

A study on tribal women in kashmir

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ABSTRACT

Jammu and Kashmir is native soil to a number of tribal communities with various eco-cultural, socioeconomic and geographical backgrounds. The women in the tribal community constitute half of the tribal population. In Jammu and Kashmir, tribal women are greater placed in certain respects and worst in some other respects. Tribal women play important role in the management of their house. Women have to cover long distance to collect silage , fuel and water resources. The present paper explores the population status, educational status and marital status of tribal women in Kashmir. There is an essential need to make serious efforts by government, non-government organizations and other local bodies to boost the rate of development in tribal communities of Kashmir.

INTRODUCTION

The tribal people are those who live in the lap of the nature, and depend on natural resources for their livelihood. (Nayak, 2015). India is a dwelling to a large variety of native people. The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically poor and marginalized groups in India. The tribes of India constitute 8.6 per cent of the total population of the country (Sahu, 2014). India is one of the countries having a large concentration of tribal population. In this respect, India ranks second in the world and comes next only to Africa. There are 537 different tribal communities spread all over India (Prasad and Sinha, 2012). The nature of society in Jammu and Kashmir is heterogeneous in terms of its ethnic composition as well as religious orientation. The heterogeneity of the state is multifaceted and can be seen

at racial, linguistic, cultural and religious levels. Gujjar Bakerwal and Gaddis are main tribal communities recognized as such by the government. Gujjar and Bakerwal form the third largest ethnic groups in terms of their population in the state. As per census 2011 they form 10.9% of population of state (Din, 2015) Jammu and Kashmir has 12 scheduled tribes- Balti, Beda, Boti, Boto, Brokpa, Drokpa, Dard, and shin. Changpa, Garra, mon, Purigpa, Gujjar, Bakerwal, Gaddi and Sippi spread over three regions Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Out of 12 scheduled tribes Gujjar is the most populous tribe having a population of 7,63,806. Thus forming 69.1 percent of total scheduled tribe population. Bot is second major tribe having a population of 96,698 followed by Bakerwal 60,724 and Brokpa 51,957. Gujjar along with the three tribes constitute 88 percent of the total tribal population. (Andrabi, 2013).

Tribal Women

The women in the tribal community constitute half of the tribal population. Tribal women in India face less discrimination than Hindu women. Tribal women enjoy greater freedom and sex ratio among tribal is found to be higher than mainstream population in many states. In Jammu and Kashmir tribal women is better placed in certain respects and worst in some other respects as in many districts the practice of dowry is not visible but the high status of women appears myth when child marriage and female literacy is taken into account. Tribal women play an important role in the management of house. With so called state development; women have to cover long distance to collect fodder fuel and water resources (Kumar&Sharma, 2015). The status of women in a society is an important reflection of the level of

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social justice in that society. Women's status is often described in terms of their level of income, employment, education, health and fertility as well as their roles within the family, the community and society. The role of women in tribal communities is substantial and crucial. Although they constitute about half the total population but in tribal society women are more important than in other social groups, because they work harder and the family economy and management depends on them. Even after industrialization and the resultant commercialization swamped the tribal economy, women continued to play a significant role. Collection of minor forest produce is done mostly by women and children. Many also work as laborers in industries, households and construction, contributing to their family income. However, tribal women face problems and challenges in getting a sustainable livelihood and a decent life due to environmental degradation and the interference of outsiders. Undoubtedly, the programmes, oriented towards the empowerment of tribal women, they have also improved their socio-economic conditions and status. However, there are wide variations across regions and tribes in terms of work participation, sex ratio, economic productivity and social life.(Ramakrishna, 2015)

Cited literature:

Awias, et. al (2009) and Puttaraja, et. al (2012) stated that tribal women have major role in co-management of their natural, social and economic resources. But still they suffer a lot; they are backward due to a traditional outlook, illiteracy, superstition, and submissive role in decision making, social evils and many other cultural factors. Sing & Ohri (1993), Ambashy (1970), Tufail (2004), Gupta&Farhat(2012) analyzed in their studies that the <https://assignbuster.com/a-study-on-tribal-women-in-kashmir/>

educational status of tribal women should be improved. Their studies revealed that the main causes of illiteracy among tribal women are social distance (between the teacher and the pupil), medium of instruction, the appointment of non tribal teachers in tribal areas and low social status of parents, illiteracy of parents, cultural backwardness of the family. Talmaki, (2012), Pandey,(2011)stated that tribal women enjoy greater say in family life , great deal of social freedom and they also revealed that factors like income, education, occupation and social intervention is required for improvement of the tribal women's education. Mishra (2009) highlighted the status of tribal women in terms of their demographic and other pursuits and she explained that the problem of tribal women differs from one area to another owing to their geographic location and historical background . Kantidas (2012) has made out a strong case for the socio-economic empowerment of the tribal women in India. This study identifies many social, political, economic, technological and physiological constraints in the way of tribal women empowerment Kantidas has pointed out that the main reason for the poor empowerment of tribal women was noted as lack of knowledge about new technology and information. Das (2012) conducted a study on autonomy and decision making role of tribal women: A case study of santoshpur village in sundergargh district of odisha. The major findings reveals that 73% of tribal women enjoy autonomy at their household level, especially in social aspects and enjoy equal rights along with their husbands in economic matters but their community participation was passive and autonomy level was very low. Panda(2008), Singh (1993) & Chanda (2004) have expressed that the health status of tribal women is inferior due to unhealthy surroundings, poor working conditions and pressures of physical

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labor, invasion of sexually exploitive market forces and also found that the health care facilities provided to tribal women of different regions and age groups need to be reorganize. The studies also revealed that Tribal women are facing the problems in health and nutrition such as malnutrition is common among the tribal women, higher infant mortality rate in tribal compared to national average, and the average protein calorie intake is low among tribal women

Objectives

To study the tribal women in all Districts of Kashmir.

