

Managing Gujar Tribe Familial Lineage Of Mansehra

Dr. Junaid Bashir¹, Dr. Maseeh Ullah², Dr. Shahid Mehmood³

¹*Head, Tourism & Hospitality Department, FUSST.*

²*Post Doctorial Fellowship 22-23 IRI, IIU Islamabad (Islamic Research Institute, Int. Islamic Uni.) /Asst. Prof. FUSST*

³*Assistant Professor Foundation University Islamabad.*

Abstract:

The Gujarars are one of the pre-literate nomadic pastoral tribes whose classification is based on a system of kinship. Even after settling in different areas, they retained that system of social organization or kinship. The basic unit of social life among them is family in which the nearest kin are found. The family has certain functions to fulfill to maintain its existence and consequently maintain the existence of society.

The Gujarars have their own rules and process of marriage like many other societies.

Gujars still have a system by which kinship is identified and grouped. The kinship system of Gujar is of typical Sudanese type and kin is given a separate term in two generations.

Keywords: Tribe Structure, Gujar Family, Gujar Kinship, Familial disputes.

Introduction:

The Gujarars are settled in different parts of Hazara, where they live their lives according to nomadic, settled, and semi-nomadic traditions.

In the Mansehra area, the Gujarars are exclusively pastoral. They scarcely cultivate the land. They keep flocks of sheep and goats and their wealth is buffalos. In some places, they live by selling milk, Ghee, and other products from their herds. The Gujarars are one of the oldest inhabitants of the area. There is no written history of these people because most of the Gujarars are illiterate. As Gujarars were basically nomads and they had been moving from place to place for centuries to graze their cattle, goats, buffalos, and seeps. It may be ascertained that the Gujarars of Mansehra had moved from upper Punjab such as Gujranwala and Gujrat in ancient times.

Family is the basic socio-economic unit of the Gujarars community living in Mansehra. The individual is known and identified by the family

in which he lives. It is the basic unit by which the income of different individuals in the family is generated and spent on the needs of members according to their requirements. Family fulfills a certain function for itself and for the community due to which its existence is essential.

The labor within the family is divided among its members by age and sex. Usually, the head of the family is the elder member. There is more than one type of family due to their composition and functions.

The Gujar families may be categorized into two types:

1. Extended or Joint Family:

The extended or joint family has more than one couple living under one roof. In this case, the family is not created with the commencement of the marriage but as an extension of the older family of the father or brother. Traditionally all families of Gujar were joint and the family

continued further until the death of both parents – disintegrated into a nuclear family. This tradition is deviating due to subsistence patterns. Most of these joint families exist due to migration, and labor as the married sons may be working out of town. Since they need someone to take care of the females and children, they do not separate themselves from the joint or extended family soon after marriage. In a joint family, as there are more couples and their children living together, the relationships between different persons in a family are affected. The relationships between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law are sometimes resisted and the daughter-in-law tries to gain power within the family. This conflicting relationship becomes a reason for separating the family from joint to nuclear.

2. Nuclear or Conjugal Family:

A nuclear family is a family in which one couple and its unmarried children live together. Most of the Gujar families are nuclear. The nuclear family is either created with the marriage and separation from the family or it is created after the marriage from the joint family. In the traditional setting, the nuclear families take birth from a joint family either after the death of the parents or the marriage of their second son. After the marriage of the second son and the first son separated from the original family and the younger son always lives with the parents. After the marriage of two or more sons, it becomes difficult for the joint family to continue living under the same roof. Son's new house is built and the married couple along with the children is separated.

1) Family Function:

A Gujar family is similar to one in other societies as they have universal functions such as; economics, procreation, sexual recreation, socialization, protection, etc. These basic functions still exist among Gujar families. The most important functions of the family of the Gujar are to continue their existence. Each one desires to have a male

inheritor to pass on the name to the next generation. The fulfillment of sexual needs regulates the relations of two individuals living as husband and wife within the family. The protection of its members has also important functions in the family. The vulnerable children are only secure under the shelter of family. The elder members also feel security living in the family.

The socialization and enculturation of the children are also one of the functions of the family. The child learns all basic knowledge, customs, language, and culture of the society through the family.

The most important function of the family is its economy.

