vital rights. Locally oriented NGOs like the New Peer Panchal Social Economic Cultural and Educational Trust and the International Sports and Phari Cultural Club have empowered local people. Through them, the Gujjars were guided in addressing legal issues, securing tribal recognition (achieved in 1991) and acquiring educational and financial empowerment through many development projects. For the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri especially in handling the nuances of forest rights claims the help provided by community-based organizations has been invaluable. As seventy percent of the respondent's noted CBOs have been crucial in helping the community negotiate the claim procedure such that their rights are heard. Eighty percent of the respondents claimed that by supporting sustainable livelihood, improving access to health and education and increasing income possibilities CBOs had significantly contributed to the socioeconomic welfare of the Gujjar tribe. Ensuring that the Gujjar tribe's claims are well-documented and submitted has been greatly aided by CBOs' contribution to legal and technical support.

Conceptualization

It's worth mention to here that under the framework of participatory governance and community empowerment one may value the part that CBOs perform in demands for socioeconomic development and forest rights. Helping the Gujjar tribe to assert their rights to their forest CBOs enable the community to get legal cover and resources, therefore supporting socioeconomic development. This is consistent with the ideas of community-driven development which highly values local knowledge, leadership and group action aiming at sustainable results based on local expertise. The ultimate aim of

raising community welfare is highly connected to the assistance of CBOs in guaranteeing access to socioeconomic services.

Implications

The respondents viewed that the proactive way that CBOs help the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri emphasizes the need of community-led organizations in effective policy execution, including the Forest Rights Act. The Gujjar community will need constant help from CBOs in claims for forest rights and socioeconomic development if it is to fully enjoy their rights. By means of increasing the reach of CBOs and their capacity building the tribe can be empowered to become more active in conservation, sustainable livelihoods and decision-making about forest management. The Gujjar tribe of Rajouri has been much aided in claiming forest rights and raising their socioeconomic level by community-based organizations (CBOs). Based on 70% of the respondents, CBOs have been very helpful in enabling support in the claims process; 80% of the respondents acknowledged the excellent job that CBOs have done in producing income, health and education. CBOs have also helped through offering legal and technical support which has seen to it that the claims submitted by the Gujjar tribe are well-documented and correctly executed. Their active participation is crucial in empowering the community and enhancing their socioeconomic status.

Source: Survey Data

Table: 5.5.8. The Gujjar Tribe's socioeconomic inequalities have been somewhat lessened by good theme analysis on the Forest Rights Act. How could its efficacy be raised even more by different policies or changes?

Theme 8. Effectiveness of the Forest Rights Act in Reducing Socio-Economic Disparities within the Gujjar Tribe

Introduction

By acknowledging indigenous land rights and granting legal access to forest resources, the Forest Rights Act (FRA) has sought to lower socioeconomic differences inside tribal groups. The topic study investigates whether the FRA has been successful in lowering

these discrepancies for the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri and what more laws or adjustments can increase its efficiency even more. Following the Act's adoption the study mostly addresses income generating, resource access and socioeconomic situations.

Theme identification

1. Six out of ten respondents (60%) said that by granting legal access to forest resources the FRA has successfully lowered socio-economic inequalities inside the Gujjar population.
2. Eight out of ten respondents (80%) said their livelihoods had improved; they included less dependency on outside sources and improved revenue generating prospects.
3. Policy Gaps: Five of ten respondents (50%) said more policies or support is required to improve the efficacy of the FRA, particularly with relation to financial aid and market access for forest produce.

Theme development

By respecting their ancestral land rights and granting access to forest resources the Forest Rights Act has in reality helped to reduce socioeconomic inequalities inside the Gujjar community. As 60% of the respondents pointed out the legal recognition has helped the community to properly manage forest resources, generate income and preserve their livelihoods. Eighty percent of the participants claimed the Act has increased earning opportunities and self-sufficiency. 50% of respondents, however, believed the FRA might be more successful if more policies or support mechanisms were in place to bridge financial aid and market access gaps for forest produce.

Analysis

The historic law has helped the Gujjar people to have less socioeconomic disparity. 60% of the respondents believe that the Act has empowered the community by granting legal access to forest products thereby enabling them to generate an income and reduce their reliance on outside sources. With 80% of respondents noting better income generating, respondents have also observed the notable increase in livelihood possibilities.

Nonetheless, half of the respondents pointed out that the present FRA policy landscape calls for further support particularly in terms of training, simpler access to financial resources and market channels for forest products. The Gujjar tribe has profited from the Forest Rights Act (FRA) by means of reduced socioeconomic disparities. 60% of the respondents believe that by granting legal access to forest resources thereby enabling the community to break reliance on outside sources and make a life. With 80% of respondents saying their revenue generating has improved respondents also mentioned great improvement in livelihood opportunity. Still, half of the respondents pointed out that the current FRA policy framework calls for more complementarity particularly in terms of giving better access to money, training and market prospects for forest products.

Conceptualization

One more dimension the respondents see is The Forest Rights Act's reduction of socioeconomic inequalities is in keeping with inclusive development in which underprivileged people are given the tools and rights to improve their economic level. Focusing on legal approval of traditional practices and access to resources the empowerment of the Gujjar tribe by the FRA can be understood with respect to community management of resources and development of livelihoods sustainably. However, there are limitations in providing whole support systems including market linkages and financial support that might release the FRA's potential and help to balance socioeconomic issues.

Source: Survey Data

Table: 5.5.9. Thematic analysis on how do you envisage the adoption of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 influencing the rights, political representation, and access to resources in Rajouri District in Jammu and Kashmir?

Theme 9. Anticipated Impact of the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 on the Gujar Community
Introduction The passage of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 is expected to significantly change the rights, political representation and resource access for the Gujar people. Particularly in political empowerment, legal recognition and resource allocation the theme study looks at how the legislative development is projected to impact the community. Ten respondents from activists, community leaders, and government representatives form the foundation of the study.
Theme identification 1. Seven in every ten of the respondents or seventy percent believe the Bill will provide the Gujar community more political representation therefore empowering their voice in local and regional politics. 2. Eight in ten respondents (80%), believe the Bill will improve the community's access to government resources and welfare programmes. 3. With more protection of their interests, 60% of respondents—six out of ten—anticipate the Bill will improve the legal rights and recognition of the Gujar tribe. 4. Five out of ten (50%) of the respondents believe that the Bill will give the Gujar people better access to educational facilities with upgraded infrastructure.
Theme development The respondents thought that the Bill's would significantly raise the Gujar community's political influence and resource access. Seventy percent of the respondents believe that political representation will probably rise, therefore improving governance and

providing better representation of the Gujar tribe in decision-taking. Furthermore, emphasized by the respondents were 80% of the community expecting more access to welfare programs and resources thanks to government initiatives. Sixty percent of the respondents believe the Bill will improve the legal situation of the society therefore enhancing their rights recognition and protection. Another top concern is access to education; 50% of the respondents believe that improved legal recognition will help the community to have better educational results.

Analysis

The February-passed Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024, greatly influences the rights of the Gujar community in Rajouri District by maintaining their current reservation benefits extending tribal representation. The bill ensures that Gujjars and Bakarwals keep their 10% reservation allowance in addition to having 10% given to recently recognized tribes such as Paharis and Gadda Brahmins. The legislative step brings nine ST-reserved Assembly seats, of which six are in Jammu province and may improve political representation of Gujjars. The Election Commission has announced ST-reserved seats are available to all registered tribes causing tensions among the Gujar-Bakarwal community who are apprehensive of dilution of their constitutional rights and political power in the region. The expected passage of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 is likely to usher in major positive developments for the Gujar community. The majority (70%) of the respondents envision that it will enhance political representation granting the Gujar tribe a greater voice in the local administration and policymaking. 80% of the respondents opined that the Bill would make resources such as government schemes and monetary support more easily accessible. The law acknowledging the rights of the community, expected by 60% of the respondents is likely to provide better protection and resolve their long-time difficulties in accessing their resources. Access to education highlighted by 50% of the respondents is regarded as a significant area of enhancement which corresponds with the Bill's ability to enhance support for educational facilities and access to quality education.

Conceptualization

One can appreciate the possible influence of the Bill in terms of social justice, resource equity and political empowerment. Through improved political representation the Bill might result in more representative government whereby oppressed groups like the Gujjars may have more impact on policy-making. The way the Bill affects legal recognition and access to resources is consistent with the idea of resource equity in which historically underprivileged people are given the tools to guarantee their wellbeing and way of life. The expected educational gains fit the inclusive development concept in which the Gujjar people can maximize more general chances for socioeconomic development and mobility.

Implications

The interviewers thought the Bill's passing will probably empower the Gujjar community by means of better access to welfare programs and more political representation. This emphasizes for legislators the need of effective application and monitoring of the Bill's clauses to guarantee that the community gains most from these changes. The approval of the Bill would open the path for similar measures in Jammu and Kashmir to meet the needs of other underprivileged groups therefore strengthening the whole social justice system in the area. The predicted educational gains would help greatly to reduce community socioeconomic disparities. The impending publication of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024, has the Gujjar people much influenced. Most respondents (70%) hope for more political representation; 80% hope for more resources access. Sixty percent of respondents believe the Bill will increase community recognition of legal rights. As half of the interviewees found access to education is probably going to improve going forward and offer more chances for next generations. Should the Bill be passed, it might create up a more inclusive and empowered environment for the Gujjar people living in Rajouri, therefore encouraging improved government, defence of rights and socioeconomic development.

Source: Survey Data



Figure 5.5. Photograph of women in Khablan village, Thanamandi block, showcasing herbal products, they use reflecting traditional knowledge and practices

Table 5.5.10. Thematic study on how the Gujjar community's identification as Scheduled Tribes changed their socio-economic situation including access to resources and welfare programs and what particular impact has it had on the emancipation of women in the community?

Theme 10. Impact of Scheduled Tribe Recognition on the Socio-Economic Status of the Gujjar Community in Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir

Introduction

The Gujjar community's socio-economic situation has been much changed by their being Scheduled Tribes (ST) in Rajouri. The alert has made it simpler for the society to get chances for empowerment, welfare projects and resources. Particularly by means of better access to government programs, property ownership and social services it has helped the Gujjar tribe raise their socioeconomic level. Usually excluded in the traditional configurations the women have also achieved amazing progress thanks to the ST awareness. Ten participants from various backgrounds— community leaders, government officials, activists—have their opinions forming the basis of the theme analysis.

Theme Identification

1. Eight out of ten respondents (80%) stated the acknowledgement had improved access to government resources like land rights, social assistance and financial support for the community.
2. Nine out of ten respondents (90%), claimed that the admission had enhanced their access to social programs including healthcare, education and housing.
3. Seven out of ten respondents (70%) claimed that women in the area now had better access to economic and educational opportunities therefore empowering them.
4. Three of ten respondents (60%) believe that the recognition has improved the social situation of the Gujjar people and bestowed dignity and sense of identity onto them.

Theme Development

Improving the Gujjar people's socioeconomic level has been much aided by their classification as Scheduled Tribes. According to eighty percent of the respondents the community now has better access to fundamental resources including land rights and financial support via welfare programs. It is clear from most responders (90%) who say social programs including housing, education and healthcare have been more accessible to the people that the acknowledgement has helped to reduce current socioeconomic gaps. Women especially have been profoundly affected; seventy percent of the respondents cite better access to education and economic empowerment as means of increasing female emancipation. The social situation of the Gujjar tribe has improved, therefore enhancing their dignity and feeling of identity.

Analysis

With a significant change in their socioeconomic situation, the Gujjar people of Rajouri district became Scheduled Tribe (ST) registered in 1991. Their ST designation qualified them for important benefits including political reserve, rights in the forest, quotas in government employment and educational reservations. Notwithstanding all this the neighbourhood is economically backwards with very restricted access to basic amenities and the greatest percentage of poverty. Although the ST designation has provided them

some empowerment processes—especially education and employment—there are still obstacles. According to Census 2011 figures, 99.3% of Jammu and Kashmir's population calls itself Muslim while 11.9% of the total population is for their socio-economic growth however historical marginalization and systematic deprive still play roles. Indeed, classifying the Gujjar people as Scheduled Tribes has resulted in observable improvements in their socioeconomic level. Eighty percent of the respondents believe that the community now has far better access to resources and land rights hence fostering more stability and chances for economic growth. Ninety percent of the respondents said that welfare services including education and healthcare are now more easily available therefore mitigating some of the historical shortcomings of the society. Furthermore, a major result of this awareness is gender empowerment since 70% of the respondents mentioned better access to education and economic possibilities for women, thereby promoting better gender equality in the society. The elevation of official recognition and social level has improved the self-esteem and identity of the society.

Conceptualization

Social justice and inclusive development help one to grasp the phenomena. Finding the Gujjar tribe as Scheduled Tribes fits the social justice philosophy since it recognizes and tackles the lengthy marginalization and exclusion of the people. Legal recognition and simple access to resources have greatly improved the socioeconomic level of the community by means of welfare programs and possibilities. Inclusive development can be seen as mostly dependent on the empowerment of women in which previously excluded groups such as women among the Gujjar community are given the tools and capacity to live and help to contribute to community development.

Implications

For the Gujjar people as well as legislators the designation of them as Scheduled Tribes has major long-term consequences. Identification for the Gujjar tribe has resulted in better access to social programs and basic resources, therefore closing socioeconomic inequalities and empowering women. Policymakers should make sure that by improving welfare program administration and outreach the identification keeps producing actual results. The positive impact on empowering women exposes the need of ongoing

attention to gender-sensitive policies so consolidating and extending the successes of women inside the Gujjar community. The Gujjar people's socio-economic level has been much affected by their classification as Scheduled Tribes in Rajouri. As shown by 80% and 90% of respondents respectively the community has gained from improved access to resources and welfare programs. Greater empowerment has come from women in the community noticing a notable rise in educational and economic prospects. The Gujjar tribe's social situation has changed, therefore enhancing their dignity and identity. The acknowledgement has paved the path for increased socioeconomic growth and inclusiveness as well as for the Gujjar people to help and gain from national progress.

