



## Employment Nature Of The Gujjar Community In Punjab

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### Abstract

Punjab state has been sheltering several communities in its lap for centuries. Each people on the earth needs his livelihood to survive in life for that he wants to have some employment job to earn some money. Like other communities, the Gujjar community still practice the hereditary profession of cattle breeding. In this modern age, where humans aspire to set foot on the moon, the Gujjar have followed the primitive occupation. The purpose of this research paper is to discuss their employability qualities by investigating the advantages and disadvantages of employing Gujjar. How will their employment affect their nomadic life? There are 81 Gujjar families in Punjab. This study focuses on 50 Gujari families living in the most populated villages of the Gujjar community in the Punjab District, Punjab, and examines the contemporary employment characteristics of Gujjar. Barriers faced by the community in the field of their employment will also be examined in this research work.

**Keywords;** Gujjars, Employment, Nature, Occupation, Nomadic life, Punjab.

### Introduction

Punjab state lies on the north-western plains of India. The area is enriched with alluvial soil, which is considered the best fertile soil for agriculture. The green fields always attract agriculturists and other agricultural dependents. These green fields also help the dairy farmer to nourish their cattle. This is reasoning why Gujjars and other nomadic tribal communities were migrating toward the Punjab state for decades. However, the number of the Gujjar families is still trying to get settled down here but unfortunately, most of the families did not get success to have a permanent resident of the state.

The word Gujjar is derived from the term Gaucharana, meaning to graze cows. In other languages like English, Hindi, Urdu. In Urdu, the word Gurjar or Gujjar is in use but in all the ancient records up to 1300 A.D. it is Gurjar, its Prakrit is Gujjar which is normally verbal by the persons. Sanskrit Dictionary compiled by Pandit Radha Kant explains:

Gurjar = Gur (enemy) + Ujar (destroyer)

Gurjar means Destroyer of the enemy.

The Gujjars are also called Goojar, Gujjar, and Gurjara.

It is stated in a theory that the Gurjars were instigated in Central Asia and came to India via Iran Iraq and Afghanistan and established their territory in Gujarat. They are first referred to in the 7th century as warriors; they migrated to the mountains for pasture for the animals. Their linguistics is Gojari, which is similar to the Pahari language. The census of India 1941 states: "Historians are accepted that the "Gurjaras" tribes were established in the area of Mount Abu in Rajasthan. It is thought that these and other divisions of the tribe were the descendants of those now known as Gujjars in this state.

In Punjab, Gujjaris have migrated from Jammu and Kashmir for decades. They are known for their hereditary activities as ranchers. Jammu and Kashmir is located in a hilly region and heavy snowfall in winter makes it difficult to supply enough green fodder for livestock. Most of the Gujjaris tended to migrate to the plains of Punjab. Punjab, along with Jammu and Kashmir, is the first plains state to offer favourable weather conditions for them. In Punjab, green grass for grazing cattle is readily available, allowing Gujjaris to earn a living by feeding livestock and selling milk from buffaloes. After years of struggle, many Gujjar families settled in several districts of Punjab.

### Objectives of the study

1. The main objective of the research is to explore the employment nature of the Gujjar community in the Punjab district.
2. To find the major barriers in the field of their employment.
3. To analyse the financial strength of the community.

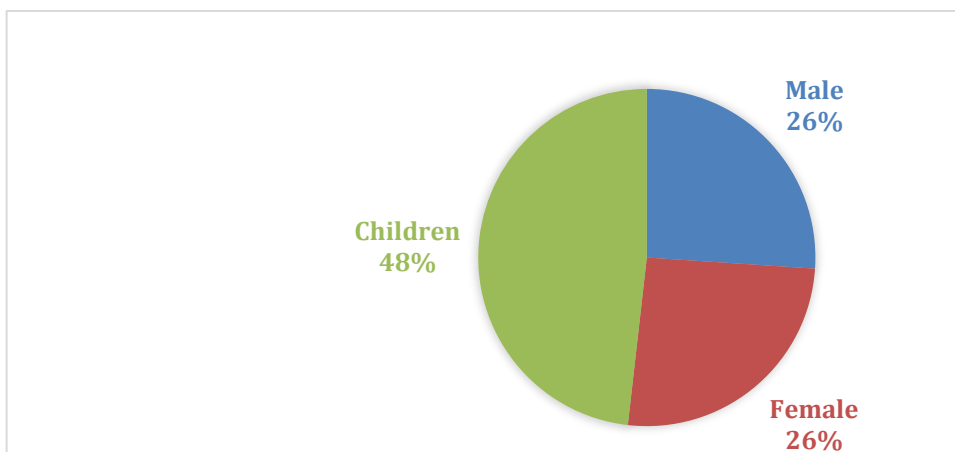
### Research Methodology

The research approach of this research is a case study to analyze the employment characteristics of the Gujjar communities. The Punjab District of Punjab has been designated as the study area for primary data collection. As per government records, 1281 Gujjar families live in Punjab. Insights are gleaned through interactions with 100 Gujari families living in the most populated villages of the Gujjar community. Secondary data were collected from published books, research papers, reports, etc.

So, overall qualitative research methodology will be used to get fruitful results of research work.