Every member of the family is fed by the family. The income is pooled jointly and is spent jointly. The work is often distributed amongst the members. The females traditionally work in the house, while the males are responsible for outdoor activities. The income is generated in different ways such as agriculture, livestock, woodcutting, etc. The cash money is kept by the head of the household. The requirements are spelled out to him and he brings the grocery to be used. Major expenditures, i.e. house construction, marriage, and death occasions are done with the consent of elders.

When one member earns and gives the income to the head of the household, it becomes a joint property and is shared with all members. The house and land property is shared and inherited by the male members while the household property is considered to be possession of females.

The following are the defined Rules:

1.1 Descent Rule, the Gujar society is paternal, and the descent is traced through the male member. If a child is born, male or female, he/she will bear the name of their father. The father is considered the actual genitor of the children.

1.2 Residence rule of marriage, the bride moves to the groom's family and leaves her biological residence, which means that rules of residence in Gujar families are as common as in other tribes that reside locally. The bride lives with her husband and his parents until their residence is separated from them.

This residential pattern shows that only the female is displaced from her natal family while the male lives in the same place. She changes her role and status and arrives in a new environment and adjusts herself accordingly.

In the beginning, when she shifts from the natal family to the husband's family, she has a strong relationship with the natal family but with time her relationship weakens due to her adjustment in the husband's family. Finally, a point comes where she forgets her natal family.

1.3 Inheritance Rule:

The property and land are inherited by male offspring after the death of the father. The land and property, moveable and immovable, are distributed among his sons.

The Gujars do not own or cultivate land their property consists of herds distributed among the members of the family.

According to Islamic law that allows females to inherit a part of their father's property. However, this is hardly implemented practically in most Gujar families.

Females only get dowry from their father's side and have no share in the property. The family is patriarchal and the authority is vested in the head of the household who is a male. The husband has power and more rights over the female. He is not only physically stronger than females, but he is also socially stronger by having lineal property rights.

1.4 Relationship Rule within a family differs according to its type; being joint or nuclear.

In the case of a joint family, there is more than one couple living together including their children.

The elder female called mother-in-law, tries to maintain her authority in the household over her daughter-in-law. Sometimes the relationship becomes conflicting because the sister-in-law also tries to maintain their prior position in the family and on the other hand newlywed female tries to gain her own position.

The conflicting relations sometimes result in conflict in the family and the daughter-in-law goes to her natal family temporarily, in this situation mother-in-law and sister-in-law unite against the wife.

The relationship between husband and wife, upon the existing influence and authority of other members and their relationships in the family becomes dominant.

If the family is nuclear and only husband and wife and their children are living then the relationship between them is cordial. And if mother and wife are living together and they have conflicting relations then the relationship between husband and wife will also be conflicting.

The overall status of women in the family is lower than male. The male decides all matters because he is an earning member, keeps cash income, and provides upon request. But nowadays, women are also earning by woodcutting or working in offices.

1.5 Integration rule

The joint family is maintained until and unless all sons and daughters in the family are married till the death of their parents. Traditionally, a nuclear family is separated from the joint family when brothers fulfill the responsibilities of marrying their sisters and constructing a separate house for themselves.

Normally separation from the joint family is avoided if both parents are alive. Due to changes in subsistence patterns from herding to wood-

selling and due to cash labor income the married couple tries to separate themselves from the joint family as soon as possible.

2. Wedding Arrangements:

Marriage is a universally recognized and established institution for regulating sex relations and providing parenthood to children in almost all societies of the world.

Like other societies, in Gujars, marriage is an established phenomenon, and sexual relations without marriage are considered illegal and immoral. The Gujars have certain rules for marrying in and marrying out their spouses. Though monogamous marriages are preferred, there are certain cases of polygamous marriage in the community. Gujars also have a preference for marrying their spouses with certain kinships.

The breaking of marriages and divorce are also common in Gujars and the spouses are allowed to remarry. Through the institution of marriage, Gujars organize and re-organize their social relationships and groupings.

Marriage is a lengthy process and it has certain ceremonies to be carried out both from male and female sides which involve not only the family of spouses but the whole community. Certain economic exchanges between the spouses' families and reciprocal exchanges between spouses and community members take place on the occasion of marriage.

Actually, marriage in the Gujars is something that reinforces the old relationship and establishes new relationships.