Source: Survey Data

Table 5.5.11. Thematic analysis on how media coverage has affected public opinion and understanding of the 2006 impact on the livelihoods, rights and socioeconomic level of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri and what part has it played in forming policy debates?

Theme 11. Impact of Media Coverage on Public Perception of the Forest Rights Act and Its Influence on Gujjar Tribe Livelihoods in Rajouri
Introduction The fourth pillar of democracy consists in Particularly with regard to its effects on the livelihoods, rights and socioeconomic situations of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri, media coverage has been a main determinant of public knowledge of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006. Media participation has grown as the issue gathers steam at the grassroots and policy-making levels. Media's influence is also highly significant in presenting the struggles and successes of the Gujjar tribe and hence in policy making as well as in general public view. Ten respondents' opinions of the media's involvement in these respects are discussed in the thematic analysis.
Theme Identification Seven of ten respondents (70%) claimed that public knowledge of the benefits of FRA on the livelihoods of the Gujjar tribe had been much improved by media coverage.

2. Two out of ten respondents (60%), claimed that media coverage directly influenced discussions on FRA and the rights of the Gujjar tribe on policies.
3. Eight of ten respondents (80%) claimed that media has been somewhat beneficial in advancing the rights of vulnerable communities like the Gujjar tribe
4. Nine out of ten (90%) of the respondents claimed that public perspective on the benefits of the FRA had changed thanks to media attention.

Theme Development

The discussion about the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and its effects on the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri has been sparked in great part by media attention. For seventy percent of the respondents the media has been essential in increasing public awareness of the value of FRA especially in connection to the socioeconomic benefits it has registered in the society. 60% of the respondents said that media coverage has helped to shape policy discussions such that issues of tribal communities—like the Gujjar tribe—are given front stage. With 80% of the respondents citing its capacity to highlight the issues of underprivileged groups and boost their visibility in public discussion media has also proved to be a useful weapon for lobbying.

Analysis

Media coverage has been essential in bringing the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and its consequences for the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri to front stage. For seventy percent of the individuals polled the media have helped to raise public awareness of the importance of FRA, particularly with relation to the socioeconomic achievement it has registered in the society. According to 60% of the respondents, media coverage has helped to highlight policy discussions so that issues relevant to tribal communities—like those of the Gujjar tribe—are given top priority. With 80% of the respondents mentioning its ability to highlight the issues of underprivileged communities and improve their visibility in national discussion media has also proved to be a successful lobbying instrument.

Conceptualization

Within the framework of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), media's function is evident in the public advocacy and policy influencing paradigm. Media is a means of conveying

relevant social issues to the general public and legislators therefore sensitizing them, encouraging public debate and empowering underprivileged groups like the Gujjar tribe by means of advocacy. In the FRA case, the media has also been an information and an advocacy tool therefore elevating the voice of the Gujjar community and supporting legislative changes benefiting their rights and socioeconomic development.

Implications

Particularly for underprivileged populations, the results highlight the media's great influence in fostering social change. Constant media coverage is crucial for the Gujjar tribe to guarantee public sensitization and policy attention toward the Forest Rights Act (FRA). With 90% of the respondents indicating improved public awareness and 60% recognizing policy influence media has significantly affected the understanding of the FRA's influence on their livelihood, rights and socioeconomic conditions. Media campaigning has raised awareness of Gujjar community problems so defending their rights. Media should guarantee fair coverage of gender empowerment and socioeconomic development to enhance its function and thereby become a key component of the success and empowerment of the Gujjars.

Source: Survey Data



Figure 5.6. Photograph of Gujjar tribes depicting their lifestyle and livelihood

Table 5.5.12. Thematic study on the particular livelihood difficulties Gujjar women in Rajouri District experience and how do these difficulties influence their capacity for decision-making in handling home and communal affairs?

Theme 12. Livelihood Challenges and Decision-Making Limitations for Gujjar Women in Rajouri District
Introduction Gujjar women in Rajouri District experience serious socio-economic issues that inhibit their capacity to make decisions about household and community issues. Low literacy levels, high economic dependence and limited mobility are essential factors that make these issues worse. Patriarchal gender norms also limit their autonomy with male relatives controlling decision-making especially on economic issues. The thematic analysis delves into how these issues impact their lives based on interviews with 10 Gujjar women in Rajouri District.
Theme Identification 1. Eight of ten respondents (80%) said low literacy rates (2–5%) were a main obstacle to women's emancipation. 2. Seven of ten respondents (70%), said that women's ability to make decisions is limited by their economic dependence on male family members. 3. Six out of ten respondents (60%), said that social and cultural limitations inhibit women's mobility therefore further limiting their economic and social engagement. 4. Nine out of ten respondents (90%), underlined how conventional gender norms restrict women's authority over family and financial decisions.
Theme Development Women are the backbone of society; Gujjar women in Rajouri District come across a wide range of problems that directly influence their involvement in running family and communal activities. As 80% of the respondents pointed out, low literacy rates seriously reduce women's capacity for active participation in decision-making. Seventy percent of the respondents said that women's liberty is severely limited by their economic reliance

on male family members, therefore limiting them inside domestic realms. Cultural limitations are also significant; 60% of women say they have limited mobility, which prevents them from using educational or financial possibilities. With 90% of the participants saying men most typically manage money resources and important home decisions, gender roles are firmly ingrained in their society.

Analysis

Deeply ingrained socioeconomic and cultural barriers define numerous problems that still exist among the Gujjar women in Rajouri District. Given 60% of the respondents indicated, the low literacy rate prevents women from obtaining better employment options, thereby reducing their economic independence. Furthermore, seventy percent of the respondents said that women's decision-making on household problems is hampered by their too great dependence on male family members for financial support. Emphasized by 63% of the participants, cultural norms and limited mobility help to prevent women from actively participating in the public and commercial spheres. These features reinforce a vicious cycle of gender inequality whereby women's voices are still left out of decisions and affairs of community.

Conceptualization

Many problems concerning Gujjar women can be characterized in terms of gender inequity, educational restriction, and financial reliance. Such conventional gender roles and social constraints limiting women's mobility and decision-making capacity aggravate these problems. Conceptually, one must remove these barriers by increasing education, financial freedom and by challenging the conventional gender roles restricting their mobility and decision-making capacity.

Implications

Education is quite important for society to develop and for the outcome shows that helping Gujjar women from Rajouri District will need concentrated educational interventions combined with financial support. Higher degrees of literacy and more easily available jobs will help women to be more financially independent so enhancing their flexibility for making decisions. Improving women's socioeconomic level can be

much enhanced by challenging gender stereotypes and supporting women's movement and public life participation. Policy interventions have to be focused on promoting women's rights, increasing the inclusiveness of educational systems and helping women's businesses to break the cycle of inequality and dependence. Extreme socioeconomic problems afflicting Gujjar women in Rajouri District compromise their capacity for making decisions in home and community life. Low literacy, economic dependency, limited mobility and traditional gender norms are the main challenges that all restrict their autonomy. The findings show the critical need of education, economic empowerment and social change for raising Gujjar women's socioeconomic level and so promoting gender equality. The first priorities in solving these issues are enabling women to become more involved members of their homes and communities.

Source: Survey Data

Table 5.5.13. Particularly in relation to traditional activities like cattle keeping, thematic study on how the occupational patterns of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District have changed over time has helped to explain their socioeconomic level.

Theme 13. Evolution of Occupational Patterns and Socio-Economic Impact on the Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District
Introduction The dependency of Gujjar tribe is cattle farming as their means of survival. Still, shifting socioeconomic, environmental and educational elements has resulted in amazing variations in occupational tendencies across time. The thematic study looks at how these developments—particularly with relation to cattle farming—have impacted their socioeconomic level and the results of diversification into secondary and tertiary sectors. Examined from the responses of ten Gujjar tribe members from the district is:
Theme Identification 1. The Gujjar tribe's socioeconomic level has been much influenced by the fact that seven out of ten respondents (70%) claimed that their main activity has always been raising cattle.

2. Six out of ten respondents (60%), reported changes in occupational patterns brought about by shifting socioeconomic and environmental conditions toward alternative professions including labour occupations, tourism support services and participation in secondary and tertiary sectors.
3. Three out of ten respondents (80%) agreed that these changes have brought both good and negative effects on their socioeconomic level including new vulnerabilities but also greater income possibilities.

Theme Development

With over 85% of the respondents engaged in the main sector, Gujjar Tribe has traditionally relied on farming and cattle keeping. Still, 60% of respondents said throughout time that employment patterns have changed. Along with serving in urbanized areas like the Rajouri block, some of the tribe members are also joining secondary and tertiary industries like tourism services like porters and pony guides. Enhanced access to school and work information is mostly responsible for the tendency of 24–30% of the respondents in metropolitan areas toward joining tertiary sectors. With subgroups like Dodhi Gujjars still stressing milk and dairy production, 70% of the respondents said that traditional livestock keeping is remained at the centre of their identity despite diversification. These developments show how the tribe adapted to modern economic conditions while preserving fundamental cultural customs.

Analysis

Environmental forces as well as socioeconomic factors have moulded the work patterns of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District. With over 85% of the respondents engaged in the primary sector, historically raising cattle was the main source of income. However, 60% of respondents in the long run said they diversified into other industries including tourism and secondary employment since they require fresh sources of income through things like declining grazing land, economic transformation and more access to education. Since 24–30% of respondents moved into jobs like porters or guides the urbanized block of Rajouri has witnessed more participation in tertiary sectors including tourism. With some subgroups like Dodhi Gujjars still focused on milk production,

traditional cattle rearing is still firmly ingrained in the socioeconomic life of the tribe despite these changes. Along with new hazards including exposure to market volatility and loss of conventional knowledge the change has offered benefits including increased chances for revenue generation. The possibilities and difficulties presented by these career changes have helped to define the tribe's socioeconomic life.

Conceptualization

Economic diversification and cultural preservation help to explain the evolution of the Gujjar tribe's occupational patterns. Fresh sources of revenue come from diversification into secondary and tertiary industries (such as urban work and tourism); the tribe's cultural attachment toward their traditional pursuits is shown by the persistence of cattle rearing as a primary occupation. The dual strategy is a stage of transition in their economic adjustment whereby modern and ancient livelihoods simultaneously coexist as well as expose them in additional vulnerabilities brought about by environmental variables, market volatility and socio-cultural inhibitions.

Implications

The diversification into secondary and tertiary industries gives the Gujjar tribe new opportunities; however, it is essential to provide support to help them to move successfully. Policies have to aim to strike a balance between the benefits of contemporary employment and the upkeep of traditional vocations like farming cattle. The Gujjars need investments in education, skill development and sustainable livelihood projects if they are to adapt to changing financial conditions. Improved market connectedness and increased access to urban employment data help to lower the risks associated with new professions, so giving the society long-term socio-economic stability. From traditional livestock farming to a more diversified economy with involvement in secondary and tertiary industries especially tourism the Gujjar population in Rajouri District has seen a significant change in occupational trends. Along with fresh socioeconomic hazards the transition comes fresh financial sources. The study notes the need of striking a balance between economic diversification and cultural preservation as

well as ensuring that the Gujjar people have the necessary tools to handle these developments.

Source: Survey Data

Table 5.5.14. Thematic study on how the Gujjar community in Rajouri District, especially in terms of cultural identity, access to education and livelihood possibilities has been impacted by social media usage.

Theme 14. Influence of Social Media on The Gujjar Community in Rajouri District
Introduction With an eye on how it has impacted their cultural identity, educational access and livelihood possibilities the study looks at how social media has shaped the Gujjar community in Rajouri District. Feedback from ten community members forms the foundation of the study.
Theme Identification 1. Six out of ten respondents (60%), said that by linking them with other Gujjars and allowing the exchange of customs, social media has helped to build their cultural identity. 2. Seven of ten respondents (70%) said that particularly for younger members of the community social media has enhanced access to educational resources. 3. Five of ten respondents (50%), said that social media has created fresh livelihood possibilities mostly in the digital and tourist sectors.
Theme Development Social media has positively and negatively impacted the Gujjar community in equal measure. It has assisted in the dissemination and preservation of cultural practices, 60% of the interviewees also acknowledged its contribution in enhancing access to learning resources and learning platforms. 70% of the respondents indicated that social media has

served as an excellent tool for educational information mostly for the younger generation. 50% of respondents said that it has created new livelihood prospects, particularly in the field of tourist-related activities which has impacted positively on its socio-economy.

Analysis

A 2022 digital survey revealed 42% mobile internet penetration, 28% active social media presence, and 36% improved digital literacy levels, indicating major changes in the Gujjar population in Rajouri District. About 18–22% of Gujjar young people were using Facebook and YouTube for learning tools, skill development and financial emancipation by 2023. About 15% of respondents say they have improved awareness of government programs, educational scholarships and livelihoods so facilitating knowledge exchange. WhatsApp and Instagram have become rather popular means of communication since they let generations share knowledge and cross cultural boundaries. With successive generations enjoying better connectivity, less geographical isolation and wider socio-economic horizons a slow but significant technological integration into the Gujjar community has progressively affected cultural identity. According to the study, social media has served the Gujjar people in Rajouri District two-fold purposes. On the one hand it has encouraged preservation of cultural identity by connecting members to others and sharing conventional knowledge; on the other hand, it has increased access to learning resources and brought new livelihood options, especially in areas like tourism and online work. Still, the degree of these changes is still in an initial phase; some members of the community are unable to fully seize these chances.

Conceptualization

Social media usage among the Gujjar people is a move towards digital connectivity that improves both cultural retention and exposure to contemporary economic prospects. Social media serves as an intermediary between tradition and modernity providing the Gujjar tribe with an opportunity to maintain their heritage while also venturing into new areas of development.