To find out the different categories of tribal women in Kashmir.

To assess the marital status of tribal women in Kashmir.

To analyze the educational status of Tribal women in Kashmir.

Rationale of the Study

The position that the women hold in a society gives an indication of the level of the justice in that particular society. It is often found that women are more helpless section of the society relative to the male counterpart and they often happen to be last receiver of nation. The severe is the case about the tribal women as they are more isolated in term of education, employment and health facilities from the mainland. So, it may be that they are more deprived when compare with male-counterpart as well as the women from other communities. The health status of tribal women is very poor in comparison to women of other caste and religion. Tribal women lack

nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation which have a direct bearing on their reproductive health causing maternal mortality and higher fertility rate. The common health related problems of tribal women are sickle cell anemia, malaria, tuberculosis, malnutrition and sexually transmitted diseases etc. Tribal women are not free from atrocities. Apart from social prejudices, tribal women suffer from lack of education, health services and independent economic activities. Tribal women are discriminated more in cases relating to ownership, possession, cultivation and possession of lands. A large number of offences against woman have occurred in the schedule areas showing extremely vulnerable position of tribal women.

Material and Method

For this study data from secondary sources is used. The main sources of data are; the Census reports (2001 and 2011), Data of Registrar General of India, Websites, Research Articles and Books.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 reveals that majority of tribal women population i. e., 25 percent (f= 55016) is in Anantnag district of Kashmir followed by 17 percent (f= 35976) in district Bandipore , 15 percent (f= 17468) in district Kupwara, 13 percent (f= 33439) in district Ganderbal, 8 percent (f= 28516) in district Baramulla , 6 percent (f= 12637) in Kulgam, 5 percent (f= 10770) in Pulwama, 4 percent (f= 10509) in Shopian and only 1 percent (f= 3914) of tribal women population is in Srinagar district of Kashmir. So we can say that majority of tribal women population lives in Anantnag district of Kashmir. More than 70 per cent of the ST population is concentrated in Madhya Pradesh,

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Maharashtra, Orissa, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Gujarat. The essential characteristics of these communities are primitive traits, geographical isolation, distinctive culture, shyness of contact with communities at large and backwardness. In India there are no tribals in Haryana, Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi and Pondicherry. Tribal population is very low at Goa i. e; only 566 persons (0.04% of total population)

The figure depicts that majority (75%) of tribal women in Kashmir belongs to the Gujjar Tribe followed by Generic and other tribes (19%), while a small percentage (5%) of tribal women belongs to the Bakerwal tribe and only (1%) belongs to the Balti and Beda. Some of the tribal groups in India include Gonds, Santhals, Khasis, Angamis, Bhils, Bhutias, Bodos, Bishnois and Great Andamanese. The four major tribal groups in India are:

The Bodos of Assam

The Khasis of Meghalaya

The Bhils of Rajasthan

The Bisnois of Rajasthan

Education is the key which opens the door of life, develops humanity and promotes national and self development. Education can be an effective tool for women empowerment. It enables the tribal women to acquire knowledge for improving and empowering their tasks in all fields. It is quite clear from table 3 that educational level among the tribal women of Kashmir is not impressive. The data shows that majority (76%) of female population is illiterate while only (24%) of tribal women is literate that is very low as <https://assignbuster.com/a-study-on-tribal-women-in-kashmir/>

compared to those recorded by all tribal women at the national level. The analysis has brought this fact to the fore that the educational status of tribal women is very low as compared to general women of Kashmir. Therefore, there is an immediate need to study the causes for such a low performance in educational sector by tribal women so that a sociological framework of suggestions will be provided for the solution of those problems through micro-macro level programme intervention in the long-term and short term policy planning in Kashmir.

According to the fig. 3, as per 2011 census, majority (60%) of tribal women in Kashmir are never married followed by (36%) of tribal women who are currently married and very low percent of tribal women are widowed (2%), separated and divorced (2%). It is clear from the above analysis that maximum of the tribal women in Kashmir are never married. Marital status is essential to assess the social life, as it determines the status and respect got due to their husband's families. In India majority of the tribal women are unmarried or single and those who are married have best and cordial relations with their husbands.

SUMMARY

It revealed that majority of tribal women population (25%) lives in Anantnag district of Kashmir followed by (16%) in district Bandipore and (15%) in district Kupwara and a small percent of tribal women population is in other districts of Kashmir.

It shows that majority (75%) of tribal women in Kashmir belongs to the Gujjar Tribe followed by Generic and other tribes (19%), while a small percentage

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CONCLUSION

After analyzing this data it has been observed that majority of tribal women population lives in district Anantnag and most of the tribal women belongs to the Gujjar Tribe in Kashmir . In Kashmir the literacy rate among tribal women is very poor as compared to other tribal women at the national level. Most of the tribal women have never married and very few tribal women have currently married as compared with never married women population. The practices of divorce and separation is not common among tribes of Kashmir. Education is a key indicator of socioeconomic development. It also increases the knowledge and vision of a person. Equally, it is considered as an essential element in bringing change in social, political, economic fields in a society. There is immense need to understand the context, and background of education system in Kashmir to address the question of providing equal access of education to tribal's.