2.1 Endogamy and Exogamy:

The Gujars marry within the Gujar QUOM (Tribe) and do not give their daughters outside the QUOM. They also do not take females from other ethnic groups. They prefer to marry their sons and daughters within their QUOM/KHANDAN, Gujar BHARWAL, and KHATANAS Gujar from KHATANAS.

However, there is no ban to marry their daughters or sons from the other sub-groups of Gujar. In certain cases, the Gujar BHARWALS take daughters from KHATANA but do not give them but they marry their daughters to DEDAR. These sub-ethnic groups are interlinked with each other by marriage. The Gujar also marry their sons from surrounding villages and give their daughters also.

2.2 Monogamy and Polygamy:

Normally a man has one wife and lives his entire life with her. The first marriage is important and all rejoices are made on that occasion. This marriage takes place with the consent of the parents of both spouses. There are many cases of polygamy marriage that have been noted in the community.

There are cases of second marriages that have taken place due to certain factors. If a person did not have a male inheritor then he marries a second time to fulfill the desire and have his name carried on. Different cases are also observed where one would elope someone else's sister as revenge for his own sister's elopement.

2.3 Marriage Preferences:

Marriages take place within the Gujar ethnic community either inside or outside the village. The preference in marriage is often with maternal cousins who are already chosen.

The daughter of the maternal uncle is preferred due to the reason that the mother is from the same family and taking the daughter from the same family will strengthen the relationships.

Additionally, this lessens the chances of conflict between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law. The maternal aunt's daughter is preferred due to the same reason that both sisters exchanging the spouse have already cordial relations.

Certain families prefer marriages between paternal families, in which the parents of the female spouse originally belong to his family.

Preference in the selection of spouses shows that the parents arrange for their sons from those families whom they know well so that the marriage would be stable and long-lasting.

Besides the already existing relationships, certain other factors are also considered including the beauty, health, physique, wealth, and status of her family.

2.4 Exchange Marriage:

These marriages are not much liked by the Gujars due to the reason that a phenomenon in one family will incept something similar in the other family as well.

In an exchange marriage, one person marries his son to a girl from one family and in return, the son of that family marries the daughter of the first family.

This exchange marriage may also take place by exchanging a daughter with a wife. If a person is a widower and he wants to marry a second time and has a daughter, he may request an exchange. Though he may get his wife first and give his daughter later.

2.5 Levi rate and Sorrow rate:

After the death of one spouse the other spouse is allowed to marry according to their own wishes. But in certain cases, the female prefers to marry the younger brother of her late husband.

There are quite a few cases in which after the death of the wife, her parents give the late wife's sister to the widower.

These arrangements are made to continue the family system and rearing of children and keeping the property in the family.

Since the sister, as his second wife, can look after her deceased sister's children better than anyone else. The same is the case of the death of the husband; his brother would be a better caretaker for his late brother's children than anyone else.

This practice can take place if the couples are not too old and their children are minors.

2.5 Divorce and Remarriage:

The marriage is arranged by the parents though sometimes the consent of the marrying spouses is also obtained through friends, and the spouses are always supposed to say "YES".

After the marriage, the success of the marriage depends upon the liking of the husband and wife. If there is any understanding gap between them then there are chances of a divorce.

There are some cases noted of divorce by the husbands who divorced their wives due to the reason that they developed a chatting or cheating relationship with someone else – an unlawful relationship.

In most cases, the female gets rid of her husband by running away with someone and moving the case to court.

In certain cases before the court decision, the husband divorces his wife after some compensation from the person who wanted to get married. If the husband does not agree with the person who made the elopement then he contacts the father of his wife and pays him some money, so that he may support him – the person who made the elopement – in court. So the case may be decided in his favor. Almost all divorce cases have occurred due to the reason that either of them wished for remarriage and the female may have the husband of her liking.

2.6 Elopement:

Marriage is arranged by the parents who select a spouse for their child. As stated earlier the consent of the spouse is sometimes obtained through their friends and the marrying spouses must always respond positively.

In certain cases, the female does not agree with the decision in the possible scenario that she has relationships or likeness to someone other. If the male who likes her sees the possibility of their marriage, he tries to elope with her.

The majority of cases of elopement occur after marriage when a married woman develops relationships with someone else in the village or outside the village.

They run off and take the case to the village elder who moves the divorce case through the female. This elopement is called UDALAH locally.