Implications

Last but not least, social media is the modern paradigm and has proved to be a useful tool for the Gujjar people since it improves their livelihood and education. Still, special projects will have to be undertaken to ensure that digital literacy is pervasive and to enable the community to properly take use of the new possibilities. Extending training and support for usage of digital platforms will improve their socio-economic situation and protect cultural practices. By developing cultural identity, providing access to educational resources and creating new livelihood routes social media has drastically changed the Gujjar community in Rajouri District. These developments have had major socioeconomic consequences but more help is required to make sure the community can fully exploit digital technologies.

Source: Survey Data



Figure 5.7. Photograph of a Gujjar Respondent Using a Mobile Phone

Table 5.5.15. A thematic analysis of your thoughts on the Gujjar people's land rights, forest resources and socioeconomic development as they pertain to the Forest Rights Act (FRA) of 2006 and its present implementation in Rajouri District.

Theme 15. Impact of The Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 on the Gujjar Community in Rajouri District
Introduction The historic legislation has clear ramifications. The study investigates the Gujjar community view in Rajouri District of the application of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 and its consequences on their land rights forest resources and socio-economic development Ten respondents' answers form the basis for the outcomes.
Theme Identification 1. Eighty percent of respondents to the poll claimed the FRA has let them make use of land and forest resources. 2. Regarding socioeconomic growth seventy percent of respondents indicated that FRA improved their circumstances. 3. Of the respondents, 60%—that is, six out of ten— say they still find it unclear about their rights under the FRA.
Theme Development The majority of the respondents underscored that the Forest Rights Act has granted them legal title over their land and forest resource rights. 80% of the respondents noted the increase in resource access, contributing to improved standards of living. 70% reported that FRA has benefited their socio-economic condition through poverty alleviation and facilitation of income generation. Still, a substantial proportion (60%) noted that awareness about their complete rights under the Act still exists.
Analysis At the Forest Rights Rajouri District, FRA 2006 has seen tangible success with 2,852 titles distributed until December 2024, being the maximum distributed in the Jammu

area. Implementation under Forest Department staff such as B. Mohandas, Conservator of Forests West Circle, has recognized the individual and collective rights for dwelling forest-dwelling groups, with especial gain to the Gujar tribe. The law has opened up traditional forest resources, granting rights of self-cultivation, dwelling and access to seasonal resources. By December 2024, the project has provided employment avenues by Self-Help Groups and Biodiversity Management Committees facilitating sustainable livelihood practices and empowering the Gujar community to protect and manage their traditional forest habitat securing their socio-economic growth.

The FRA has largely been received well and a majority of the respondents mentioned increased access to land and forest resources and thus it has also led to their socioeconomic development. But the lack of complete awareness of the provisions of the Act shows that there is a need for additional awareness campaigns and education concerning the entire extent of rights provided by FRA. The knowledge gap might delay the community's full exploitation of the Act.

Source: Survey Data



Figure 5.8. Photograph of Gujar Tribe Showcasing the Use of New Technologies like Refrigerators, Reflecting Changing Economic Conditions

Table 5.5.16. Thematic analysis on the Gujjar community's social, political, and economic standing has been impacted by the recent arrival of other Scheduled Tribes (STs) to Jammu and Kashmir, including the Pahari and Other Tribes. In your opinion, what opportunities and problems has this brought about for the Gujjar community?

Theme 16. Impact of the Inclusion of Pahari and other Tribes in the ST List on the Gujjar Community in Rajouri District
Introduction The analysis investigates how the addition of the Pahari ethnic group and other groups in Jammu and Kashmir's Scheduled Tribes (ST) list impacted the sociopolitical, economic status of the Gujjar community as well as the challenges or opportunities it created. Findings are drawn from responses of 10 respondents.
Theme Identification 1. Concerns about the Gujjar community's share of ST benefits and reservations were voiced by seven out of ten respondents (70%) in regards to the possibility of the Pahari tribe's inclusion diluting their quota. 2. The inclusion has heightened competition for socio-economic benefits, according to eight out of ten respondents (80%). 3. Discord in the Community: Six out of ten people polled (60%) said they've seen tensions rising between the Gujjars and other groups as a result of the new ST categories.
Theme Development Respondents overwhelmingly perceived the addition of the Pahari and other tribes as a threat to the socio-economic privileges of the Gujjar community. The 70% of respondents who were apprehensive about the dilution of benefits stated that the addition might lead to a redistribution of quotas impacting the Gujjar community's access to resources. 80% cited more competition for government benefits and reservations. The tension caused has been particularly visible in political and social debates with 60% of the respondents mentioning increasing alienation between the Gujjar community and the rest of the tribes.

Analysis

The addition of the Pahari ethnic community and others such as Gadda Brahmin, Koli, and Paddari Tribe to Jammu and Kashmir's Schedule Tribes list in February 2024 has caused a great deal of tension for the Gujjar-Bakarwal community. Although Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda assured that the existing ST benefits would not be affected, the Gujjar-Bakarwal community feels this is a threat to their quota and socio-economic interests. The nomadic Gujjars ST-listed since 1991, see the addition of the Paharis (some classify them as a forward caste) as possibly watered-down reservations earned by them and leading to long-term communal clashes. The effort to add more tribes to the ST list seeks to give voice to marginalised communities but has been the cause of protests especially by the Gujjar community as they feel that it would weaken their reservations and access to government resources. This change creates issues regarding possible effects on social cohesion and political representation.

Conceptualization

The addition of the Pahari tribe and others to the list of STs, although beneficial for the included groups has raised issues of competition for resources and quotas which could reduce the socio-economic status of the Gujjar community. The case warrants a more subtle response to ensure that the new communities along with the old ones equally benefit from reservations and government programs.

Implications

The application of the inclusion would result in re-evaluating the current quota system, and policymakers must implement measures to ensure balance in satisfying the needs of all concerned communities. Transparency and fairness in allocating resources could provide a buffer to ease tensions and promote more unity. The recent addition of the Pahari and other groups in the list of STs has raised alarm in the Gujjar community, mostly on the issue of dilution of their reservation privileges and added competition. The action however opens the door for greater representation of marginalized groups as long as policies are formulated to strike a balance between the needs and rights of all concerned communities.

Source: Survey Data

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Chapter – VI

Case Studies on the Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri

District

CHAPTER-VI

CASE STUDIES ON THE GUJJAR TRIBE IN RAJOURI DISTRICT

This chapter is concerned with case studies regarding cultural and livelihood changes in the Gujjar Tribe within Rajouri District. It examines major alterations in customary roles, marriage rites and lineage practices within the group with an emphasis on the impact of modernization. The paper presents the case study of how the Forest Rights Act 2006 affected the livelihood of Gujjars with a fresh look at the modern situation of FRA, including its implementation, advantages and issues. It also addresses the case study regarding recent addition of new Scheduled Tribes in the fold of tribal's of Jammu and Kashmir and analysed its effect on the Gujjar community regarding representation and resource accessibility. The chapter addresses the case studies on how education access has influenced youth aspirations, challenges of Gujjar women in sustaining their livelihoods and the transition from joint to nuclear families. It also addresses the case studies of intergenerational relationship dynamics, social media influencing cultural identity and views of modernization on cultural heritage and religious practices. It examines shifts in native professions, economic prospects and the cessation of some practices because of outside forces. The chapter concludes by discussing the case study of the impact of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024, on the rights and identity of the Gujjar community presenting an overall vision of their changing cultural and socioeconomic situation.

6.1 OVER VIEW OF CASE STUDY METHOD

A case study is a rich, context-dependent investigation of a particular person, group or phenomenon in its naturalistic context and, as such a rich and potent qualitative research instrument. A case study presents rich contextual information by investigating several sources of information, interactions and influences frequently employing multiple sources of data including interviews, observation and documents. Case studies in researching the Gujjar Tribe reveal complex dynamics of cultural and livelihood change showing significant shifts in traditionally determined roles, marriage customs and intergenerational

relationships. They facilitate a discussion of subjective experiences e.g. the effects of modernization, education access and issues encountered by Gujar women examining also outside influences such as the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and the recent addition of new Scheduled Tribes to the Jammu and Kashmir Scheduled Tribes Order. By emphasizing certain themes—such as social media's role, shifting family arrangements and shifting career goals—case studies develop a qualitative in-depth comprehension of the changing socio-cultural and economic makeup of the Gujar community thus rendering them extremely useful for qualitative analysis

6.1.1 Case Study-1

In Sokar village a farmer of 29 years resident with his children and family members, narrates how marriage traditions and family culture have evolved through time. Previously, marriages used to be conducted by parents purely and younger people had nothing to do in this regard. Rituals were simple and reflected the tribe's traditions; gifts like goats and sheep were exchanged and ceremonies took place in mud houses or under makeshift tents. With modernization and urbanization these customs have undergone tremendous changes. Social media now plays a big role in helping young men and women meet and get into relationships. For example, he refers to a neighbour who found his wife on social media something that never used to happen. It has provided people with more options in choosing their spouses. The marriage age has also risen. Unlike before when one got married young education and money come first before having kids. Being a farmer, he prefers such changes because it enables the young couples to shoulder responsibilities more boldly. Celebrations of weddings have also changed in a more contemporary way. The traditional kurta-shalwar attire is now frequently being replaced by stylish suits and dresses. The weddings are conducted inside large, elaborately decorated tents with sumptuous meals modelled on metropolitan wedding trends. Even as these changes he is of the opinion that families need to keep a hold of their traditional culture and blend with contemporary influence. The key to the future of the Gujar community, according to him is the equilibrium between tradition and progress.

6.1.2 Case Study-2

A female labourer 25 years old from Budhal block Mohra village describes the way marriage and family life among women there have evolved. Early marriages used to be prevalent and parents would make decisions without thinking about the couple being ready. These early marriages often resulted in ailments for women and interrupted children's schooling because young mothers could not handle multiple responsibilities. Modernization and education have greatly improved things now. She clarifies that marriages are taking place at the rightful legal age as per constitutional stipulations. For instance, she remembers her younger cousin who had finished school before marrying at the age of 22 a change that has brought about improved health and prospects for women and their children. She explains how preference is being shown to nuclear families as well. In contrast to the past when joint families prevailed couples presently prefer living autonomously from parents. The reform gives them their own independence so they can sort out their things and decide individually particularly issues about their kids' education and well-being. She explains that the reform freed women to command more influence regarding family issues since it defied conventional patriarchal rules. Nevertheless, not every change has benefited the people involved. The impact of the social media has presented challenges for example increased divorces as some men abandon their wives once they have formed relationships with other women on social media. Marriages have also been modernized with Bollywood music taking over traditional Gujar-language music in festivities. Despite these challenges she believes that the focus on education and modernity is supporting her community in focusing on personal development and improved livelihoods.

6.1.3 Case Study-3

Another case study of the Gujar tribe is on when to visit his business in Mughlan village. One 35-year-old shopkeeper expressed his opinions on how family and marital customs among the Gujar people have changed during the past few years. He claimed that before the wedding parents typically planned marriages they had little or no communication with the bride and groom. These simple ceremonies consisted in grooms

riding horses to the bride's house and basic family tribal cuisine created by the family. These customs have evolved drastically with social media and urbanization. Even before they choose to tell their parents most young adults today build connections and choose their mates by themselves. He mentioned how his neighbour's son found his bride on social networking therefore bypassing the conventional route of arranged marriages. With the grooms turning up in vehicles instead of on horseback and menus including multi-cuisine dinners inspired by non-tribal and metropolitan society marriage rites have likewise evolved in complexity. The retailer also pointed toward changes in wedding attire. Modern attire including coats and pants has replaced traditional kurta-shalwar as people feel these pieces better suit with current trends. He cited his nephew's elegant three-piece suit from his wedding which was evidence of shifting societal preferences. Urbanization has also brought about these developments since many families migrate to cities in pursuit of better prospects. These shift elements affect their customs and way of life including their perspective of marriage. He highlights the significance of preserving the Gujar community's cultural legacy even if he acknowledges that modernity has brought some positive developments such more autonomy and freedom of choice.

6.1.4 Case Study-4

In the fourth case study, which was done in the small village of Brevi, which is situated in the Kalakote block, the impact of social media changed the life of a married labourer 26 years old. After a long day at work they utilize their basic smartphone to link to a world much different from their hometown. They are able to contact with other young Gujjars distribute folk music and submit pictures of themselves dressed in traditional attire via social media sites like Facebook and Instagram therefore preserving their culture. Watching videos on YouTube has helped them to learn how to treat animals better which has enhanced their employment and income. These people are also given educational materials on social media which motivates them to give their children a better education. Still, living metropolitan life online can often make it difficult to balance modern influences with old customs. Regarding the worker as well as society at large social media offers chances for development as well as a difficulty for the preservation of their cultural inheritance.

6.1.5 Case Study-5

In the rural village of Dali village, Kalakote block a 32-year-old Gujjar farmer explained how social media has introduced change and challenges into their daily lives. As a farmer steeped in traditional ways, they did not feel much need for technology in the beginning. But gradually sites like Facebook and YouTube became a necessity to learn and communicate. For example, the farmer described finding a video on new irrigation methods which saved them water and enhanced their crop production greatly enhancing their living standards. Social media is also used as a platform to conserve and promote their cultural heritage. The farmer is a member of online forums where Gujjar communities from various parts of the country share folk songs, traditional dishes and anecdotes about their lifestyle. The exchange makes them proud of who they are and connects them to a greater system outside their village. The farmer however confessed that social media has its drawbacks. The sight of urban lives on social media tends to elicit a sense of comparison rendering their simple way of life wanting. The youth by virtue of such exposure at times estranges itself from traditional beliefs and chooses instead modern ways. Despite these difficulties the farmer feels that social media is more beneficial than detrimental. They highlighted how a single small video transformed their agricultural practices and increased their revenue something they could never have dreamed of otherwise. Social media is for them a tool of immense growth and knowledge even as they strive to maintain the roots of their culture within a constantly evolving world.

