

## Seasonal Migration: Trends and Challenges Faced by Tribal Community


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The paper focus on the decline in seasonal migration as the communities now feel marginalized as their social as well as economic life is harsher and difficult. The 'Bakarwal' community is one of the twelve tribal communities that are officially recognized in Jammu and Kashmir with the assistance of various amendments. Both 'Gujjar' and 'Bakarwal' communities together form the third largest population group in the state. According to the Census of India (2011), the total population of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) in Jammu and Kashmir accounts for 11.9 per cent of its total population, out of which Gujjars are the highest in number followed by Bakarwal Tribe. It has long been a tradition among both Gujjars and Bakarwal Tribe to migrate to the highland pastures along with their livestock in summers and migrate back to the lowlands in winters. This tradition of seasonal migration has consistently been maintained by their generations together. This is why they are known as 'Nomads' and their movement is called 'Transhumance'. However, both Gujjars and Bakarwal Tribe have continuously been migrating, but this tradition has declined among them (declined more among Gujjars than Bakarwal Tribe).

**Keywords:** Tribe, Seasonal Migration, Marginalized, Schedule Tribes, Gujjars and Bakarwal

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## Introduction

The life of these nomadic people has been a kind of a periodical shifting. Such an oscillatory movement or mobility assumes that they must have two separate living places or dwellings—a permanent one in the village at low altitudes and another in the form of hut in alpine pastures. People living in mountains in isolation have not been exposed to the outside world. Their social life has deeply been affected with fear of the black magic and this creates a barrier in their advancement and progress. In their society, the process of overall progress and development has highly been constrained by the tough conditions. It is one of the areas where nature holds the upper hand and determines man's destiny. The residents of these kinds of areas have incorporated spatial mobility, flexibility in diet and eating customs, and maintenance of low densities of population, which raise the resilient feature of this fragile and weak ecosystem (Rets, et al, 2017).

The Bakarwal Tribe of Jammu and Kashmir have a unique way of life, language, and customs that are quite different in comparison to their counterparts who are settled mostly in the plains of Jammu and Kashmir. The Bakarwal Tribe remain nomadic, but even for them, this has been changing as it can be recorded that a significant proportion has settled in the plain regions of Jammu and Kashmir, owing to the increasing hardships that the phenomenon of the seasonal migration.

## Research Methodology

In order to ascertain the reasons behind seasonal migration and its decline 7 districts of Jammu province were select using the purposive sampling technique (as these districts have considerable populations of the Bakarwal Tribe). The selected districts were namely Kathua, Samba, Jammu, Reasi, Rajouri, Ramban, and Poonch. A sample of 50 households belonging to the Bakarwal Tribe was selected and surveyed using snowball technique. A total of 350 households with the help of interview schedule recorded data on seasonal migration

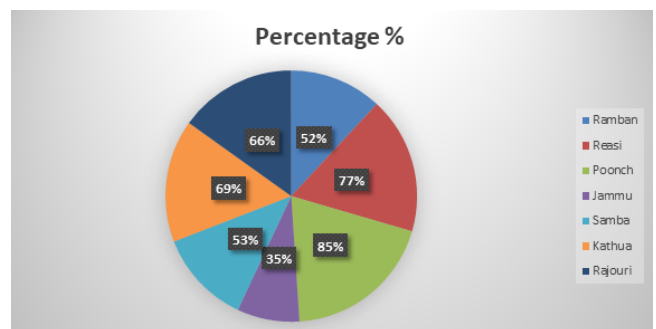
This paper takes into consideration the following aspects of the seasonal migration among the sampled households in the study area:

- Trends and challenges faced by tribal community during seasonal migration
- Decline in seasonal migration

- Reasons behind declining seasonal migration among the tribal community.

