

## **Tribal Development Debate: A Study of Dards in Jammu and Kashmir**

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### **Abstract**

*The tribal population in India, though a numerically small minority, represents an enormous diversity of groups. They vary among themselves in respect of language and linguistic traits, ecological settings in which they live, the extent of acculturation, dominant modes of making a livelihood, level of development and social stratification (Xaxa Report 2014). In order to understand the process of development, analysis of socio-economic background of respondents is of utmost necessity. In fact it creates an important climate for the development of society at large. Hence this paper attempts to **discuss the development of socio-economic profile among the Dard tribe of Bandipora.***

**Keywords**-Development, Tribe, socio-economic, Jammu and Kashmir

### **INTRODUCTION**

The socio-economic transformation of the rural poor has been a focus of attention of the Government since the inception of planned development. Governmental machinery has been acting as a catalyst effecting change through implementation of a wide spectrum of programmes that are aimed at generation of employment, eradication of poverty, infrastructure development and social security (Sarkar & Baruah 2007). In accordance with the Constitution (Jammu & Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order, 1989 specified the eight tribes or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribes in relation to the State of Jammu & Kashmir namely- (i) Balti, (ii) Beda, (iii) Bot, Boto, (iv) Brokpa, Drokpa, Dard, Shin, (v) Changpa, (vi) Garra, (vii) Mon, and (viii) Purigpa. Also the Constitution (Jammu & Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order, 1991 specified the four more tribes or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribes in relation to the State of Jammu & Kashmir namely-(i) Gujjar, (ii) Bakarwal, (iii) Gaddi, and (iv) Sippi. (Constitution Scheduled Tribes Orders issued under Clause (1) of Article 342). In all there are 12 scheduled tribes in Jammu and Kashmir.

As per the Census of India 2011 the total population of Brokpa, Drokpa, Dard and Shin tribe in the state is 48,439. In combination they constitute 3.24 per cent of the total tribal population of the state. The demographic numbers of “Brokpa, Drokpa, Dard, and Shin” are clubbed together in the Census. These groups can be jointly referred as Dards. In the district of Bandipore there are 19,817 members of “Brokpa, Drokpa, Dard, Shin” tribe which accounting for 40.91 per cent. The main focus of attention was to illustrate the social background of Dards from a historical comparative perspective from the traditional setup to the present day Scenario. The universe of the present study was Bandipora district of Kashmir division. The units of the study were the Dards (ST's) living within the district. The data were collected both through primary and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained through interview schedule comprised of both open ended and closed ended questions, as per the objectives of the study and were employed with great precision to get accurate and unbiased data, besides photography.

### **LANGUAGE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

According to Oxford dictionary of Sociology, language means, “any verbal or non-verbal communication engaged in by humans, animals, or even machines”. Xaxa (2005) said that language and region, each on its own, is an important mark of differences but they tend to coincide with each other in the Indian context. In fact, the two together have been the driving force behind the reorganization of the society and polity in India in post-independence era. Region and language,

though important, however, do not tell us anything about the inner workings of the society and polity that they embody.

**Table 1: Languages Spoken**

| Languages spoken | Number      | Percentage |
|------------------|-------------|------------|
| Kashmiri         | 192         | 30.29      |
| Shina            | 234         | 36.90      |
| Urdu             | 208         | 32.80      |
| Total            | <b>634*</b> | <b>100</b> |

**\*Multiple Responses**

The data collected from the field reveal that the respondents were knowing more than one language besides their native Shina language a good number 192 out of 234 were knowing Kashmiri and also 208 out of 234 knowing Urdu too. So, the researcher found it easy to get data from them because of their multilingual features. Some respondents were also familiar with Bengali and Punjabi particularly all those who were ex-army men.

**EDUCATION OF RESPONDENTS**

In any society education is of immense importance to lead a better way of life. Education and development are quite interrelated to each other. Education is one of the best means for progressive development of a person. For development it is required to deal with a number of prerequisites, which are fulfilled by the education. Therefore it is important to have a minimum level of education for proper growth and development. Education also plays an important role in gaining self confidence in developing capabilities to gain status in the society (Johnson 2005).