6.1.6 Case Study-6

The sixth case study centres on a 41-year-old Gujjar female farmer from Bari Darhal village in Darhal block muses on the likely impact of the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 on her people. Considered as a significant step toward the empowerment of the disadvantaged the bill grants Scheduled Tribe (ST) designation onto more communities and improves conditions for currently existent ST tribes like the Gujjars. The amendment provides the Gujjar people more efficient representation in administrative and political decision making. Reserved seats in local councils and legislatures give a forum for their voice to be heard and their issues to

be taken under consideration. Gujjar women who often face double marginalization due to their gender and tribal background especially need this. The measure also makes it possible for ST communities especially to have easier access to government services such medical treatment, scholarships, financial aid and government policies. For a worker like her it may mean better living conditions by means of access to sophisticated agricultural tools and technologies and better education for her children. Still there are difficulties include ensuring efficient implementation and handling the likely resource competition among several ST groups. She sees this bill, though as a glimmer of hope giving the Gujjar people a path toward more dignity, equality and opportunity.

6.1.7 Case Study-7

Living in Fatehpur Village, Manjakote Block Rajouri District Jammu and Kashmir, is 28-year-old Gujjar tribe member. Over the past ten years he has seen major shifts in conventional gender roles in his society. Respondent A finished his secondary education and currently supplements his family's income by working part-time in the building industry. His family comprises his two children, wife and parents. The family earns its income from dairy and small-scale farming. Men in the Gujjar society were traditionally employed in farming and herding; women were relegated to domestic tasks and housekeeping. Still, Respondent A said most men—including himself—have ventured into other fields including trade and construction because of declining returns from pastoralism and farming. Women have also broken out from their traditional roles by participating in economic activities including milk product sales and income generation under government employment projects like MGNREGA. The wife of respondent A belongs to a self-help group aimed at small businesses. Higher enrolment of boys and girls in the village has brought about changes in education. Rashid noted that his younger brother is attending college a clear break from the past pattern of early dropout from school. Women are also becoming literate; 40% more women than ten years ago report attending school. Respondent A believes that access to modern values via the internet and mobile phones has been crucial in changing goals and questioning accepted limitations.



Figure 6.1. Photograph of Gujjar Laborers Engaged in Work Under the MGNREGA Programme.

6.1.8 Case Study-8

A 34-year-old woman residing in Jamola village, Manjakote block, whose parents were shepherds grazing buffaloes and cows in the forest tells her story of change from past adversity to current stability. "Our conventional living was rearing animals and we even ventured into villages and towns to beg for rice, clothes or some money because we were so economically disadvantaged," she explained with a sigh, reminiscing on the trying days when existence was a day-to-day struggle. Grandchildren were usually sent to stay with grandparents because of financial constraint." Yet, she took great pride in detailing how the times have changed since then. "Now, we toil have bought land and plant all types of vegetables in our fields. This has brought us economic stability," she smiled. She talked of her son being in school and dreaming of a better future a far cry from the earlier days when going to school was a dream beyond reach. Our children are not learning only for themselves; they are instructing us with improved agricultural practices and enabling us to enhance our lives" she said smiling. The socio-economic situation of the Gujjar Tribe has transformed significantly from dependency and struggle to self-sufficiency and education and with hope for a better and prosperous future.



Figure 6.2. Photograph of Gujjar Women in a Vegetable Garden in Rajouri District

6.1.9 Case Study-9

Sitting in her room sewing clothes surrounded by sewing materials and colourful clothing, is a 35-year-old woman from Dabbrote, a village in the Manjakote block. She recounts how her life was transformed by learning tailoring from a local training institution. "Earlier, we women were confined at home relying on men for everything. Today, we are earning our own money and can make decisions for our families," she states with pride. She not only turned into an expert at tailoring but also trains other ladies in the village making them independent. By creating fashionable dresses which the younger generation admires she established a constant source of income for herself and the women she teaches. Discussing cultural transformation she states "Our traditions are still important but now we mix them with modern styles so we can grow." She has gained respect in her community through her work demonstrating how women can overcome barriers and make a difference. In comparison to the past when women from the Gujjar tribe were largely restricted to their homes change demonstrates how life is becoming better. Women are now becoming self-supporting and socially self-assured and bringing modern concepts and ancient values together for a future that is brighter.



Figure 6.3. Photograph of an Educated Gujjar Woman in Rajouri Pursuing Tailoring as a Livelihood

6.1.10 Case Study-10

A 34-year-old from Fatehpur village, Manjakote Block, Rajouri District, remembers how the Gujjar community used to trace their origin through rich oral traditions shared by elders. The family histories used to be told in the form of interesting tales and songs where the elders would narrate the migration of the tribe from far-off lands, their struggle for survival and their association with particular places and landmarks. One of the traditions was through the oral dissemination of "Pehli Khandar" (family lineage), in which the old folk explained the original habitation and tribal affiliations, "Qisse" (traditions) were recounted, recounting the heroic acts and tribulations of previous forebears so that later generations would know their forebears. Another tradition was the "Jeevan Charitra" (life stories), in which the old people recounted the achievements and ethical lessons from previous generations to pass on cultural values. These traditions are still treasured; younger generations such as him Form now depend on written documents, government-issued caste certificates and online tools to trace their genealogy. The transition is an interesting

combination of old and new keeping the community's spirit in tune with contemporary times.



Figure 6.4. Photograph of Modern House Structures: Showcasing the Use of New Construction Materials, Replacement of Traditional Chula's and Women Engaged in Agricultural Activities

6.1.11 Case Study-11

Another case study centres on a 45-year-old government official employed in Village Danhur under the MGNREGA programme recalls how much the Forest Rights Act (FRA) of 2006 has changed things for his people. He is a Gujar tribe member and has personally experienced how his people endured before the FRA. Along with others throughout Jammu and Kashmir the Danhur village Gujjars had been forest dwellers for millennia, depending on grazing rights and meagre forest products for survival. But for years they teetered on their possible displacement since the state denied protection of their rights. Families had to leave their customary houses and their means of income were in jeopardy. The Gujar people's relationship with their original territory has evolved under the Forest Rights Act (FRA). Previously they lived in constant fear, hiding their grazing from the government and authorities so as not to run into them. The FRA granted them

legal rights to priceless resources like forest goods like firewood and medicinal plants as well as grazing areas and this recognition guaranteed their existence and protected their traditional way of life. The FRA translates for the Gujjars in Danhur hamlet into security and financial stability. Not under danger of eviction anymore they may now assert their rights and participate in forest management. The Act has let them share their resources therefore promoting sustainable use and protecting their legacy. Beyond legislation, the FRA translates into dignity and cultural preservation. It has strengthened their bond with the ground so they may continue their customs free from concern for loss. For the Gujjars the Act marks a victory since it offers safety for their past as well as future.



Figure 6.5. Photograph of the Gujjar Tribe in a Forest Highlighting their Livelihood and Deep Connection to Nature

6.1.12 Case Study-12

Drawn from the 50-year-old ex-village chief Leerian Village in the Rajouri District the twelfth case study offers insight into shifting intergenerational interactions in the Gujjar Tribe. Traditionally, the Gujjar people had close-knit, hierarchical families in which the direction of the junior generation was guided by the older generation. The elderly were revered and their opinions—especially in relation to marriage, livelihood and customs—were much sought after. While the elderly led in preserving traditional customs such as nomadic herding and communal ceremonies the younger generation looked up to the older

generation for counsel and direction. Still, he has observed a significant transformation throughout the years. As modernism permeates Gujjar society the younger generation has grown more autonomous in their ideas and choices. The authority of the elders is no more unqualified. The younger members are drawn to schooling, city employment and the usage of modern technologies—which often contradict with conventional pastoral lives—more and more. He thinks that the shift in values has generated a generation gap. While respect for their elders is still upheld the young people nowadays enjoy more freedom to decide their destiny. With most people shifting from traditional livelihoods like herding livestock away from them this new development has questioned established family structures. Now, however is hopeful about the future and thinks the next generation will be able to preserve the rich cultural legacy of the tribe while embracing modernism.



Figure 6.6. Photograph of a former village head from leerian Village discussing the evolving intergenerational dynamics within the Gujjar Tribe

6.1.13 Case Study-13

A 32-year-old doctor from Budhal Block in Rajouri District spoke about the current health crisis that has taken 17 lives mostly from three families since December 2024. She mentioned the peculiar symptoms seen such as gastrointestinal and neurological complications which have triggered suspicion of pesticide contamination in a nearby water

reservoir. The actual cause has not been confirmed; Dr. highlighted the wide range of measures taken by health teams including screenings of close to 10,000 homes and cooperation with national health bodies. She further identified key health challenges, e.g. poor medical resources delayed determination of the cause of the outbreak and poor rural health infrastructure that have impacted on the speedy response to the crisis. The health crisis has hit hard the livelihood of the community living here, as fear of contamination has derailed agriculture activities and normal living which mainly rely on local water sources. Families are also struggling with the financial costs of medical care and loss of livelihood due to illness or death of income generating members. Dr. observed the important interventions by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, such as sending an inter-ministerial team while hoping for early resolution and drawing stress upon the importance to urgently improve healthcare systems to protect lives as well as livelihoods in affected areas.



Figure 6.7. Photograph of Doctors with Patients in Rajouri Hospital

6.1.14 Case Study-14

A 32-year-old Forest Department employee provides information regarding the abandoned or modified traditional practices in the Gujar society and the reasons for such

alterations. She narrates how the traditional way of life of the community for example, seasonal migration with herds and dependency on forests as grazing areas has undergone substantial alterations as a result of contemporary influences and governmental policies. She describes how the traditional nomadic way of living of the Gujjars in which families would seasonally migrate in quest of grazing areas has been affected by growing limitations on the use of forests and encroachment by urbanization. The pastoral and livestock economy of the community is slowly giving way particularly among the youth, who are not as willing to adopt this lifestyle. She writes that policies imposed by the government limiting grazing within protected forest regions have pushed most Gujjars away from their pastoral life and into adopting more settled forms of farming. The younger generation with improved access to education is also drifting away from traditional practices and seeking employment in more stable professions such as teaching, government work and even the army. These developments are regarded as advances by some she admits that they also result in loss of cultural identity as well as erosion of traditional knowledge pertaining to pastoralism and forest protection. She feels that the cultural transformation is unavoidable but a balance between tradition and modernity should be maintained.

6.1.15 Case Study-15

The fifteenth case study is about a sixty-year-old ex-village chief of Fatehpur Village provides a contemplative perspective on the evolution of Gujjar Tribe family structure in the fifteenth case study. For the Gujjars, many socioeconomic factors have affected their shift from joint to nuclear households during the years. Gujjar families were historically joint homes where extended relatives shared similar chores, resources and decision-making. This type of arrangement created a significant degree of supportless and intimacy. Still, modernism urban migration and financial pressure have slowly altered family life. Younger Gujjars seeking education and employment in metropolitan areas choose nuclear homes more and more since they respect financial liberty and independence. Urban life demands a different kind of living where smaller families are more under control. From traditional hierarchical family setups the younger generation yearns for space and independence. Though it provides economic security and independence the change upsets conventional routines and social bonds in the society.

While younger generations—especially those who reside in cities—are more likely to have nuclear households older Gujjars preserve blended family customs. This change can be explained in part by simplified economic management and financial freedom. Younger Gujjars likewise yearn for personal freedom and space free from conventional buildings. Although the feeling of community is strong these changing family patterns also suggest more widespread socioeconomic shifts among the Gujjar population. He does see that the nuclear family model has produced more autonomy and a weakening of the conventional ties in the community. For him the change marks a loss of the close-knit support system that formerly defined Gujjar civilization as well as an opportunity for personal development. Though modernized he thinks the fundamental principles of hospitality, respect for age and friendship—which define the Gujjars—remain unchanged in spite of all these changes.

6.1.16 Case Study-16

Reflecting on how increased access to education has affected professional objectives and alternatives among Gujjar young the sixteenth case study is on a 25year-old entrepreneur from Danhur Village. Coming from a herding background in his family, He had been expected to follow the road taken by his ancestors. Still, He was able to attend classes and subsequently seek a degree in business because to the better educational opportunities particularly from government programs. Improved access to education is mostly responsible for younger Gujjars' adjustment in professional aspirations. Not limited to pastoralism many young Gujjars today aspire to be teachers, engineers, doctors and entrepreneurs and want professional jobs in the urban area. One Gujjar young person has even started a small farming business in Fatehpur combining traditional expertise with modern commercial methods. As younger members support varied livelihood and older members choose traditional professions this changing attitude is redefining the community. This shift is a significant socio-economic one that offers chances but progressively alters the Gujjar way of life. New professional paths thanks to education have opened Gujjar young people to dream of a future outside herding and farming. He believes that the change is not only for the long-term financial sustainability of the society but also for the personal aspirations of Gujjar young. He does admit though that the difficulty is in ensuring that the

educational development does not lead to the loss of the unique Gujjar tribe cultural identity.



Figure 6.8. Photograph with Professor Rafique Anjum at Ghulam Badshah University, discussing changes in the overall social structure and educational advancements among the Gujjar tribe.

6.1.17 Case Study-17

The seventh case study is on 62-year-old teacher in Larian Village, Darhal Block, who offers a reflective examination of how modernization and interaction with different communities have shaped religious belief and practices within the Gujjar Tribe. Growing up in a traditional Gujjar home he was surrounded by clan customs including communal prayers, animal sacrifices and specific cultural events linked with their nomadic way of life. But younger Gujjars today start questioning and changing conventional religious practices especially in metropolitan settings he notes depending on more education and interaction with other groups. Many of the Gujjar young have embraced more modern, secularist viewpoints in response to changing international ideas of spirituality and mainstream religions. The younger generation's attitude toward marital rites, celebrations and ceremonies—which are progressively aligning with modern conventions rather than traditional ones—has witnessed most change he argues. He also notes that the Gujjars' contacts with other groups—particularly in schools—have exposed them to a greater range of religious ideas therefore fostering a more pluralistic conception of spirituality. While the

younger Gujjars follow modern religious practices most elderly ones still follow their customs.