## Seasonal Migration

As soon as the summer season begins, the Bakarwals start their seasonal migration towards the high altitudes and the heights of the Himalayan mountain range, where the lush green grass on the grasslands is abundantly available for livestock or herds. They mainly rear sheep and goats; therefore they are called as Bakarwals. There are six lakh Bakarwal in Jammu and Kashmir. In their appearances and attires, they are having a well built, and they are brave and very hospitable. Earlier, the members of the Bakarwal tribe did not construct a permanent house to live and reside in them. Most of the Bakarwali people have houses in the shape of tents only. These tent houses are made with the help of tarpaulin, small sticks, and rope lengths. They carry along their clothes and household things from one place to another by loading on the back of their pack animals, such as horses. Generally, each Bakarwal family has about 400 sheep, 100 goats, 6 to 8 horses, Bakarwali mastiff dogs, and some poultry animals. Bakarwals, generally, do not rear buffaloes and cows. The Bakarwali women wear home stitched caps. These people wear the shoe, which is called a 'Jooti' that is fixed with some iron nails at the bottom and are quite heavy (Sofi, 2013).



**Fig:1 Percentage of the bakerwals tribe Migrating Seasonally**

Fig:1 shows the percentage seasonal migration in different districts. Data clearly indicates that Poonch district has highest percentage (85%) migrating seasonally and Jammu district has lowest percentage (35 %). The study area clearly indicates 62% of the sampled households were migrating seasonally. It was found that highest percentages of seasonal migration were still found in hilly areas mostly as compared to plain areas.

**Glimpse of migration Routes in the study area during Seasonal Migration**

The various ethnic groups and indigenous peoples have developed certain norms, traditions and values to protect their environment while obtaining their food, fuel and other basic needs. Like the Gujjars and Bakarwals of Jammu and Kashmir, the Tharus of the Terai region of Uttaranchal, and the Bhutias and Lapchas of Sikkim and Bhutan oscillate in the valleys and alpine pastures along with their cattle to make use of the available green grasses in the different seasons during the year. These peoples have been forced by their environment to adopt a particular mode of life and they have developed and adopted appropriate technologies for the utilization of their resources, and to maintain their ecosystems, resilient and sustainable (Gellner, 2007). Migration routes followed by the sampled households in Ramban district during seasonal migration have been represented in Table 2.1. The sampled households living in Tangar, Upper Tangar, and Bathan cross Banihal Pass, and their destination spots is Nowgam (Shahabad, Anantnag). The sampled households living in Suligam cross Pogal Paristan, and their destination spot is Kapran (Shahabad, Anantnag). The sampled households living in Chanderkot and Kanga cross Banihal Pass and Wadhwan, and their destination spot is Marwah in Kishtwar district. The sampled households living in Ramban cross Banihal Pass, and their destination spot is Verinag in Anantnag district.

**Table 2.1 Migration Routes used by bakerwals tribe in Ramban District during Seasonal Migration**

District	Places of Origin	Migration Routes and Mountain Passes	Destinations
Ramban	Tangar, Upper Tangar	Banihal Pass	Nowgam (Shahabad, Anantnag)
	Bathan	Banihal Pass	Nowgam (Shahabad, Anantnag)
	Suligam	Pogal Paristan	Kapran, (Shahabad, Anantnag)
	Chanderkot	Banihal Pass-Wadhwan	Marwah
	Ramban	Banihal Pass	Verinag
	Kanga	Banihal Pass-Wadhwan	Marwah

Source: Field survey.

Migration routes followed by the barekwal community in Ramban district during

Seasonal migration have been represented in Table 2.2. The barekwals living in Kundra-Pai cross Banihal Pass, and their destination spots are Nowgam (Verinag) and Wadhwan. The barekwal community living in Pouni cross Jahajji Pass and Banihal Pass, and their destination spots are Litharbhat (Pahalgam) and Kokernag. The sampled households living in Kareeya cross Patnitop, and their destination spot is Sinthantop. The barekwals living in Mansoo-Tanda cross Banihal Pass, and their destination spot is Nowgam (Verinag). The barekwal community living in Bhaga cross Banihal Pass, Sarua Pass, and Pir Panjal, and their destination spots are Krishnala (Marwah) and Nowgam (Shahbad, Verinag). The barekwal community living in Bharakh cross two routes, (1) Banihal pass, Kokernag (Anantnag), Matigavaran, Lathalwan, and Wadhwan, and (2) Gool, Arnas, Ramban, Kokernag (Anantnag), and Margan Top, and their destination spots are Santhal (Ramban), Wadhwan, and Lawali.