**Table 2: Educational Qualification and Sex of the Respondents**

| Sex Educational                            | Male           | Female        | Total        |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Qualification</b>                       |                |               |              |
| Illiterate                                 | 8              | 9             | 17 (7.26)    |
| Up to Primary (5 <sup>th</sup> )           | 83             | 14            | 97 (41.45)   |
| Up to Secondary School (10 <sup>th</sup> ) | 63             | 10            | 73 (31.20)   |
| Up to Senior Secondary (12 <sup>th</sup> ) | 19             | 9             | 28 (11.97)   |
| Graduation upto Ph.D                       | 16             | 3             | 19 (8.12)    |
| Total                                      | 189<br>(83.41) | 45<br>(16.58) | 234<br>(100) |

The data with regard to the education shows that majority of the respondents 97 (41.45 per cent) have studied up to primary standard, interestingly the proportion of respondents having education up to secondary level schooling is 73 (31.20). In all 73 per cent of respondents are educated up to 10<sup>th</sup> class. The literacy rate of any society reflects the status of society. The educated masses are capable of bringing socio-economic development in society. Hence it is the biggest asset. On the other hand, the respondents with qualification of graduation and above are 19 (8.12 per cent). Only small proportion of respondents 17 (7.26 per cent) are illiterate. Further an attempt was made to examine the education in terms of sex. The data collected from the study clearly depicts that there is a majority 189 (83.41) of males and only 45 (16.58 per cent) respondents comprised of females. The data highlighted that out of 234 respondents 217 were educated which is an eye opener and directly proportional to development and transformation. Kamat (1981) Education and literacy play an important role in the economic change which is helped by the governmental programmes for tribal development.

**EARNERS IN THE FAMILY OF RESPONDENT**

Wealth is any valued resource that is not needed for consumption in the near future and can therefore be held in reserve and accumulated. Income which consists primarily of money received during each year and which may be converted into wealth through investment or the purchase of things such as building or land (Johnson 2005).

A comparative analysis has been made in the table 3 about the earners in the family with the number of family members of respondents. From the data it clearly depicts that in majority 102 (43.53 per cent) of families there was only one earner, followed by 48 (20.51 per cent) of cases having two earners, in 27 (11.52 per cent) cases three earners and 57 (24.37 per cent) cases having more than three earners. Due to prevalence of nuclear family setup households with 1-4 members are having more earners 116 (49.57 per cent), followed by 5-9 members comprised of 66 (38.20 per cent) and with less earners in the family comprising of greater than 15 members is 13 (5.56 per cent). Thus, comparatively preference for large family size was found to be on decline. Thus dominance of nuclear family pattern in the area depicts that a change has undergone for the past few decades and the people prefer small family size irrespective of joint or extended family structure.

**Table 3: Number and Earners in the family of Respondents**

| <b>Earners in the family</b><br><b>Number of family members</b> | <b>One</b>        | <b>Two</b>        | <b>Three</b>      | <b>&gt;Three</b> | <b>Total</b>    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <b>1-4</b>                                                      | 41                | 30                | 22                | 23               | 116 (49.57)     |
| <b>5-9</b>                                                      | 34                | 13                | 5                 | 14               | 66 (28.20)      |
| <b>10-14</b>                                                    | 24                | 4                 | -                 | 11               | 39 (16.67)      |
| <b>Above 15</b>                                                 | 3                 | 1                 | -                 | 9                | 13 (5.56)       |
| <b>Total</b>                                                    | <b>102(43.59)</b> | <b>48 (20.51)</b> | <b>27 (11.53)</b> | <b>57(24.37)</b> | <b>234(100)</b> |

**CONDITION OF HOUSE AND NUMBER OF ROOMS**

Traditionally, the condition of houses of Dard Tribals was not like as it is today. The change has occurred from approximately more than three decades before (said by a respondent aged 63 years old).

