



## **Education and Cultural diversity of tribal population in Himachal Pradesh, India**

**Rakesh Kumar and Kamal Manohar**

*Department of Political Sciences,  
Himachal Pradesh University, Summer Hill, Shimla, (Himachal Pradesh), INDIA*

**ABSTRACT:** Education, Cultural and traditional diversity of tribal population are necessary considerations in the theory of generation and developmental processes of preventive interventions; yet, culture diversity are often overlooked in tribal population. The paper presents a conceptual framework focused on the seamless incorporation of culture and diversity throughout the various stages of in education, Cultural and traditional diversity of tribal population. This will help in integration of cultural and diversity considerations at each phase with emphasis on the importance and value of "tribal population" to promote traditional validity. The integrated approach will ultimately facilitate more global, universal translation of changes in attitudes, norms, and systems.

**Keywords:** Education, Cultural, traditional diversity, tribal's, integration

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Himachal Pradesh was constituted as a separate administrative unit by merging Punjab hill states except Nalagarh and the princely states of Sirmour, Chamba and Suket on April 15, 1948. Mandi was merged on May 1, 1948. It was then administratively divided into four districts of Chamba, Mandi, Mahasu, and Sirmour. The district of Chamba and Sirmour comprised of the area of the erstwhile princely state bearing same name. Mandi district was formed by grouping the erstwhile states of Mandi and Suket and the rest of the Punjab Hill States were grouped to form Mahasu district [1].

On July 1, 1954 the Part C, State of Bilaspur Comprising of the erstwhile state of Bilaspur was also merged into Himachal Pradesh through an Act of Parliament Called the Himachal Pradesh, Bilaspur (New State) Act, 1954. Bilaspur was added as the fifth district to Himachal Pradesh in 1954. And yet another new district, the sixth one was carved out of the district of Mahasu on May 1, 1960. The entire Chini Tehsil and 14 villages from Rampur Tehsil of Mahasu District formed the new Kinnaur District. Under the Punjab re-organization Act, 1966, (Act No. 31 of 1966) more territories were transferred from Punjab to Himachal Pradesh. Himachal Pradesh got full statehood on January 25, 1971 under the state of Himachal Pradesh Act 1970 (Act No. 53 dated March 5, 1970). Out of Kangra District, later, were carved out the District of Una and Hamirpur. Mahasu District was reorganized, new district of Solan was formed, and Shimla District was enlarged [2].

Tribal communities may loose all moorings. It is therefore necessary that attempts should be made to preserve the best in the tribal culture to the enrichment of 'our composite culture' of which 'the tribal heritage is an important component and at the same time, help tribal people to absorb the best in the ways of modernization. Hence, the aim of the present study is to study Cultural and traditional diversity of tribal population of Himachal Pradesh.

#### *A. Demography of Tribal population*

The Tribal area in the state are spread over the District of Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti and Pangi and Bharmour sub-division of Chamba District. There were seven Tribal Development Blocks in these areas, viz., Kalpa, Pooh, and Nichar (Kinnaur District), Lahaul and Spiti (Lahaul-Spiti District), Pangi and Bharmour (Chamba District). Snow, glaciers, high altitude and highly rugged terrain crisscrossed by fast following rivers and their tributaries are the peculiar features of the tribal belt [2].

The scheduled Tribes population of the state as per 2001 census comes to 244,587 persons forming 4.0 percent of the total population. The highest proportion of 73.0 percent tribal population has been returned from Lahul & Spiti and is followed by Kinnaur (71.8) and Chamba (25.5). The small proportion of tribal population has

also been returned by Kullu (3.0 percent), Bilaspur (2.7), Sirmour (1.3), and Mandi (1.2). In remaining districts, this proportion is almost negligible [3].

The total population of Himachal Pradesh according to 2001 census (excluding Gaddi and Gujjars of merged areas numbering about 1,12,190 declared as Scheduled Tribes in January 2003) which is 4.02% of the total population of the state. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India has notified Gaddi's and Gujjars residing in merged areas of the state as Scheduled Tribes. With the notification of Gaddi's and Gujjars as Scheduled Tribes the population of Scheduled Tribes as per 2001 figures has increased to 3,56,777 constituting about 5.9 percent of the state population but actual population figures of Gaddis/Gujjars as Scheduled Tribes will be confirmed in 2011 census [3].