Figure 6.9. Photograph of Gujar Women Tribe Members Participating in Religious Practices and Beliefs at Shardha Sharief Dargah in Rajouri

6.1.18 Case Study-18

The eighteenth case study focuses on a 29-year-old Gujar woman from a distant village in the steep terrain of Rajouri District who offers an insight into the everyday struggles her people go through due of water scarcity. Traditionally nomadic and pastoral people the Gujjars have lived in these far-off regions depending on the natural streams and springs dotting the terrain for millennia. She has witnessed; however, the one-time reliable sources of water dwindle with time and her community is left grappling with an increasing issue. Water is now a precious resource with the start of climate change and poor infrastructure; it lacks a serious issue. Her days begin with a long walk—sometimes several kilometres to the closest spring—a trip that will take hours therefore leaving her little time for everything else. Usually done by women and children the work seriously affects their

health and education. Every excursion for her is a battle for life rather than only a means of quell of thirst. The scarcity influences her cattle on which their livelihood depends as well as agriculture formerly a guaranteed source of revenue which is now increasingly difficult. She is tenacious in spite of all these in surmount challenges. She is also actively advocating better water management infrastructure and the building of water reservoirs by means of active communication with nearby government officials and authorities. "Our community is strong but we cannot live without water," she says firmly. She dreams for a time when her children will no longer have to travel great distances for water and when the Gujar clan may continue their customs free from constant worry of running out of this valuable resource. Her narrative reminds us of the pressing necessity of sustainable solutions to guarantee the future of far-off communities like hers and it is one of resiliency and optimism.

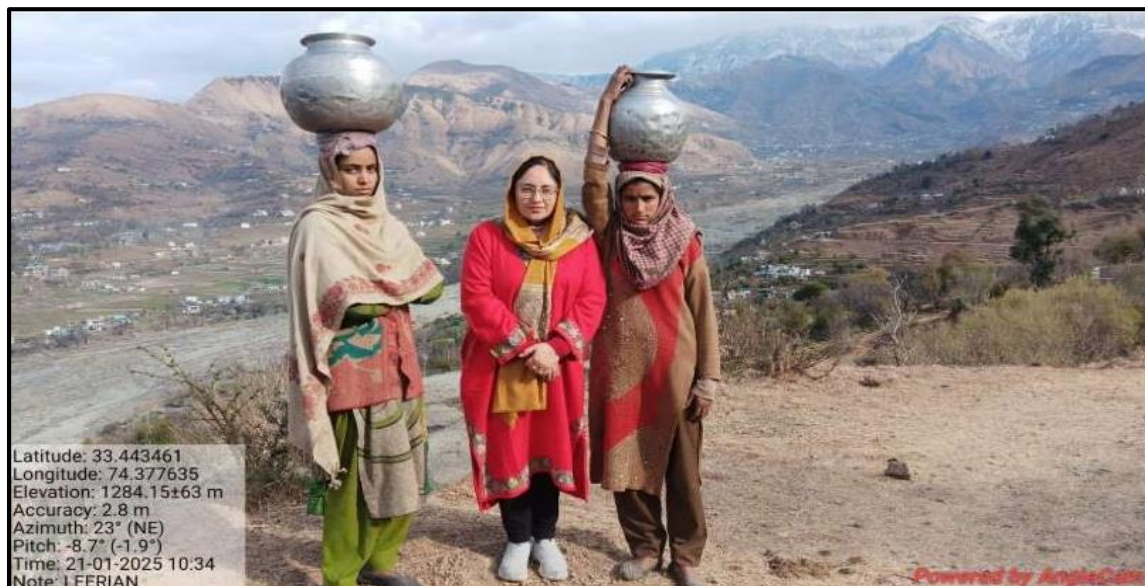


Figure 6.10. Photograph of Gujar women fetching water from springs, with the Jal Jeevan Mission under process to improve water access in remote areas

Thus, the case studies above illustrate the dramatic changes in the Gujar community as a result of modernization, urbanization and technological changes. The customary marriage practices, gender roles and livelihoods have undergone changes, with education and economic independence now being given priority over early marriage and

women enjoying more autonomy in domestic and economic matters. Social media have had a mixed role of bringing opportunities for shared knowledge and relations while presenting dilemmas of destruction of the classical values and an upsurge in divorces. Economic transitions have forced the majority out of pastoralism and into other career paths while family organization has shifted from compound to nuclear family. Government initiatives like the Forest Rights Act and amendments to the Scheduled Tribes have been vital but their implementation has been an issue. While empowerment and enhanced standards of living have been brought about by modernization the members of the community are keen on keeping things in balance so that development does not erode their heritage.

Chapter – VII

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

CHAPTER-VII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of the study was to conduct a sociological analysis of cultural and livelihood changes among the Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir. A descriptive research design was employed, utilizing purposive sampling to select a total of 35 respondents and 18 case studies. Data was collected through two open ended interviews: one with 25 general respondents from the Gujjar community and another with 10 stakeholders. The study gathered qualitative data which was analysed using thematic analysis. Initially, responses were categorized, followed by an in-depth thematic analysis to uncover main trends and insights. The specific objectives of the research were to explore changing patterns of family and marriage systems among the Gujjar tribe examine changes in cultural patterns and occupational status, analyse the socio-economic impact of the Forest Rights Act on livelihood patterns and study the livelihood issues faced by Gujjar women in the region. The findings aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural dynamics and economic challenges within the Gujjar community providing insights for policy and programme development to support their livelihoods.

7.2 FINDINGS ON DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF GENERAL RESPONDENTS

1. The data on age distribution reveals that 48% of respondents fall within the 41-to-50-year age group followed by 24% in the 31 to 40-year range. Meanwhile, 16% are aged 18 to 30 and 12% are above 50 emphasizing a predominance of middle-aged individuals in the study.
2. The analysis of gender distribution shows a slight female majority with 56% identifying as female and 44% as male. This balance ensures diverse perspectives contributing to the research.

3. The results on marital status indicate that 48% of respondents are married making it the most common category. Unmarried individuals constitute 32%, while separated (8%), divorced (4%), and widow/widower (8%) represent smaller groups highlighting varied relationship experiences.
4. The data on educational status reveals that high school completion (28%) is the most common level among respondents followed by middle (24%) and primary (20%) education. Furthermore, 12% of respondents are illiterate showcasing a range of educational backgrounds.
5. The analysis of occupational distribution exhibits that farming (24%) is the most common occupation followed by small shopkeeping/entrepreneurship (20%). Additionally, labouring and multi-works account for 16% each, while 12% of respondents engage in forest-dependent jobs and government/private employment, highlighting an economy cantered on agriculture and small businesses.
6. The results on family structure demonstrate that nuclear families (48%) are the most prevalent followed by joint families (32%) and extended families (20%). This trend suggests a shift towards nuclear setups impacting family roles and resource-sharing.
7. The data on family size shows that the majority of respondents (40%) have 1 to 5 members, followed by 32% with 5 to 10 members. Larger families of 10 to 15 (20%) and 15 to 20 (8%) are relatively uncommon indicating a preference for smaller households influenced by economic and social factors.

7.3 FINDINGS ON CHANGING PATTERNS OF FAMILY AND MARRIAGE SYSTEM AMONG THE GUJJAR TRIBE OF RAJOURI DISTRICT

- 1) According to the study, most of the respondents said that Gujjar tribal families had changed in size throughout past years. Reflecting evolving household patterns, the numbers show that family size has altered for socio-economic or cultural reasons

- 2) Most of the respondents according to the study have said that their household has grown from the past. The conclusion suggests economic limitations and cultural values could have produced larger homes while others have reduced due to migration or changes in family structure.
- 3) The results show that the main factor influencing family size differences among the Gujjar tribe is economic one. According to the data family sizes over the long run are mostly determined by financial limitations, cultural pressures, access to healthcare and education as well as by others.
- 4) Classical lineage and kinship systems are reportedly under decline according to statistics. The results show that while almost half of the respondents still acknowledge their importance there is a small majority who sees them erasing under changing social structures.
- 5) The results show that among the Gujjar families parents remain the most important members of a family. The data exposes a high parental power then followed by spouses and children so reflecting both conventional and evolving family relations.
- 6) It shows that most of the participants noticed changes in ancestral lineages and inheritance patterns. The result suggests changes in surnames, legal systems and declining relevance of lineage thereby reflecting socio-cultural changes inside the society.
- 7) The findings show that the Gujjar society still follows conventional gender norms. Although some respondents note changing trends the data shows that most respondents still define conventional male and female roles
- 8) For most Gujjar men and women, the data shows that gender roles and duties have changed. Though some people still follow old patterns the result shows that socioeconomic changes, industrialization and exposure to new ideas have modified conventional roles.

- 9) The result emphasizes how the Gujar people have changed in response to changes in gender roles, financial obligations and conventional practices. The information points to continuous social and economic changes influencing cultural identity and way of life.
- 10) According to the study major elements in changing gender roles are changes in social conventions and the impact of media and technology. The outcome implies that redefining home and community duties also depends on economic need and more education.
- 11) Although the families have traditional means of communication the results show that the young actively contact with the elderly thereby fostering cooperation and intergenerational interaction even if the tribe has diverse experiences in the evolving social environment.
- 12) According to the research the young people of the Gujar tribe show conventional influences while some still retain traditional beliefs therefore reflecting a multicultural dynamic between tradition and changing desires. Their priorities are education and career.
- 13) Though changing opinions imply slow adaptation to modern influences, the survey reveals that planned weddings are still a major cultural practice encouraging family participation in marriage decisions.
- 14) The study shows that although some members of the society preserve ancient cultural practices others in Gujar rituals adapt their customs in response to modernism therefore striking a balance between continuity and transformation.
- 15) The study emphasizes how education helps to change Gujar marriage ceremonies by introducing fresh ideas even surpassing local expectations.
- 16) The study reveals that although in certain cases a traditional structure maintains position the changes of marriage customs reformulate household responsibilities and relationship inside the Gujar community.

- 17) The result shows that growing norms include diverse opinions about marriage practices with mixed reactions ranging from positive neutral to critical form part of.
- 18) The study shows that while early weddings continue in traditional sectors, shifting marriage age patterns in the Gujjar community shows delayed marriages resulting from schooling.
- 19) Though some Gujjars still follow endogamous practices indicating cultural diversity the research shows that exogamy is common and promotes larger social networks.
- 20) Although it's supposed impact varies based on family and traditional perspective exogamy reconfigures socio-cultural relations in the Gujjar community according to the results.
- 21) Gujjars ensure continuity by means of cultural preservation, modern adaptations and outside help thereby managing societal change.

7.4 FINDINGS ON CHANGES IN CULTURAL PATTERNS, EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE GUJJAR TRIBE COMMUNITY

- 1) Results show that mainstream culture has a significant impact on indigenous beliefs and practices which leads to cultural adaptations in expressions that show the Gujjar tribe is overcoming obstacles of cultural preservation in front of outside society pressures.
- 2) Rising educational levels particularly among the young which is redefining occupational preferences indicate that access to education is developing as a determining factor in the future employment prospects of the Gujjar population
- 3) As a sign of adjusting to new economic reality and looking for sustainable sources of income within the Gujjar tribe the research reveals a diversification of livelihoods with members of the tribe entering into non-conventional professions outside pastoralism.

- 4) The results of the study show that the Gujjar population faces significant difficulties adjusting to current work sectors; problems in reaching modern labour markets with limits such limited skills and educational chances impeding access reveal.
- 5) The study shows that younger generations mainly choose more widely spoken languages thereby reducing the use of indigenous language which could point to loss of cultural identity and legacy in the Gujjar tribe
- 6) As younger generations separate themselves from conventional professions, indicating a desire for economic stability and professional progress among the Gujjar people the results suggest growing interest in formal work.
- 7) The outcome reveals that outside influences are changing traditional customs and ways of life among the Gujjar tribe thereby reflecting the slow change in the lifestyle of the group coming from the influence of urbanization.
- 8) The study indicates that these needs government intervention in educational programs intended to improve the socioeconomic level of the community which implies that special programs might considerably increase access to school and employment possibilities for the Gujjar tribe.
- 9) The study reveals that among the Gujjar population exposure to social media and modernism have influenced educational access. Particularly among the young people there is a change toward appreciating education which is changing their socio-economic level and cultural standards
- 10) Ten respondents underline the emergence of new economic opportunities and improved social awareness thereby indicating the varied influence of social media. Still, there are worries about the loss of traditional customs brought on by modern forces. Social media is seen as a tool encouraging more social ties also compromising indigenous traditions and practices.
- 11) The study shows that government programs have improved the Gujjar people's access to education and socioeconomic level. Notwithstanding these cultural

changes and persistent economic struggle are still common and the demand for more help to solve persistent marginalization and progress socioeconomic development keeps strong.

7.5 FINDINGS ON LIVELIHOOD ISSUES OF GUJJAR WOMEN IN RAJOURI DISTRICT

1. The research reveals deep barriers to economic autonomy such as restricted market and resource access for Gujjar women revealing that there are structural imbalances that affect their capacity for achieving financial strength and empowerment at the community level.
2. The analysis of data shows that there is a shortage of formal support systems which worsens the problems of women in maintaining their livelihoods indicating that more institutional support is required to meet the specific needs of Gujjar women.
3. The findings show the significance of skill development programmes which are critical for economically empowering women indicating that special training programmes could improve their employability and income-generating capacity in the Gujjar community.
4. The result found that the traditional gender roles still influence women's economic activity in the Gujjar tribe; so, there exist cultural traditions that limit women's involvement in some livelihood activities which also restrict their potential for advancement.
5. The research emphasizes that the research area requires better healthcare facilities, which are important for the health and productivity of Gujjar women implying that health resource access is important for improving their overall quality of life and economic output.
6. The study shows the viability of entrepreneurial activities which may give women alternative sources of income and improve their economic status and it is indicated

that developing entrepreneurship may empower Gujjar women and lead to community development.