**Discussion**

As per sample design data has been collected from the 100 families (Deras) of the Gujjar community in the Punjab district of Punjab. The information from the respondents that have come to light is that the total population in respondent 100 families are 672 with the sum of 172 males, 174 females, 186 male children, and 140 female children. The above numbers disclose that the population of Gujjars in the District is very nominal. These fewer numbers of their community should be considered dangerous figures to save their existence in the District.



*Graph no. 01: Population percentage of Gujjar community in Punjab*

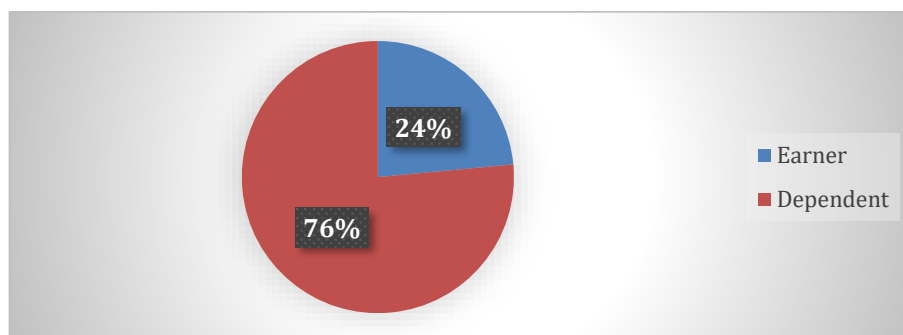
**Nature of their employment in the Gujjar community**

In Punjab, all interviewed householders are self-employed. All Gujaris practice animal husbandry and dairy farming as their ancestral occupation. Today, livestock show their identity in the community. Most Gujaris are illiterate, so having a job is very important to them. They take the cows to the fields to graze and sell the milk at the market in the morning and evening. All family members help managers and workers in various areas of animal husbandry. Women and children take the cows and graze them on the roadsides and in the village fields. The head of the family or a young man brings the milk and sells it in the market or anywhere in the country. Therefore, they enjoy their independence. Their low income is an important reason why they have a large number of dependents despite a small number of workers. In Punjab, 158 Gujaris out of 100 surveyed households are breadwinners and 514 of the same family are dependents. Parents, spouses and children are considered on the list of dependents. The difference in numbers between workers and relatives is 356. The difference between earners and dependents is 356 in numbers. This reveals that dependents are only 23.5% population are earners and 76.5% are dependents

Total respondent	Earners	Dependents	Earners %	Dependents %
672	158	514	23.5%	76.5%

*Table no. 01: Percentage of Eraner in the Gujjar community of Punjab.*

According to the above data, the earner represents less than 24% of the total respondents, and they must take responsibility for the remaining 3/4ths of their community. This large gap leads their community to poverty because it is extremely challenging for the earner to provide livelihoods to the dependents due to their very small income.



*Graph no. 02: Percentage of Eraner in the Gujjar community of Punjab.*

The pie chart shows the major difference between the percentage of earners and their dependents. In the above figures, only human being dependents are considered whereas earners have to make expenditures for their other livestock as well. Their very less income made it difficult to survive in their economic life.

### Barriers to their employment

The Gujjars in India are characterized by a high degree of instability in their employment. This is due to their nomadic lifestyle, which allows them to move from place to place within a short period. Consequently, their employment is contingent upon the locations they move to. As a result, a large proportion of Gujjars work as self-employed individuals and are actively involved in cattle-raising. To achieve stability and growth in their employment, Gujjars face a variety of challenges, both major and minor, which can impede their progress. These challenges are outlined below.

- I. Gujari employment is based on pastoral farming such as buffalo, cattle and goats. The price of green fodder and rice straw is very high, and the economy is not good. This will give you fresh, green food.
- II As the green fields of Punjab are getting smaller by the day, they have brought their livestock to graze on the roadside. They can get annoyed when livestock are hit by vehicles on the road.
- III. Gujar is best known for her hereditary profession of milk selling. Milk is a product that requires a lot of protection and care. Using sticks can ruin the whole milk and result in financial loss.
- IV. Gujari families are largely mobile and their traditional nomadic culture is a barrier to permanent or stable employment
- V. Low levels of education and high illiteracy among Gujaris hinders the further growth and self-sustaining development they should achieve. Because they are illiterate, they cannot take advantage of new milking techniques.
- VI. These are not economically reasonable and the price of new buffalo is very expensive. So they made the financial resources available whenever they wanted to expand their work.
- VII. Livestock and dairy operations rely on environmentally friendly and healthy cattle feed. A method of feeding only rice straw to cattle as green feed during the off-season was investigated. As a result, milk production decreases, which negatively impacts income.
- VIII. Milk production increases in winter but decreases in summer, resulting in unstable income. IX. Cows cannot produce milk all year round. Feed small amounts of milk for 7-8 months a year. However, Gujaris have to feed all year round and this means an economic loss for them.

### Conclusion

In the district of Punjab population of the Gujjar community is very low. In this modern era, they are still living a nomadic life moving from one place to another place. Gujjars are well known for their cattle-rearing profession. They sell the milk of their cattle which is the main source of their income. They don't have any other occupational skills. so, their means of living is only dairy farming. However, it seems very hard for them to survive on very less income. Employment nature of the Gujjar community is self-employment but unstable also.

They do not have any permanent or stable income. Their income is varying in different seasons. Their expenditure and milk production cost are much higher than their low income. The government should make some policies regarding increasing their income or providing some stable employment to unemployed youth of the Gujjar community.

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