**Table 4: Condition of House and Number of Rooms**

| <b>Number of rooms</b><br><b>Condition of House</b> | <b>2-4</b>       | <b>5-6</b>         | <b>7-9</b>        | <b>&gt;10</b>    | <b>Number</b>    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Pucca/Cemented</b>                               | 19               | 92                 | 39                | 29               | 179 (77.16)      |
| <b>Semi- Pucca</b>                                  | 4                | 11                 | 13                | -                | 28 (12.06)       |
| <b>Kachha</b>                                       | 2                | 7                  | -                 | -                | 9 (3.88)         |
| <b>Wooden</b>                                       | 3                | 13                 | -                 | -                | 16 (6.90)        |
| <b>Total</b>                                        | <b>28(12.06)</b> | <b>123 (53.01)</b> | <b>52 (22.42)</b> | <b>29 (12.5)</b> | <b>232 (100)</b> |

A comparison has been made in the table 4 between condition of house and the number of rooms in a household. The data in the table show that majority 179 (77.16 per cent) respondents have pucca/cemented houses and also a good number near about half of households have rooms from 5-9 in each. The data show that 28 (12.06 per cent) of respondents are having semi-pucca households with a

few respondents having 5-9 rooms in a household. A less number 16 (6.90 per cent) are having wooden house and also the table shows that 9 (3.88 per cent) of households are having kachha houses. Due to the harsh winter in Gurez valley and in adjoining villages people are preferring to reside in wooden houses rather than cemented houses during these months because the cold waves do not affect much to wooden blocks used for the construction purposes and the indoor remains warm while as the later cools the interior of the household and also the external temperature remains too cool. This is the factor why people in the Gurez valley prefer wooden houses.

## **SOURCES OF FAMILY INCOME**

For a better social and economic status of any group, income is the most decisive factor. Income is influencing factor in determining the individual's power, prestige, consumption pattern, control of services and utilities (Tripathi 1987). The origin of income is the way of pursuing through which money is generated for the survival and upbringing of the family. Sources of income basically means how a person earns from what so ever exchange of services he/she provides. The more the income one has the more luxurious life one has in life. So the living standards and income are directly proportional to each other. Also economy is related with the power and decision making ability in social life.

**Table 5: Sources of Family Income**

| <b>Sources of Income</b>                   | <b>Number of Respondents</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Employment (Govt./Private)</b>          | 233                          | 59.89             |
| <b>Live stock</b>                          | 53                           | 13.63             |
| <b>Business</b>                            | 43                           | 11.05             |
| <b>Agriculture &amp; Allied Activities</b> | 37                           | 9.51              |
| <b>Labour/Wages</b>                        | 23                           | 5.92              |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>389*</b>                  | <b>100</b>        |

### **\* Multiple Responses**

The data with regard to the sources of income reveal that all the respondents except one have government/private jobs as their source of income. However, 53 (13.63 per cent) of respondents regard livestock as their additional source of income. The respondents who said business as their source of income other than governmental jobs constitute 43 (11.05 per cent). Those who have agriculture/ allied activities constitute 37 (9.51 per cent). A small number 23 (5.92 per cent) constitute Labour/ wages as their source of income. From the above discussion, it may be concluded that employment whether in government or private sector is the main source of income. However, other sources of income are also giving a push towards raising more income as there are more dependents in the family. In order to avoid more dependency/ burden on a single person, family is doing other activities for earning to compensate their livelihood.

## **CONCLUSION**

In nutshell, the socio-economic profile of the respondents reveals that the conditions of these tribals are relatively different from the other tribals in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The first major finding is that they possess a sense of we-feeling and were deeply rooted in the consciousness towards their tribe. Secondly, majority of the respondents were possessing multilingual features. It means that they are easily communicating with the people outside their domain. Thirdly, majority of the respondents were educated and all the children in the households who were of school going age were admitted in them which is an eye opener and directly proportional to the Development and transformation. In most of the respondents the condition of houses was good with proper structure. Majority of the respondents reveal that it is employment which is the main source of income. All the respondents were possessing television and mobile phones in their houses.

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