The population of Scheduled Tribes was 197,263 in 1981 census which rose to 218,349 in 1991 and 244,587 in 2001 census. The growth rate of Scheduled Tribes was 10.69 during 1981-91 which rose to 12.02 percent in subsequent decade of 1991-2001 in the state, as a whole. The highest growth rate of 44.63 percent has been returned by Solan followed by Kinnaur where population of Tribes has grown by 42.06 percent during 1991-2001. Bilaspur and Mandi has moderate growth rate of 14.99 and 12.18 percent respectively. However district of Kangra, Hamirpur, Una, Sirmour and Shimla have negative growth of Scheduled Tribes population but these district have small population of scheduled tribes which usually fluctuates from one decade to other [3].

Of the total Scheduled Tribes population of the state, 48.1 percent tribal population is distributed in Chamba district followed by Kinnaur (23.0 percent), Lahaul & Spiti (9.9), Kullu (4.6), Mandi (4.3), Bilaspur (3.8), Sirmour (2.4), Shimla (1.7), and Solan (1.4). Una, Kangra and Hamirpur district have almost negligible proportion of tribal population.

The sex ratio among Scheduled Tribes is still better than scheduled castes. The sex ratio was 981 females per 1,000 males in scheduled Tribes population in 1991 which further rose to 996 females in 2001 census. The tribal district of Kinnaur has highest sex ratio of 1,040 females in 2001 against 1,082 in 1991 census and is closely followed by Lahaul and Spiti with 1022 and 1,028 in 1991 and 2001 respectively. Chamba district also has significantly high sex ratio of 983 females in 1991 which further rose to 998 females in 2001 census slightly below the parity line. The sex ratio among tribal population is also high in Kullu (1,004) followed by Mandi (991) and has improved in both districts during 1991-2001. There is decline in the sex ratio of Solan, Shimla and Sirmour districts and their values are far below the equality point. The district of Una, Hamirpur and Kangra with small tribal population reflect very low sex ratio in both censuses [2,3].

The Child sex ratio of Scheduled Tribes has declined from 966 in 1991 to 955 in 2001. This decline in sex ratio has been observed in Kullu, Bilaspur, Solan, Sirmour and Shimla districts. The highest decline in sex ratio has been found in Solan district where sex ratio decreased from 1,010 in 1991 to 870 in 2001 followed by Mandi from 1,023 to 936 and Shimla from 957 to 770 female during 1991-2001. Child sex ratio in Una and Hamirpur is equal to parity in 2001 census while in other districts, it varies between 991 in Kinnaur and 770 in Shimla district.

#### *B. Literacy Rate of Scheduled Tribes Population*

The Development of Nation is not measured through the buildings it has built, the roads it has laid down, the bridges it has constructed and the like but by the human resources the nation has developed through well-defined system of education. Education is the most crucial factor not only to equip the new generation with skills so essential for earning livelihood but also to create among them an awareness to social and environment realities, inculcates in them scientific temper independence of mind and spirit which are of paramount importance for them to become responsible citizen [6].

The proportion of literates to total Scheduled Tribes population excluding 0-6 years population was 47.1 percent in 1991 census which rose to 65.5 percent yielding net change of 18.4 points during the decade in the state. This literacy rate among the Scheduled Tribe is quite low as compared to literary rate of Scheduled Castes. All districts show increase in the proportion of Scheduled Tribes literates except Kangra where literacy rate has declined from 78.9 to 64.0, Hamirpur from 96.2 to 60.6 and Una from 90.6 to 46.7 percent during 1991-2001. This decline in literacy rate in these districts appears to be effected by the migration of tribal population. The literacy rate in districts varies between 46.7 percent in Una and 87.0 percent in Shimla district as per 2001 census [3].

**Male Literacy Rate of Scheduled Tribes.** Male literacy rate has increased from 62.7 percent in 1991 to 77.7 percent in 2001 census. All district level, male literacy of 2001 census shows variation between 91.2 percent in Una district. The Pattern of change in male literacy during 1991-2001 is the same as discussed in total literacy rate.

**Female Literacy Rate of Scheduled Tribes.** Literacy in female tribal population is very low and gender gap in literacy is still very high which comes to 24.4 points as per 2001 census. The percentage of female literates was only 31.2 in 1991 which rose sharply to 53.3 percent in 2001 which is still for behind the male literacy rate of 77.7

percent. In districts this rates varies between 40.7 percent in Sirmour and 81.7 percent in Shimla district. During 1991-2001, all district except Hamirpur reflect improvement in female literacy.