Sometimes the husband registers a case against his wife and the person who made the elopement. By doing this, the husband has to spend a lot of money to get his wife back. As this is an expensive activity and the husband does not follow the case since the major Gujar populous is not in a wealthy condition.

In most cases of married elopements, the husband does not follow and divorces her at a price .ie. Gets some money.

In certain cases, the parental family of the girl receives some money from the eloping person and RAZI NAMA is announced in JIRGA. The person who eloped her then marries her.

As this scenario extensively existed in the community, it can be termed as the type of marriage in which the individuals marry without the consent and permission of parents, even disregarding the existence of prior marriage.

In one case where a female elopes twice, it means that she has married thrice, once by her parents and the second and third time by herself with two different people.

- The major reasons for elopement are the easy access of the adult female in the forest under the excuse of woodcutting and access to the market in order to sell that wood. The easy movement and mixing with other males tempt that woman to elope with a person of her liking.
- The second big reason for elopement is the involvement of an influential person (KHAN) in that area. The KHANS have their own vested interest. Sometimes the eloped woman is kept in KHAN's house for a number of days until the case of

divorce is decided. Sometimes the KHANS have a disliking for someone due to disobedience, so they motivate and even help one to elope the daughter or sister of the person with whom they have a problem. By doing this, they maintain their authority and influence in the community and the tenants always remain under their pressure.

- Another reason is that the eloped female and the man who elopes her do not get any punishment either from the court of law or from society. In these cases usually, the RAZI NAMA is the last outcome.

3. Marriage and Ceremonies:

3.1 MANGAVA – marriage is arranged by the parents. Usually, the marriage process starts with MANGAVA (betrothal). It takes place a few months before the NATA and JANJ. MANGAVA is the engagement that in most cases takes place one to two years before the marriage. Before engagement, the father of the groom comes to ask for the female not from his father but through his maternal or paternal uncle. The manifesting function of this is to involve the relatives and ask the father through them but the latent function is actually to know whether or not the female is required by paternal or maternal uncle for his own son, after getting the consent from paternal or maternal uncles of the bride. This also includes the consent of the parent of the bride, the parents of the groom pay a visit to the house of the bride along with Jirga for the engagement. The father of the bride puts some demands before the Jirga and after acceptance of the demands; the father of the bride declares that he has given his daughter to the son of so and so. Then the girl is brought and her father gives her hand in the hand of the boy's father and declares that he has given it to and so that he may get her whenever he desires.

3.2 NATA is the next process of marriage after engagement. NATA means deciding the day or JANJ/BARAT. On NATA, the father of the groom along with Jirga comes again to the house of the bride's family.

This ceremony is held about one month to fifteen days before the day of marriage. The father of the bride welcomes the guests and the elder of Jirga MUQADDAM tells the father that they have come to take the IMANAT. The father of the bride typically replies that their IMANAT is ready and they can take it whenever they desire.

After that father of the bride is allowed to present demands, if any, along with reasons why these demands were not presented on the occasion of MANGAVO.

After the negotiations between the elder of Jirga and the father of the bride, a date is fixed for the marriage to take place.

The Jirga elder asks the other Jirga members whether this date is acceptable to them. All of them usually say YES and the day for marriage procession is fixed.

Before the distribution of sweets, NIKAH is performed. In most cases, the NIKAH ceremony is also performed on the same day. The major arrangements for the marriage are the arrangement of a feast by both families.

The fixation of the date certain ceremonies take place after discussion between both families. An important ceremony from the female side is PERKARI and in the male family ceremony of ARVA is celebrated.

- ✓ Perkari takes place at around midnight among the bride's family. The women go to the stream and bring water in a clay pot. This pot is held by a woman who has children and is leading a peaceful family life. This water will be used for the bride to bathe in the next early morning.
- ✓ Arva ceremony takes place in the groom's family, one day before the marriage, in the evening. The young women from the groom's side go to the

bride's house with MEHNDI. The MEHNDI is pasted on the hands of the bride by this group. There is a competition for dancing and singing between the girls from both sides.