7. The finding concluded that political representation as more women have been needed to become involved in leadership positions at the community level to address their special needs means that additional representation may have a positive impact on advocating better for women's rights and for resources.
8. Results show the need of community involvement since group efforts help women to overcome socio-cultural obstacles and imply that encouraging solidarity and cooperation inside the society is necessary for so achieving gender equality.
9. Research shows that religious practices have also been witnessed to change with most respondents commenting that modernization and contacts with other societies have resulted in the adoption or abandonment of customs. This indicates a general shift in the social structure and culture of the community.

7.6 FINDINGS ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FOREST RIGHTS ACT ON THE LIVELIHOOD PATTERNS OF GUJJAR TRIBES IN RAJOURI DISTRICT

- 1) The results highlight the low knowledge of the Forest Rights Act among most of the respondents which emphasizes the need of particular education initiatives to raise awareness and empower communities in properly claiming their rights.
- 2) The research shows that while government agencies and media have modest roles, stressing the need of greater governmental and media-driven awareness initiatives, NGOs and community leaders are the key sources of information regarding the Forest Rights Act.
- 3) The study shows that whereas some members of the Gujjar tribe have benefited from the Forest Rights Act while others still face ongoing difficulties implying unequal application of the Act among the tribe.

- 4) The outcome indicates that legal protection of rights has created economic possibilities for some members of the Gujjar community thereby benefiting traditional livelihoods for some households. Access to forest resources has thus has to be improved.
- 5) The outcome revealed that overcoming bureaucratic obstacles is essential for fair access to resources and that a demand for enhanced policy execution lets underprivileged sections in the society fully benefit from the Act.
- 6) The outcome revealed that continuous disputes over land rights indicate that land tenure security is still a major concern for the socio-economic stability of the Gujjar clan since external forces still influence their control over ancestral grounds.
- 7) The study reveals a change in livelihoods whereby community members diversify into trade and agriculture in response to changes in access to forest resources so emphasizing that economic resilience among the Gujjar tribe needs adaptation.
- 8) The outcome suggests the need of awareness campaigns which might inform the society about their rights under the Forest Rights Act 2006, thereby hinting that more knowledge is essential in enabling the Gujjar tribe to claim their rights.
- 9) The outcome shows the need of institutional support which is necessary in helping the Gujjar tribe to understand the complexity of land and resource management and highlights that good relationships with NGOs and government can enhance community capacity.
- 10) According to the study participatory tactics are essential for sustainable development and community involvement in decision-making helps to identify and satisfy the particular needs of the Gujjar tribe in policy environments.
- 11) The results of the study reveal that although opinions on the efficacy of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) of 2006 vary its socioeconomic influence is somewhat noteworthy. While some respondents say their legal access to forest resources

generates more money others find bureaucratic obstacles and ignorance of their rights under the Act.

7.7 AMENDMENT BILL 2024 FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

1. The research discloses that 2024 Amendment Bill has drawn alarm regarding enhanced competition for reserved resources and erosion of prevailing rights while others view it as a chance for greater political representation and socio-economic development. Equitable benefits continue to be important
2. The data indicates that ST recognition has enhanced education, employment and welfare scheme access and solidified social and political identity. Nevertheless, some of the respondents believe that socio-economic marginalization continues which emphasizes the necessity for improved policy implementation and awareness campaigns.

7.8 RELIGIOUS PRACTICES & SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE AMONG THE GUJJAR TRIBE IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

1. The research indicates that interaction with other societies and modernization have transformed religious practices among Gujjars and resulted in adaptation the decay of traditions and a consolidated identity evidencing varied responses to outside forces acting upon belief systems.
2. The result indicates that social media facilitates greater cultural consciousness, learning and economic possibilities for the Gujjar population but also leads to concerns of cultural dilution and disinformation presenting both positives and negatives of digital interconnectedness.

7.9 EDUCATIONAL CHANGES AMONG GUJJARS

1. It was observed from the study that higher school and college admission and higher consciousness of higher education have enhanced the access to education among Gujjar youth. Yet, monetary and infrastructural constraints continue restricting

opportunities. A transition to varied careers signals the changing livelihood scenario.

7.10 FINDINGS ON CASE STUDIES

1. The first case study objects to us with knowledge of changing Gujjar tribe marriage customs. Parents used to set the marriages with minimal couple contribution. Social networking today helps people choose partners, postpone marriage for financial freedom and schooling. Weddings have evolved by including contemporary fashion alongside tradition.
2. Second case study shows how modernization has improved marriage customs. Previously early, marriages were carried out; now, legal rules and education now postpone them, thereby improving women's health and education. Still, social networking has presented problems including more divorce and changing wedding ceremonies in terms of culture.
3. Third case study looks at changing marriage traditions. Arranged weddings used to reflect basic customs. Social media today allows self-choice weddings, modernized wedding dress and lavish parties. Urbanization and migration also affect these changes and run the risk of cultural dilution
4. Fourth case study offers viewpoints on how social media supports livelihood development and preservation of culture. Sites provide Gujjar tradition sharing, access to educational materials and creation of commercial opportunities. Still, encounters with metropolitan cultures cause conflict with traditional identity because of modern impact.
5. The fifth case study shows how social media shapes cultural preservation as well as agriculture. Social media presents agricultural information so encouraging production. Although virtual platforms help to spread conventional techniques sometimes younger generations are guided away from cultural roots by contact with metropolitan life.

6. Case study number six looks at the impact of the amendment bill for the Scheduled Tribes Order, 2024. The measure improves government benefit access gives more Gujjar representation in politics and administration and promotes economic growth. Still, problems of implementation and resource competitiveness call for attention.
7. Seventh case study on shifting gender roles among Gujjar people Men enter new professions while women pursue income-generating activities therefore reflecting economic diversification. More education and exposure to digital surroundings question accepted conventions which makes people more independent and socially change-oriented.
8. The eighth case study explores the transforming journey a Gujjar lady from financial uncertainty to stability takes. From reliance to independence insights show how education and property ownership have strengthened the people therefore inspiring hopes for next generations.
9. The ninth case study shows how tailoring instruction helped Gujjar women to become financially independent. Results show the blending of old and modern forms that resulted in self-sufficiency, decision-making power, and respect inside society, therefore improving their social level.
10. Tenth case study covers elements of Gujjar lineage tracking evolution. Written records and computer technologies currently augment the traditional oral stories like "Pehli Khandar" and "Qisse," therefore honouring cultural legacy while embracing fresh techniques.
11. The Gujjar community's experience shows how the Forest Rights Act shapes them. It shows how legal acceptance of land rights has enhanced economic stability preserved traditional livelihoods and enabled self-governance so strengthening the link of the society to its ancestral grounds.
12. The case study's 12th offers Gujjar Tribe experience with changing intergenerational relationships. Driven by education and urban living it shows a

change from authoritarian older rule to more young freedom breaking custom while yet respecting cultural values.

13. The case study 13th points up a continuous health emergency in a Gujjars community. Key areas demanding stronger medical infrastructure and community healthcare programs to prevent future epidemics are indicated as being the fear of contaminated water inadequate healthcare and financial pressures.
14. The case study 14th shows how modernism and state control have undermined traditional pastoralism among Gujjars. It provides the understanding of why limited use of forests has required sedentary farming with consequences on culture and less reliance on animal grazing
15. Fifteenth case study offers details on the changing Gujjar Tribe family structures. It illustrates the transformation from joint to nuclear families due to economic demands and modernization which bestows autonomy but erodes customary communal bonds and support networks.
16. The 16th case study indicates how education has redefined career ambitions in Gujjar society. Findings point to a transition from conventional herding to a multitude of occupations including business and teaching, improving economic sustainability alongside balancing modern desires with cultural identity.
17. The 17th case study is the influence of modernization upon religious practices of Gujjars. Findings indicate younger generations embracing secular beliefs and contemporary rituals driven by education and intercommunity exchange while the elderly retain classical customs with an indication towards pluralism.
18. The case study 18th depicts the critical water shortage situation of the Gujjar community. Context indicates the common struggle for water on a day-to-day basis affecting health, education and livelihoods and indicates the urgency required in sustainable water management to sustain community resilience as well as survival

7.11 SUMMARY OF THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Based on information from important findings the livelihood and cultural change of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District was investigated using thematic analysis. The study focused on how the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 affected the tribe's traditional livelihoods—including cattle raising and forest resource use. The main themes were the part Gram Sabhas and community forest rights play in helping the Gujjar tribe to be empowered to control resources and participate in conservation. Problems with the FRA were brought up, particularly considering the tribe's migratory character as well as proposed solutions for such challenges. The assessment looked at the socio-economic implications of the FRA its impact on enhancing access to basic services and how it affected forest management. How media and social media shape opinion and policy dialogue was also brought into perspective. The research found that FRA had a positive effect on socio-economic development; it still faces obstacles in policy realization especially the balancing of indigenous knowledge and outside influences. Inclusion of the other Scheduled Tribes in Jammu and Kashmir was seen to challenge and provide opportunities for the Gujjar tribe. Some improvements have been brought about by FRA; yet more policy refinement is needed in order to be more suitable for the special challenges of the Gujjar tribe. Strengthening policy enforcement, raising community awareness and support for women and education will be essential to improving the socio-economic wellbeing of the community while maintaining their cultural heritage.

7.12 FINDINGS ON DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

- 1) From an age perspective, the biggest chunk (60%) of stakeholders is between the ages of 26-40 and are actively contributing to FRA debates while balancing family obligations and livestock and forest resource-based livelihoods.
- 2) Marital status-wise, most (70%) of the stakeholders are married, forming family units directly affected by the FRA with an interest in land rights, management of resources and economic stability in the long run.

- 3) 60% of the stakeholders are male, being mainly involved in agriculture and forestry and 40% are female working mainly in domestic activities and collecting resources, portraying typical roles.
- 4) With regards to educational background the majority (40%) of stakeholders have higher secondary education followed by 30% with college-level education, 20% with graduate level and 10% with vocational training, impacting their interaction with FRA processes.
- 5) Occupation-wise, most stakeholders (50%) work in NGOs and civil society followed by 30% in the forest department and 20% working in forestry vocations all of which bring in varied opinion for FRA implementation and advocacy.

7.13 THEMATIC FINDINGS ON IMPACT OF THE FOREST RIGHTS ACT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF THE GUJJAR TRIBE IN RAJOURI

- 1) The research indicates that identification of land rights under FRA has had a favourable effect on livelihoods among the Gujjar tribe of Rajouri. Data indicates increased rearing of livestock, enhanced use of non-timber forest products and income generated through forests reinforcing their socio-economic resilience
- 2) The research shows that Gram Sabha and Community Forest Rights implementation has greatly empowered the Gujjar tribe of Rajouri. The findings point to enhanced participation by the community, sustainable management of forests and better socioeconomic results particularly in terms of forest resource use and protection
- 3) The research points out that the migratory nature of the Gujjar tribe creates enormous challenges in the effective enforcement of FRA. The findings indicate the challenges in documentation of land claims and highlight the necessity for improved coordination, electronic documentation and focused training programs to address these challenges.

- 4) The research discloses that the Forest Rights Act (FRA) has aided the Gujjar tribe in accessing forest livelihood resources, albeit with continued fear of overuse of these resources. Monitoring and community participation are needed to improve implementation
- 5) The outcomes indicate that the FRA has helped the traditional way of life, income generation and provision of essential services to the Gujjar tribe in a positive manner. Improved income from rearing animals and improved healthcare and education are significant gains with fewer forest-based conflicts.
- 6) The result indicate that the FRA has enhanced forest management with 80% of the respondents citing increased community participation in conservation. The traditional knowledge of the Gujjar tribe has played a crucial role in ensuring forest health with biodiversity and sustainable use being encouraged
- 7) The research reveals that community-based organizations (CBOs) have played a pivotal role in facilitating the Gujjar tribe through forest rights claims and improving socio-economic conditions. 70% of the respondents recognized CBOs' intervention in claims filing, while 80% of them acknowledged improvement in livelihoods through CBO interventions
- 8) The data reveals that 70% of respondents expect increased political representation for the Gujjar community through the passing of the 2024 amendment. Additionally, 80% anticipate improved access to government resources and 60% foresee enhanced legal rights and recognition for the community.
- 9) To the extent that, the identification of the Gujjar community as Scheduled Tribes has brought large-scale improvement in socio-economic status particularly access to resources and welfare schemes. Empowerment of women through improved access to education and employment opportunities has been particularly striking. Yet, improvements are still necessary and a sustained effort has to be maintained to make improvements sustainable.

- 10) The research reveals that media reporting has been pivotal in influencing public opinion regarding the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and its effect on the Gujjar tribe. It has created awareness, lobbied for policy reforms and enhanced public image. Media has played a vital role in initiating policy debates and offering a voice to marginalized groups thus ensuring the socio-economic empowerment of the Gujjar tribe.
- 11) The study discloses that Gujjar women encounter several socio-economic obstacles, including poor literacy levels, economic reliance, limited mobility and conventional gender stereotypes which hinder their decision-making authority. These obstacles render them incapable of making active contributions towards household and community decision-making. Removing these hindrances is fundamental in empowering women and advancing gender equality among the community
- 12) The research establishes that the Gujjar tribe of Rajouri has undergone a change in occupational trends from traditional cattle rearing to diversified sectors such as tourism. Although these shifts have boosted income they have also brought about vulnerabilities, which affect the socio-economic status of the community.
- 13) The results demonstrate that social media has made a positive contribution to the Gujjar community by enhancing cultural identity enhancing access to education and opening up new livelihoods particularly tourism. Yet, the full potential of the community in utilizing digital opportunity is yet to come forth.
- 14) The evidence shows that the application of the FRA has given the Gujjar community enhanced access to forest and land resources with favourable socio-economic benefits. Yet, most are still not aware of their complete rights under the Act which slows down its potential.
- 15) The research considers the effect of the addition of the Pahari and other tribes to the ST list on the Gujjar community of Rajouri District. The survey result indicates that 70% of the people are afraid of ST benefits getting diluted, and 80% are

concerned with rising competition for socio-economic benefits. The report finds that 60% of the respondents find increased tension among the Gujjar and other groups, signalling a possible fissure over redistribution of quotas and government benefits. The change necessitates a well-balanced measure to meet the interests of all parties involved but at the same time maintain justice.