**Table 2.2 Migration Routes of Reasi District used during Seasonal Migration**

Dist rict	Plac es of Origin	Migration Routes and Mountain Passes	Destinations
Reasi	Kundra-Pai	Banihal Pass	Nowgam (Verinag), Wadhwan
	Pouni	Jhajji Pass, Banihal Pass	Litharbhat (Pahalgam), Kokernag
	Kareeya	Patnitop	Sinthantop
	Mansoo-Tanda	Banihal Pass	Nowgam (Verinag)
	Bhaga	Banihal Pass-Sarua Pass-Peer Panjal	Krishnala (Marwah), Nowgam (Shahabad, Verinag)
	Bharakh	1. Banihal Pass-Kokernag (Anantnag)- Matigavaran-Lathalwan-Wadhwan 2. Gool- Arnas-Ramban-Kokernag (Anantnag)-Margan Top	Santhal (Ramban), Wadhwan, Lawali,

Source: Field survey.

Migration routes followed by the barekwal community in Poonch district during seasonal migration have been represented in Table

2.3. The sampled households living in Nali and Harhi cross Gali Chamaran, Parh, Tarkana, and Gali Taara Aali, and their destination spots are Masloon Aali (Poonch), and Oochi. The barekwal community living in Barhi and Behk cross Khilo Gali, Toti, Roopalo, Gali Taara Aali, Seeinaali, and Gagarh, and their destination spot is Pathrein (Mandi). The barekwal community living in Kanuiyan cross Mandi, Sawjiyan, Satarban, and Jamiyan Gali, and their destination spots are Kapral (Jamiyan) and Purjidhar (Gulmarg). The barekwal community living in Islamabad and Karmara cross Sawjiyan and Jamiyan Gali, and their destination spot is Purjidhar (Gulmarg). The barekwal community living in Gali Pindi cross Mandi, Sarimangyana, and Diwar Gali, and their destination spot is Purjidhar (Gulmarg)

**Table 2.3 Migration Routes during Seasonal Migration in Poonch district**

District	Places of Origin	Migration Routes and Mountain Passes	Destinations
Poonch	Nali, Harhi	Gali Chamaran-Parh-Tarkana-Gali Tarahn Aali	Masloon Aali (Poonch), Oochi
	Barhi, Behk	Khilo-Gali-Toti-Roopalo-Galiyan-Taara Aali- Seeinaali-Gagarh	Pathrein (Mandi)
	Kanuiyan	Mandi-Sawjiyan-Satarban-Jamiyan Gali	Kapral (Jamiyan), Purjidhar (Gulmarg)
	Islamabad, Karmara	Sawjiyan- Jamiyan Gali	Purjidhar (Gulmarg)
	Gali Pindi	Mandi-Sarimangyana-Diwar Gali	Purjidhar (Gulmarg)

Source: Field survey.

Migration routes followed by the barekwal community in Jammu district during seasonal migration have been represented in Table 2.4. The barekwal community living in Nagrota cross two routes, (1) Patnitop, Banihal Pass, Ladho, Chadgaso, and Patni, and (2) Patnitop, Dacchhan, and Kibernala, and their destination spots are Ashmagam, Marwah, Batkote, and Dhupatti. The barekwal community living in Jagti cross Ladhahdar, Banihal Pass, Durru, Islamabad, Salur, and Mukaam, and their destination spot is Pahalgam. The barekwals living in Dhammi cross 5 routes, (1) Tunnel Top, Latharwan, Inshan Top, (2) Ladho, Banihal Pass, and Sinthan Top, (3) Banihal Pass and Daksum, (4) Ladhahdar, Banihal Pass, Sarhali, Anmar, and Aapat, and (5) Ladhahdar, Banihal Pass, Seer, and Batkote, and their destination spots are Wadhwan, Sehari, Wasma (Kokernag), Kachwan, Inderwal, and Thana (Pahalgam). The barekwals living in Tanda and Jhajjer kotli