- ✓ Barat is on the day of the marriage, people gather in the house of the male where they are served a feast. After having the meal, they are ready to move towards the house of the bride. The friends of the groom take him to a stream where he takes a bath and wears fine clothes.
- ✓ Patko Banawi ceremony organized after the groom returns from the stream. In this ceremony the groom is made to wear a turban, showing that now he has become an adult, married and responsible man. In this ceremony, one Maulvi and seven other male members participate. They sit in a circle with the groom in the middle. Maulvi recites Quran and each one of them gives a fold to the cloth hanging from the groom's turban. After this, at the house, he is garlanded with flowers and nowadays with money. Now the JANJ is ready to go bring the bride to the house of the groom. When the JANJ is about to reach the house of the bride a PATAKHA is blasted by the JANJIES as a signal to inform the family that BARAT has reached.

Soon BARAT enters, and certain ceremonies take place i.e. Batto Uthana, lifting stone in which after the BARAT reaches to bride's house and a big stone is placed before JANJ, and they are asked to lift it to show off their physical strength. After the demands from the bride's side are fulfilled, DOLLI is brought near the bride. The maternal uncle or aunt opens the one MANDAH (breaded hair) of the bride and asks her to sit in the DOLLI. The bride at that time weeps and all the family members and relatives of the bride feel sorrow some of them can be seen weeping as

well. They also keep uncooked rice in the DOLLI which is supposed to be thrown by her when DOLLI is out of the house. It means the bride's share of food is ended from her parent's home and now she must find it with her groom. The DOLLI is picked up by the relatives of the bride and the dowry is picked by JANJ. As soon they reach the house of the groom where the ceremony of BOOA PAKRAVI takes place.

BOOA PAKRAVI – the BARAT enters the house of the groom, the friends of the bride stand at the door and ask the father-in-law of the bride to give away something, such as a buffalo or a cow to the bride first, only then would they allow the bride to be taken in.

The bride then sits on a cot and the relatives of the groom come to her one by one. Each gives some money which is recorded by the mother-in-law. This is called Legai.

3.3 Exchange:

There are two types of economic exchanges that take place upon marriage. One is between the marrying families themselves and the other is between marrying families and their own respective relatives. In the first type, the bride and groom families exchange money and goods between each other. The groom's family gives BARRI which includes clothes, gold/silver ornaments as well as HAQ MAHR. HAQ MAHR is the money that is announced at the marriage and usually paid to the bride.

The bride's family gives dowry to her, it may consist of garments, household furniture, and crockery.

There are certain gifts and money which are presented by the relatives and friends of marrying families. The relatives and friends of the groom give the clothes and money at the time of marriage to the family of the groom which is called BHANJI and is supposed to be reciprocated on a similar occasion later on.

Conclusion:

The Gujars are endogamous and they marry only within the Gujars. Marriage is relatively a lengthy process in the Gujars and they perform certain typical ceremonies on this occasion. The selection of spouses is made by the parents with the consent or without the consent of spouses. A person is supposed to live his whole life with the same wife but there are certain cases where a man has more than one wife.

An interesting observation in the Gujars is the case of elopement, in which a female even after marriage, develops a liking for someone else and runs away with him. The husband does not take any revenge but withdraws himself after getting some money or even without money.

Though the female has lower status, she is still considered valuable. The groom's family always helps and reciprocates or gives some remuneration to the family of the bride for getting her after she elopes.

It is very rare to find written information in Gujar culture which is already decaying.

It is the motivation for the researchers to dig into the traditional activities of such neglected communities. The linguistics of Gujars are influenced by the Gupta language and nowadays are mixed with the local dialect.

Bibliography:

1. Fredrick, B. 1979. 'Political Leadership among Swat Pathans', The Athlone Press, London.
URL: <https://archive.org/details/politicalleaders00bart>
2. Fred, E. 1950. 'Social Organization of the Western Puchlos Chicago', University of Chicago Press.
URL: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/american-antiquity/article/abs/social-organization-of-the-western-pueblos-fred-eggan-university-of-chicago-press-1950-xvii-373-pp-10-tables->

[600/6429B3F125CA54D7A0B589EDEEB
CF849](#)

3. Mathew, E. 1969. 'Economic Analysis in Anthropological Setting: Some Methodological Considerations', American Anthropologist.
URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/670261>
4. Koppad, K.B. 1970. 'Consanguineous Marriage Relation in Mysore State', The Eastern Anthropologist.
5. Panni, S.B.K. 1969. 'History of Hazara', Dar-us-Shafa, Abbottabad.