7.14 CONCLUSION

The diverse Indian tribes with their distinct lifestyles, rituals and deep connection to the environment truly enrich the cultural tapestry of India. Despite facing social inequalities and limited access to basic needs these communities showcase incredible resilience and a rich cultural heritage. It's crucial for both the government and society to ensure their wellbeing through thoughtful policies and inclusive development initiatives that respect their traditions while promoting growth in areas like economic empowerment, health and education. For India to thrive, it must protect its cultural roots and advocate for the rights of these tribes. The modernization of tribal life has led to significant changes that impact their traditional ways. Innovations in technology, infrastructure and global economic trends have transformed farming practices, education and communication among other things. While some tribal communities have benefited from improved healthcare and living standards others have encountered challenges such as land loss, cultural erosion and disruptions to their social structures. This blend of modernity brings both opportunities and challenges creating a complex interplay where external influences increasingly shape traditional lifestyles, sometimes leading to cultural assimilation. Various constitutional clauses regulations, actions, and government programs the livelihoods of tribal people in Jammu and Kashmir have evolved quite a bit over time. Article 46 of the constitution is there to safeguard the rights of Scheduled Tribes while the revocation of Article 370 in 2019 brought the region under national policies. In addition to job opportunities laws like the Forest Rights Act (2006) and the Jammu and Kashmir Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes (Reservation) Act, 2004, provide essential protections and land rights. Government initiatives such as the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Program (2008), MGNREGA (2005), and the Tribal Sub-Plan (1974–75) are all aimed at boosting employment and economic growth. The reorganization of the area and the revision of the

Panchayati Raj Act in 1989 have also led to better tribal participation in government. While these efforts have certainly enhanced health, education and livelihood opportunities, challenges like poor infrastructure, inconsistent implementation of schemes and limited market access still persist.

Dive into the rich history of the Gujjar clan from Rajouri District in Jammu & Kashmir, a group deeply rooted in the traditions of nomadic pastoralism. Known for their seasonal migrations between the high mountain pastures and the lower plains the Gujjars have experienced significant social, cultural, and economic shifts in recent years. They make up about 20% of the district's population primarily found in areas like Budhal, Rajouri, and Darhal. Traditionally, they raised buffaloes, cows, sheep, and goats, embodying a pastoral lifestyle centered around animal herding. However, the winds of modernity, education and changing government policies have transformed the sociocultural landscape for the Gujjar people. Family structures are evolving with more progressive and liberal systems gradually taking the place of traditional patriarchal ones. Additionally, marriage patterns are shifting, placing greater emphasis on education and personal choice, reflecting a growing focus on these important aspects of life. Women's roles have evolved dramatically as more of them join the workforce and take on decision making positions challenging traditional gender stereotypes. For the Gujjar tribe adapting to these changes has largely involved diversifying their occupations. Historically focused on cattle herding many in the community are now venturing into fields like government, business and agriculture. A key factor in this transformation has been improved access to education; younger generations are now able to seek greater social mobility and economic opportunities. The Forest Rights Act of 2006 has also played a significant role in shaping their lives as it offers legal protections and potential property rights that were previously uncertain. However, Gujjar women still face complex challenges when it comes to their livelihoods. Despite recent progress they continue to navigate traditional expectations while striving for financial independence. Their roles extend beyond household responsibilities as more women are actively engaging in local business events and pursuing academic interests.

The women of the tribe are becoming significant social changemakers, reconciling modern ambitions with cultural heritage. The Gujjar community traces a complex trajectory of cultural resilience and adaptive transformation. Their incredible display of social dynamism is their ability to maintain cultural identity embracing new possibilities.

Embodied in the deeper socio-economic alterations in rural Jammu and Kashmir economic transformation, educational investment and alteration in social structuring have transformed the Gujjar tribe into a critical turning point of traditionalism and modernity. Specifically in sectors like cattle grazing, forest revenue generation and non-timber forest product access like herbs and medicinal plants the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 has assisted the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri considerably in upholding their traditional means of livelihood.

The Gujjar community has managed to secure their traditional rights on forests by recognizing rights over land under the FRA, thus being able to carry out sustainable practices related to cattle and collection of forest products. By involving the Gujjar community in forest management and conservation efforts, Gram Sabhas and community forest rights have also empowered them by making sustainable collection of forest products that guard the ecosystem possible. But the implementation of FRA is a challenging task especially keeping in view the transhumant lifestyle of the Gujjar tribe who migrate through a number of areas in search of grazing hence making it hard to assert and utilize forest rights. These have to be surmounted with more relaxed, situation-specific rules keeping in view the mobile nature of the society.

FRA has provided the Gujjar tribe with a voice in forest protection while assisting their socioeconomic needs such as money generation and provision of necessary services, thus integrating their subsistence needs with forest preservation. Particularly concerning minimizing bureaucratic hindrances and guaranteeing inclusive forest management the Act can be implemented more effectively. Where enhanced access to forest products increased income, ensured a better standard of living and empowered the community— largely women—the FRA has had a highly positive socioeconomic effect. To ensure enhanced socioeconomic status, NGOs in Rajouri have been actively engaged in counselling the

Gujjar tribe on how to negotiate the issue of asserting their rights over woods and utilizing them judiciously. In spite of all these developments, socioeconomic inequalities persist; more laws are necessary to address issues such as gender inequality, illiteracy and the problems arising from the increasing population of Scheduled Tribes in the area. Passing The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024, will certainly enhance the political representation and access to resources for the Gujjar group thus contributing to elevating their rights. Coverage by the media of the role of FRA on Gujjar community livelihoods and rights has also been very crucial in stimulating public awareness of this and thus shaping public opinion and policy debate. Especially in education, diversification of livelihoods and culture safeguarding, shifting vocational trends and the role of social media have brought new opportunities for the community. For the Gujjar community, FRA has had a good impact; with improved implementation, focused policies and ongoing people's participation their real potential can be harnessed.

7.15 SUGGESTIONS

- 1) We need to implement policies that promote family therapy and encourage intergenerational conversations as these can lead to better understanding among family members. This approach could help counter the trend of moving towards nuclear families while also preserving our cultural values.
- 2) To keep marriage customs relevant we should pair them with community programs that blend traditional values with modern practices. By fostering open communication these initiatives can help ease social pressures and ensure that changes in marriage norms still reflect our cultural identity.
- 3) By promoting cultural exchange programs we can introduce the practice of exogamy to the Gujjar tribe while respecting their traditions. These initiatives can strengthen relationships between neighbourhoods and enhance mutual understanding enriching the tribe's cultural and social life.
- 4) To empower women as decision-makers gender equality initiatives should focus on increasing knowledge and teaching leadership skills. This will encourage women

- to take a more active role in family life promoting gender equality within the Gujar community.
- 5) To protect the Gujar tribe's native language and cultural identity we should create educational programs that emphasize the importance of linguistic heritage. These programs should engage younger generations and instil pride in their traditions, ensuring that culture continues to thrive even as modernization occurs.
 - 6) Government initiatives that offer skill development and vocational training can boost employability for Gujar youth. By improving access to modern job opportunities these programs will help ensure economic stability and bridge the gap between traditional and contemporary occupations.
 - 7) By strengthening local support systems and promoting entrepreneurial training programs we can help Gujar women gain a financial edge. These initiatives will equip women with the skills they need to access markets achieve financial independence and improve their overall economic situation.
 - 8) For the Forest Rights Act to truly succeed we need to focus on localized awareness programs and streamline administrative processes. By ensuring equal access to resources and encouraging community participation the Gujar tribe can reclaim their lands, improve their socio-economic standing and promote sustainable development.
 - 9) To support the changing gender roles in Swari Village, it's crucial to engage in activities that promote gender equality, economic growth and digital literacy. These efforts can empower women to find a balance between new opportunities and the societal pressures that come with traditional expectations.
 - 10) To maintain the cultural identity of the Gujar community we must encourage the documentation of oral traditions through modern methods. It's important to educate younger generations about the value of both oral and written records in safeguarding their heritage.

- 11) By promoting educational programs that raise awareness about gender equality and marriage practices we can help facilitate smoother transitions in marriage customs. Initiatives aimed at discouraging dowry practices and highlighting personal choice can support the evolving norms within the Gujar community.
- 12) Targeted programs should focus on educating the community about their legal rights, empowering them to understand and exercise these rights while practicing sustainable forest management and preserving their cultural heritage.
- 13) To tackle financial challenges expanding scholarship opportunities and implementing reservation policies will empower Gujar youth to pursue higher education. Focused interventions can help dismantle traditional occupational barriers allowing the community to thrive in today's socio-economic landscape.
- 14) Aiming for a balance between urban influences and cultural preservation initiatives that foster an appreciation for Gujar traditions while embracing modern practices can play a key role in bridging the gap between heritage and progress. This approach will help maintain the community's identity even as it evolves.
- 15) Programmes that encourage strong community connections and collaboration are essential for upholding values that support the independence of modern family structures, thereby helping the Gujar community navigate the shift towards nuclear family dynamics.
- 16) To ensure sustainable development, it's important for programs to blend traditional knowledge with modern professional aspirations. By promoting interdisciplinary initiatives, we can guide Gujar youth in finding a balance between urban careers and cultural preservation fostering both economic growth and the maintenance of their heritage.
- 17) Strengthening policies to address urban discrimination and improve healthcare access is vital for ensuring that Gujar communities fully benefit from their status as Scheduled Tribes. Targeted interventions can help close the gap and promote social integration.

- 18) Creating awareness about legal rights and improving the implementation of the ST category will really empower the Gujjar community to make the most of their land and forest resources. By establishing localized support and advocacy programs we can ensure that these legal rights are used effectively to foster sustainable livelihoods.
- 19) There is a need programs that honour both traditional beliefs and modern influences to support the flexible religious practices of young Gujjars. These initiatives will not only help preserve vital community values but also encourage growth and adaptation in today's world.

7.16 SCOPE OF FUTURE RESEARCH

1. A quantitative analysis can be performed by increasing the sample size to further study the evolving trends of the marriage and family system in the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District.
2. A comparative analysis can be made with regard to Rajouri and other areas of Jammu and Kashmir or India to study the changes in cultural practice, occupational transition and educational development among the Gujjar tribe.
3. The role of Gujjar women in economic development of Rajouri District can be researched.
4. An assessment of the effects of climate change and environmental degradation on the livelihoods of Rajouri District's Gujjar tribe can be researched.
5. A research study can be carried out on how migration has affected the socio-cultural life of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District.
6. Research can be carried out to investigate the role of indigenous knowledge and practices in the sustainability of livelihood of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District.

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3. Jammu and Kashmir State Library
4. National Institute of Technology, Srinagar Library
5. Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology Library
6. Srinagar Municipal Library
7. The library at Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University
8. University of Jammu Library
9. Waqf Board Library, Jammu and Kashmir
10. The library at Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University

Appendices

APPENDIX-I

LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY
(School of Liberal and Creative Arts: Social Sciences Languages)
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Interview Schedule for Gujjar Tribe

Researcher's Name: Bushra Nizami Gender: Female Date:

Consent from the Participant

Dear respondent/informant/participant, the following Interview Schedule has been developed by the Ph.D Scholar (Registration No. 42000598) from the Department of Sociology, Lovely Professional University Punjab. The purpose of this Interview Schedule is to gather information about a study on “A Sociological Analysis of Culture and Livelihood changes among Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir”. The Interview Schedule's main objective is solely academic. Your responses will not be used for any other purpose and your identity will be confidential. Your support in this regard would be significantly appreciated.

General Instructions of the Participant

You are kindly requested to give genuine answers to the questions as it contributes a lot for the success of the study. Please do not write your name on this Interview Schedule. No identity is required from you. Please feel free to reply. You are entirely free to provide or withhold your consent to participate in this study at any time. Your information will be treated as totally confidential researcher who also agrees not to reveal any specific information to anybody not involved in the study. Thus, its confidential is protected.

PART-I: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF RESPONDENT**Participant' Pseudo Name/Code:**

1. Age (Years)

A. 18-25

B. 25-36

C. 36-50

D. Above 50

2. Gender

A. Male

B. Female

3. Marital Status

A. Unmarried

B. Married

C. Separated

D. Divorced

E. Widow/Widower

4. Educational Status

A. Illiterate

B. Primary

C. Middle

D. High School

E. Intermediate

5. Profession/Occupation

A. Labouring

B. Farming

C. Small Shopkeeping entrepreneur

D. Forest dependent

E. Mult works

F. Private/Government jobs

6. Type of Family

A. Joint

B. Nuclear

C. Extended

7. Number of Family Members

A. 1-5

B. 5-10

C. 10-15

D. 15-20

**PART-II: THE CHANGING PATTERNS OF FAMILY AND MARRIAGE
SYSTEM AMONG THE GUJJAR TRIBE OF RAJOURI DISTRICT**

A. Changing Patterns of Family System among the Gujjar tribe

I. Household composition and size

1. Do the size of the Gujjar tribal families changed in recent years? Yes/No
2. Are households generally larger or smaller now compared to the past?
3. What are the main reasons of decreasing and increasing of size of the Gujjar tribal families?

II. Kinship and lineage system

4. Do the traditional kinship and lineage systems work in your tribal community?

Yes/No

5. Who are considered important family members?
6. Have you noticed any changes in the way Gujjar tribal families trace their ancestral lineages or pass on family names and inheritance in recent times? If yes, what are some of these changes?