The percentage of female literates in Hamirpur was 71.4 in 1991 which fell down to 46.9 percent as per 2001 census. But Hamirpur has very small number of tribal population and demographic features of this population by and large is influenced by migration from other areas.

To work participation of scheduled tribes is better than that of 48.9 percent workers of Scheduled castes. The percentage of scheduled Tribes workers has increased from 49.6 in 1991 to 54.6 percent in 2001 census. The proportion of scheduled tribes is highest in Una (66.7) percent followed by Kinnaur (60.2), Lahul & Spiti (59.1) and Solan (58.0). The lowest percentage of 37.9 has been recorded in Kangra and 41.0 percent each in Sirmour and Shimla districts.

The proportion of main workers among tribal population works out 37.0 percent in 2001 showing slight improvement from 36.8 percent in 1991 in the state. Main workers vary between 52.8 percent in Lahul & Spiti and 26.0 percent in Mandi district during 2001 census. On the other hand the proportion of marginal workers works out 17.6 percent in the state which varies between 29.0 percent in Solan and only 0.6 percent in Hamirpur district. But Hamirpur district has quite high percentage of 40.0 in main workers among the tribal population [4].

**Table 1: Notifications of President regarding the Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh.**

S. No.	Notifications	Tribes
(i)	The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950	Gaddi
(ii)	The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) (Part 'C' States) Order, 1951.	Kinnaura or Kinnara
(iii)	The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) under Territories Order, 1951	Gujjar
(iv)	The Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists) Notification Order, 1956	Jad
(iv)	Central Act 31 of 1966 Section 28(2) and Schedule XI	Lamba, Bhot or Bodh, Pangwala, Lahaula

### C. The Ancient Tribes of Himachal Pradesh

The following were the ancient tribes or inhabitants of Himalayan region or Himachal Pradesh:

**(i) Dasas.** The Shivalik hills are believed to have been inhabited during the pre-vedic period by the Dasas. 'Dasas', along with 'Panies', 'Asuras' and 'vartiyas' are supposed to be authors of the Indus valley civilization.

**(ii) Kinners.** The word Kinner originated from two Sanskrit words; Kim+Nara, means what kind of strange persons are they? This question was raised on account of the fact that Kinner males do not have beards and moustaches as abundantly grown in the case of males of other races. The look of a Kinnaura is that of a 'half man and half horse', means the people with "Ashwamukha".

According to the legend, Pradumna, son of Lord Krishna was the earliest King of the Kinner. It is believed that the 131<sup>st</sup> descendant of this dynasty is Raja Virbhadr Singh former Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh. The Kinners are believed to have inhabited the inner Himalayan terrain right from the Ganges up to the Chandra Bhaga till Gupta period. Presently the Kinner population is confined to Kinnaur district only [5].

**(iii) Kiratas.** 'Kaivartas' and 'Chandalas' has been mentioned as the low caste people in the history of Kashmir. Kiratas came to be known as 'Mavanas' or 'Mavies' in the region across the Jammu and the Satluj. The Kirata's powerful King was Shambar, who fought against the Aryan King 'Diviodas'.

**(iv) Nagas.** They inhabited the Himalayan region at one time in the history. They were worshippers of Nagas (Serpents). Their famous kings were Vasuki, Kali and Taksaka. Today also in Himachal Pradesh there are many Naga temples.

**(v) Khasas.** The term Khasa is found in puranic and epic literature. Khasira of Vayu Purana, Khasa of Markandeya Purana, Khasa of Nepal, Kasya of Kumaon and Garhwal, Khasa of Bhagwata Purana and Vayu Purana are people of same ethnic stock. The ancient 'Khasadesh' was their homeland, situated between the North Western Provinces and Nepal. In Brihat Samhita of Varahmihira, the Khasas were mentioned with Kulutas (Inhabitants of Kullu region), Tanganas and Kashmiras. Today Khasas are inhabited in Shimla, Sirmour, Parts of Kullu and Kinnaur districts of Himachal Pradesh [2,5].

**(vi) Pishachas.** Pishachas, Consumer of raw flesh, inhabited the North frontier and the adjoining Himalayan tract. The tribe known as Rakshasas' in Vedic times were also akin to the Pishachas.

**(vii) Yakshas.** In Mahabharata, there is a reference to the encounter between Yudhishthira and his brothers with a Yaksha. They were also known as the tree gods, endowed with mysterious super human powers.

#### *D. Modern Tribes*

In Modern Himachal, Gujjars, Gaddis, Kinnauras, or Kinners, Lambas, Khampas and Bhots, Jads, Lahaulas, Pangwal, and Swanglas are the famous tribes. Tribes occupy forty percent of the total geographical area of the state, while they constitute only 4.6 percent of the total population of the state at present.