Cross Ladhahdar and Banihal Pass, and their destination spot is Pahalgam. The barekwal community living in Domail cross Mansar, Banihal Pass, Durru, Bal, Mattan, Seer, Makaam, and Matkoot, and their destination spot is Dudhal and Chanwarhi (Pahalgam) where as barekwals living in Nandini cross Sanasar, Banihal Pass, Margan Top, and Inshan, and their destination spot is Wadhwan.

**Table 2.4 Migration Routes followed by the Bakerwal community in Jammu District**

District	Places of Origin	Migration Routes and Mountain Passes	Destinations
Jammu	Nagrota	1.Patnitop-Banihal Pass-Ladho-Chadgaso-Patni 2.Patnitop-Dacchhan-Kibernala	Ashmagam, Marwah, Batkote, Dhupatti
	Jagti	Ladhahdar-Banihal Pass-Durru-Islamabad-Salur-Mukaam	Pahalgam
	Dhammi	1.Tunnel Top-Latharwan-Inshan Top 2.Ladho-Banihal Pass - Sinthan Top 3.Banihal Pass - Daksum 4. Ladhahdar-Banihal Pass -Sarhali-Anman-Aapat 5. Ladhahdar-Banihal-Seer-Batkote	Wadhwan, Sehari, Wasma (Kokernag), Kachhwan, Inderwal, Thana (Pahalgam)
	Tanda	Ladhahdar-Banihal	Pahalgam
	Jhajjerkotli	Ladhahdar-Ramban-Banihal	Pahalgam
	Domail	Mansar-Banihal-Durru-Bal-Mattan-Seer-Makaam-Matkoot	Dudhal-Chanwarhi (Pahalgam)
	Nandini	Sanasar-Banihal-Margan Top-Inshan	Wadhwan

Source: Field survey.

Migration routes followed by the bakerwals in Samba district during seasonal migration have been represented in Table 2.5. The bakerwal community living in Parey Top cross three routes, (1) Sanasar, Banihal Pass, Kokernag, and Daksum, (2) Udampur, Patnitop, and Varinag, and (3) Sanasar, Banihal Pass, Margan Top, and Minjhal (Inshan), and their destination spots are Daksum (Kokernag), Anantnag) and Wadhwan. The barekwal community living in Gangeri cross Sanasar, Banihal Pass, Margan Top, and Minjhal (Inshan), and their destination spot is Minjhal (Wadhwan). The barekwal community living in Jamora cross Sanasar, Banihal Pass, Margan Top, and Minjhal (Inshan), and their destination spot is Minglinala (Wadhwan).

The barekwal community living in Sikri (Nud) cross two routes (1) Sanasar and Banihal Pass and (2) Sanasar, Banihal Pass, Margan Top, and Minjhal (Inshan), and their destination spots are Poshnag (Kokernag, Anantnag), Wadhwan, Verinag. The barekwal community living in Sanoor cross Neelvan and Inshan, and their destination spot is Jabalnala (Wadhwan). The bakerwal community living in Khabal cross Sanasar and Banihal Pass, and their destination spots are Verinag (Anantnag) and Tootunnel (Wadhwan). The bakerwal community living in Goran cross Sanasar, Banihal Pass, Margan Top, and Minjhal (Inshan), and their destination spot is Verinag (Anantnag).