III. Gender Roles and Division of Labour

7. Do the Gujjar men and women have any traditional roles and responsibilities in the community? Yes / No?
8. Do their roles and responsibilities changed? Yes/No
9. How have these changed over time?
10. In your opinion, what are the main reasons why the involvement of men and women in household and community work may have shifted in recent years?

IV. Intergenerational Relationships

11. Have you noticed any differences in the way the elders and the youth in your tribe communicate or share responsibilities today compared to the past?
12. In what ways do the Gujjar tribal youth today seem to be different from the previous generations in terms of their values, aspirations or lifestyle choices?

B. Changing Patterns of Marriage System among the Gujjar tribe

V. Marriage Customs and Rituals

13. What are the traditional marriage customs and rituals that are practiced in your tribal community?
14. Do these ceremonies and practices changed over time? Yes / No
15. In your opinion what are the main reasons why tribal marriage customs and norms may be evolving in your community?
16. Do you think the transformations in marriage customs are influencing the overall family structure and dynamics within your tribal community? Yes/ No

VI. Marital Arrangements

17. What are the perceptions and attitudes of your tribal community members towards various marital arrangements? Are there any generational differences in the acceptance of certain practices?

VII. Age at Marriage, Inter-marriage and Exogamy

18. What is the age at marriage among Gujjar tribal community? How has this changed over the past few generations?
19. Do the tribal communities practice exogamy? What are some of reasons behind these inter-marriage decisions?

20. Do you face any socio-cultural implications due to the growing prevalence of exogamy? Yes/ No
21. How have these transformations been navigated by the community?

PART-III: CHANGES IN CULTURAL PATTERNS AND THE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE GUJJAR TRIBE COMMUNITY

A. in Cultural Patterns among the Gujjar Tribal Community

I. Traditional Values and Beliefs

22. How have the traditional values and belief systems of Gujjar tribal communities evolved to mainstream culture?
23. What are the main factors that have contributed to the transformation of cultural practices and rituals among Gujjar tribal populations?

II. Language and Oral Traditions

24. What impact has the introduction of written language and education had on the preservation and transmission of the Gujjar tribal community's cultural heritage?
25. Do the changes in livelihood, lifestyle and social structures influenced the language use and linguistic diversity within your Gujjar tribal community? Yes/No
26. Do traditional rituals, ceremonies and cultural celebrations maintain a sense of identity and community cohesion within your Gujjar tribal population? Yes/No
27. How have these practices adapted to modern circumstances?

III. Land and Livelihoods

28. In what ways have the tribal community's access to and control over their traditional lands and natural resources been affected by external forces like urbanization, modernization etc and how have they adapted to these changes?

IV. Changing Dynamics and Adaptations

29. What strategies have the Gujar tribal community employed to preserve their cultural identity and traditional practices while navigating the challenges posed by modernization, development and globalization?

V. Intra-tribal and Inter-tribal Relationships and Interactions

(i) Intra-tribal Relationships and Interactions

30. What role do the Gujar tribal community's rituals, ceremonies and celebrations play in fostering a sense of unity, belonging and shared cultural experiences among its members particularly in the face of internal differences and external pressures?

(ii) Inter-tribal Relationships and Interactions

31. In what ways have the Gujar tribal communities responded to and accommodated the influx of people, ideas, and practices, patterns of trade, exchange and collaborative activities from neighbouring or distant tribes and how have these cross-cultural encounters shaped their cultural dynamism?

B. Changes in Occupational Status of the Gujar Tribal Community

I. Historical Perspective

32. How have the traditional occupations and livelihood practices of the Gujar tribal community evolved over time and what factors (e.g., economic, social, political) have influenced these changes?
33. What role have the Gujar tribal community's historical experiences with colonization, marginalization or displacement played in shaping their current occupational patterns and socioeconomic status?

II. Generational perspective

34. In what ways do the younger generation of the Gujar tribal community perceive and respond to the shift from traditional occupations to more mainstream or nontraditional forms of employment and how does this affect their cultural identity?

35. What are the key motivations and aspirations of the Gujar younger tribal members in terms of their occupational choices and how do these differ from the perspectives of the older generation?
36. What challenges and barriers do the Gujar tribal community members particularly the youth face in accessing and participating in non-traditional or modern occupations?

III. Gender perspective

37. How have the changes in occupational status affected the gender dynamics and power relations within your Gujar tribal community? Can you provide specific examples?

IV. Educational Perspective

38. What are the main factors that have influenced the educational attainment and aspirations of the youth in your Gujar community? For example, have access to schools, quality of education, or cultural beliefs played a role?
39. In your opinion, what can be done to further support and enhance the educational and occupational opportunities for the youth in your Gujar tribal community? What type of interventions or policies would be most helpful?

V. Economic Perspective

40. Can you describe the traditional economic activities and sources of livelihood in your Gujar tribal community? How have these economic activities and sources of income changed over time?
 41. In your opinion what can be done to ensure the economic and occupational stability and growth of your Gujar tribal community? What kind of support or interventions from the government, private sector or other stakeholders would be most beneficial?
- ### **VI. Policy and Developmental Perspective**

42. Can you describe the government policies, programs or initiatives that have been implemented in your Gujjar tribal community to address changes in occupational status and economic development? How effective have these been from your perspective?
43. In your opinion what are the key challenges or barriers that have hindered the implementation and effectiveness of policies and developmental initiatives aimed at improving the occupational status and economic well-being of your tribal community? How can these challenges be addressed?
44. How do you perceive the current socio-economic and cultural scenario of the Gujjar Tribe in comparison to the past?

PART-IV: LIVELIHOOD ISSUES OF GUJJAR WOMEN IN RAJOURI DISTRICT

I. Gender and Patriarchal Structures

45. How do the cultural beliefs customs and social norms in your community shape the opportunities and challenges faced by Gujjar tribal women in pursuing their livelihood options and economic independence? Can you share any personal experiences or observations?
46. What support systems, resources or interventions (either within the community or from external agencies) do you believe would be most effective in addressing the livelihood issues and empowering Gujjar tribal women in your district? What role can the community members especially men play in this process?

II. Cultural and Traditional Perspectives

47. What are the cultural beliefs, values, and customs within your Gujjar community that shape the livelihood opportunities and decision-making power of tribal women? Can you provide specific examples?

48. What are the traditional skills, knowledge and resources that Gujar tribal women in your community possess and utilize for their livelihood activities? How are these skills and knowledge passed down within the community?

III. Access to Resources and Services

49. What educational and skill-development opportunities (vocational training, entrepreneurship programs, etc.) are available for the Gujar women in your tribal community? Do they have equal access to these opportunities compared to the men?
50. What kind of healthcare and social welfare services (maternal and child health, nutrition programs, etc.) are accessible to the Gujar women in your community? How satisfied are they with the quality and relevance of these services?

IV. Socio-economic Vulnerabilities

51. Can you describe the traditional livelihood activities and sources of income for women in your Gujar tribal community? How have these livelihood options changed over time, if at all?
52. How have factors such as poverty lack of access to markets or limited infrastructure affected the livelihood opportunities and economic security of Gujar tribal women in Rajouri? Can you provide specific examples?

V. Policy and Institutional Support

53. What kind of government policies or programs are available to support the livelihood and economic empowerment of Gujar tribal women in this region? How accessible and effective are these policies/programs?
54. Based on your experience what are the key barriers or gaps in the current policy and institutional framework that prevent Gujar tribal women from improving their livelihoods?

PART-V: SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FOREST RIGHTS ACT ON THE LIVELIHOOD PATTERNS OF GUJJAR TRIBES IN RAJOURI DISTRICT

55. Are you aware of the existence of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, also known as the Forest Rights Act?
- A. Yes B. No C. Partially aware
56. What is the primary source of information about the Forest Rights Act for your community?
- A. Government officials/agencies B. Community leaders/elders
- C. NGOs/civil society organizations D. Media (TV, Radio, Newspapers)

I. Legal and policy Perspective

57. Can you share your understanding of the Forest Rights Act and how it is intended to benefit the tribal/forest-dwelling communities in the Rajouri district?
58. What are the main challenges or barriers faced by the Gujjar tribes in claiming and securing their forest rights under this Act? How can the implementation be made more effective?

II. Livelihood and Resource Dependency Perspective

59. Can you describe the traditional livelihood activities and resource use patterns of the Gujjar tribes in the Rajouri district? How dependent are you on the forest resources for your daily subsistence and income generation?
60. In what ways has the Forest Rights Act influenced the access, control and usage of forest resources by the Gujjar tribes? How has it impacted your traditional livelihood practices and income sources?

III. Socio-cultural perspective

61. Can you describe the cultural, traditional and spiritual significance of the forests and forest resources for the Gujjar tribal community in the region? How are these linked to your identity, beliefs and way of life?

IV. Economic and Developmental Perspective

62. How has the implementation of the Forest Rights Act affected your access to and use of forest resources for your daily livelihood activities?
63. What are the major socio-economic benefits or challenges that your Gujjar tribal community has experienced due to the Forest Rights Act?
64. How do you think the passing of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 will impact the Gujjar community in terms of rights, resources and representation?
65. Do you feel the recognition as Scheduled Tribes has positively or negatively affected the socio-economic status of Gujjars? In what ways?

PART-VI: RELIGIOUS PRACTICES & SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE

66. Have you noticed any changes in religious practices or belief systems within the Gujjar Tribe due to modernization or interaction with other communities? If yes, what are they?
67. How has the use of social media influenced the Gujjar community particularly in terms of cultural identity, Education and Economic Opportunities?

PART-VII: EDUCATIONAL CHANGES

68. What changes have you observed in access to education within the Gujjar community and how has it impacted the younger generation's livelihood opportunities?

Thank you so much for your time and participation!

APPENDIX-II

LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY
(School of Liberal and Creative Arts: Social Sciences Languages)
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Interview Schedule for Gujjar Tribe

Researcher's Name: Bushra Nizami Gender: Female Date:

Consent from the Forest Right Act Stakeholders

Dear respondent/informant/participant, the following Interview Schedule has been developed by the PhD Scholar (Registration No. 42000598) from the Department of Sociology, Lovely Professional University, Punjab. The purpose of this Interview Schedule is to gather information about a study on “A Study of Socio-Cultural and Livelihood Aspects of Gujjar Tribe in Rajouri District of Jammu & Kashmir”. This Interview Schedule's main objective is solely academic. Your responses will not be used for any other purpose and your identity will be confidential. Your support in this regard would be significantly appreciated.

General Instructions to the Participant

You are kindly requested to give genuine answers to the questions as it contributes a lot for the success of the study. Please do not write your name on this Interview Schedule. No identity is required from you. Please feel free to reply. You are entirely free to provide or withhold your consent to participate in this study at any time. Your information will be treated as totally confidential by the researcher, who also agrees not to reveal any specific information to anybody not involved in the study. Thus, its confidential is protected.

PART-I: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF RESPONDENT

Participant's pseudo name/code:

1. Age Group
2. Gender
3. Marital Status of the Respondents
4. Educational Status of the Respondents
5. Profession/Occupation of the Respondents

PART-II: IMPACT OF THE FOREST RIGHTS ACT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF THE GUJJAR TRIBE IN RAJOURI

1. How has the recognition of land rights under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 influenced the traditional livelihood activities of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri, particularly concerning livestock rearing, forest-based income generation, and access to non-timber forest products such as herbs and medicinal plants?
2. How do the Gram Sabha and community forest rights contribute to the empowerment of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri in terms of managing forest resources, participating in conservation efforts, and ensuring the sustainable use of forest produce?"
3. What are the main challenges in implementing the Forest Rights Act (FRA) in Rajouri, particularly concerning the migratory patterns of the Gujjar community, and what strategies can be adopted to address these barriers?"
4. How does the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 balance forest ecosystem protection with the livelihood needs of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri, and what improvements do you suggest for its better implementation?"

5. What are the socio-economic effects of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) on the Gujjar tribe, particularly in relation to their traditional livelihoods, income generation, and access to essential services?"
6. How has the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 impacted forest management, conservation efforts, and the environmental health of forests in Rajouri, and what role has the Gujjar community played in these processes?"
7. How do community-based organizations in Rajouri support the Gujjar tribe in claiming and utilizing forest rights, and what impact have these organizations had on the tribe's socio-economic conditions?
8. Has the Forest Rights Act (FRA) been effective in reducing socio-economic disparities within the Gujjar tribe? What changes or additional policies do you think could further improve its effectiveness?"
9. How do you anticipate that the passing of The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024, will impact the rights, political representation, and access to resources of the Gujjar community in Rajouri District?"
10. How has the recognition of the Gujjar community as a Scheduled Tribe affected their socio-economic status, particularly in terms of access to resources and welfare programs? Also, what specific impact has it had on the empowerment of women in the community?
11. How has media coverage influenced public perception and awareness of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006's impact on the livelihoods, rights, and socio-economic status of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri, and what role has it played in shaping policy discussions?
12. What specific livelihood challenges do Gujjar women in Rajouri District face, and how do these challenges impact their decision-making abilities in managing household and community affairs?

13. How have the occupational patterns of the Gujjar tribe in Rajouri District evolved over time, particularly with regard to traditional practices like livestock rearing, and how have these changes influenced their socio-economic status?
14. How has the use of social media influenced the Gujjar community in Rajouri District, particularly in terms of cultural identity, access to education, and livelihood opportunities?
15. How do you perceive the current implementation and impact of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 in Rajouri District, particularly in relation to the Gujjar community's rights to land, forest resources, and their socio-economic development?
16. How has the recent inclusion of additional Scheduled Tribes (STs) in Jammu and Kashmir, such as the Pahari and Other Tribes, affected the socio-political and economic status of the Gujjar community? What challenges or opportunities has this development created for them?

Thank you so much for your time and participation!