All these tribes of Himachal Pradesh are mostly engaged in semi agricultural activities; such as rearing of cows, sheep, goat, buffaloes etc, and ploughing small fields, which are their sources of sustenance. Agriculture supplemented by animal husbandry and trade is the main occupation of these tribals. The following are the main tribes of Himachal Pradesh:

**1. Swangla:** The Swangla is a scheduled tribe exclusively living in the Pattan valley tract along the Chandra Bhaga in Lahul-Spiti districts [2, 5].

**2. Gaddis:** Gaddis of Himachal are world famous. The word 'Gaddi' is a generic name and under it are included Brahmins, Rajputs, Khatris, Thakurs, and Rathi. Gaddis are inhabited in Bharmour tehsil of Chamba district and Kangra district. Some Gaddis are also found in Nurpur tehsil.

**3. Khampa:** Khampas are not the original inhabitants of Himachal Pradesh. They are believed to have migrated from Tibet. 'Kham' is the name of a state in Tibet and the people of that state are known as 'Khampa'. The Khampa tribe is scattered in Kullu, Chamba, Kinnaur and Lahul Spiti districts.

**4. Pangwal:** The pangwal are the residents of Pangi valley of Chamba district. It is a generic name used for all the residents of Pangi valley. Which include Brahmin, Rajput, Lohar, Hali, Badi and Chanal, but the Rajputs population outnumber all the rest.

**5. Kinner of Kinnaura:** The inhabitants of Kinnaur district are known as Kinnaura, Kinara, Kanawara, Lannawra or Kinnaurese. There are many tribes and castes in India which claim their origin from divine sources and the Kinners one such tribe.

**6. Lahaulas:** The dwellers of Lahaul area are known as Lahaulas. The district of Lahaul and Spiti a unique sociological unit is one of the frontier districts of India in Himachal Pradesh.

**7. Gujjars:** The Gujjars are identified by General Cunningham with the Kushan or Yachi or Tochari, a tribes of the eastern tartars. In Himachal Pradesh, the Gujjars are members of 'Parvatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh' which was founded in 1956 to extend welfare activities among the tribes of the area [5].

**8. Jads:** The Jads are Buddhist. They have occupied the area of Pangi and Chamba. Like Pangwala, they are a polyandrous and patrilineal tribe. Being dwellers of cold region, they always prefer woolen clothes.

**9. Bodh:** The Lahaul Spiti district is the principal inhabit of Bodh tribe. The census statistics of 1971 run this (for Jad, Lamba, Khampa and Bhot or Bodh). The name Bodh has been derived from Tibetan origin. In ancient literature, Tibet was known as "Bhota Desha". Tibetans were called Bhots and their language Bhoti. The Bodhs or Bhots are found in Spiti and upper Lahaul Valley of Lahaul. Central Act 1931 of 1966 Section 28(2) and Schedule XI has recognized Bodh or Bhot tribe [5].

## **II. CONCLUSION**

A common method for bringing citizen and understanding cultural diversity is involving people in focus groups and community conversations which allow for group interaction among individuals while sharing attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions regarding tribal population. Groups can also be comprised of multiple minority groups like tribals to clarify how they differ and are the same. The use of focus groups as a research strategy for intervention development has been common, but they have been less widely used for researching adaptation of an existing intervention. This paper intends to initiate a multidisciplinary dialogue to stimulate an ongoing discussion on how best to incorporate cultural considerations of tribal people as core and paramount to effective intervention design, implementation, and dissemination and conservation of cultural, educational and traditional diversity.

## **REFERENCES**

- [1]. Jagmohan Balokhra, (1999). *The Wonderland of Himachal Pradesh*, H.G. Publication, New Delhi, 1999, p. 2.
- [2]. Ashok Ranjan Basu, (1985). *Tribal Development Programmes and Administration in India*, National Book Organization, H 39 Green Park, New Delhi, 1985, pp. 19.
- [3]. Tribal Development Department. Shimla Himachal Pradesh. <http://admis.hp.nic.in/himachal/tribal/>
- [4]. Census of India 2001, *Himachal Pradesh, Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes*, Directorate of Census Operations, DPC Tara Devi, Himachal Pradesh, Shimla, 2001, p.3.
- [5]. Annual Tribal Sub Plan, Tribal Development Department of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla, 2008-2009, pp. 1-2.