**Table 2.5 Migration Routes followed by the Barekwal community in Samba District**

District	Places of Origin	Migration Routes and Mountain Passes	Destinations
Samba	Parey Top	1. Sanasar-Banihal Pass-Kokernag-Daksum 2. Udampur-Patnitop-Verinag 3. Sanasar-Banihal Pass -Margan Top-Minjhal (Inshan)	Daksum (Kokernag, Anantnag), Wadhwan
	Gangeri	Sanasar-Banihal Pass -Margan Top-Minjhal (Inshan)	Minjhal (Wadhwan)
	Jamora	Sanasar-Banihal Pass -Margan Top-Minjhal (Inshan)	Minglinala (Wadhwan)
	Sikri-Nud	1. Sanasar-Banihal Pass 2. Sanasar-Banihal Pass -Margan Top-Minjhaltop	Poshbagh (Kokernag, Anantnag), Wadhwan, Verinag
	Sanoor	Neelvan-Inshan	Jabalnala (Wadhwan)
	Khabal	Sanasar- Banihal Pass	Verinag (Anantnag), Tootunnel (Wadhwan)
	Goran	Sanasar-Banihal Pass -Margan Top-Minjhaltop	Verinag (Anantnag)

Source: Field survey.

Migration routes followed by the barekwal community in Kathua district during seasonal migration have been represented in Table 2.6. The barekwal community living in Nora cross 3 routes, (1) Banjhal Gali and Sarthal Gali, (2) Chattergali, Bachh, and Daderh, (3) Banjhal Dhar, Sarthal Dhar, Jaigali, and Bhales Dhar, and their destination spots are Kyad Nullah (Kishtwar), Majhot (Paddar), Tholi (Paddar).

The barekwal community living in Komad cross Patnitop and Nagini (Doda), and their destination spot is Phamar (Kishtwar). The barekwal community living in Dhakhnaka cross two routes, (1) Sarthal and Phamar and (2) Chattergali, Phamar, and Kananag, and their destination spot is Marwah (Kishtwar). The barekwal community living in Thein cross Bani, Basohli, Sarthal, Jaayi, Thathri, and Kishtwar, and their destination spot is Dacchhan (Wadhwan).

**Table 2.6 Migration Routes followed by the Barekwal community in Kathua**

District	Places of Origin	Migration Routes and Mountain Passes	Destinations
Kathua	Nora	1. Banjhal Gali- Sarthal Gali 2. Chattergali-Bachh-Daderh 3. Banjhal Dhar-Sarthal Dhar-Jaigali-Bhales Dhar	Kyad Nullah (Kishtwar), Majhot (Paddar), Tholi (Paddar)
	Komad	Patnitop-Nagini (Doda)	Phamar (Kishtwar)
	Dhakhnaka	1. Sarthal-Phamar 2. Chattergali-Phamar-Kananag	Marwah (Kishtwar)
	Thein	Bani-Basohli- Sarthal-Jaayi-Thathri-Kishtwar	Dacchhan (Wadhwan)

Source: Field survey.

Migration routes followed by the bakerwal community in Rajouri district during seasonal migration have been represented in Table 2.7. The barekwal community living in Parat cross Thanamandi, Dhera Gali, and Pir Panjal, and their destination is Sonamarg. The barekwal community living in Pathi (Moglah) cross two routes, (1) Dagarlal, Bakori, Kodi, Rupdi, and Goran Batta and (2) Tatapani, Angi, Thanamandi, Chandimarh, Bheramgala, and Peergali, and their destination spots are Dagman (Dachigam) and Saribal. The barekwal community living in Divyot (Moglah) cross Bakori, Pidi, Darhal, Dugrein, and Pigali, and their destination spot is Gumar (Sonamarg). The barekwal community living in Lagi (Moglah) cross Goran Batta, Budhal, Kotranka, Pargali, and Dubjiyan, and their destination spots are Kangan and Babanagri. The barekwal community living in Kalakote cross Thanamandi, Chandimarh, and Pir Panjal, and their destination spot is Yusmarg (Budgam). The barekwal community living in Murchola cross Sialsui, Dhangri, Thanamandi, Dheragali, Bfliaz, Chandimarh, and Dubjiyan, and their destination spot is Gagharh (Yusmarg, Budgam).