

Inclusivity and Equity Strategies in Higher Education in Jammu and Kashmir: A Systematic Review of Policies, Challenges, and Future Directions

Dr. Nuzhat Jan¹, Afaq Ahmad Zargar²

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Education, *Government College for women, Nawakadal.*

²Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Applications, *Government Degree College Qazigund*

Abstract

Inclusivity and equity have become fundamental principles for promoting quality education and ensuring equal opportunities in higher education systems worldwide. In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, achieving equitable access to higher education remains a significant challenge due to geographical remoteness, infrastructural limitations, socio-economic disparities, and the unique educational needs of marginalized communities, particularly the Gujjar and Bakarwal tribes. This systematic review critically examines the effectiveness of existing policies and institutional initiatives designed to promote inclusivity and equity in higher education across the region. Relevant literature published between 2010 and 2026 was identified through Google Scholar, ERIC, Shodhganga, and government reports using predefined search criteria. The findings reveal that although substantial progress has been made through institutional expansion, scholarship schemes, digital learning initiatives, skill development programmes, and the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, several barriers continue to hinder equitable participation. Challenges such as inadequate educational infrastructure, seasonal migration, financial constraints, limited digital connectivity, and insufficient institutional flexibility continue to affect the educational attainment of marginalized learners. The review highlights the importance of adopting culturally responsive pedagogical practices, flexible academic policies, mobile learning initiatives, and community-based support systems to improve educational participation and learning outcomes. It concludes that sustainable educational equity in Jammu and Kashmir requires localized implementation of national educational policies, strengthened institutional support, improved infrastructure, enhanced digital inclusion, and continuous collaboration among policymakers, higher educational institutions, and local communities.

Keywords: Inclusivity, Equity, Higher Education, Jammu and Kashmir, National Education Policy 2020, Gujjar and Bakarwal Communities, Educational Access

1. Introduction

Higher education plays a transformative role in promoting social development, economic progress, innovation, and sustainable nation-building. Beyond providing advanced knowledge and professional skills, higher education serves as a powerful instrument for reducing social inequalities and fostering equal opportunities among diverse sections of society. Consequently, the principles of inclusivity and equity have become central to educational reforms across the world, emphasizing that every learner should have equal opportunities not only to access higher education but also to participate, succeed, and benefit from quality learning experiences irrespective of geographical location, socio-economic background, gender, ethnicity, language, or physical ability.

Globally, educational institutions are increasingly adopting inclusive policies that recognize diversity as a strength and seek to eliminate structural barriers affecting marginalized populations. International organizations such as UNESCO and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-4) advocate equitable access to quality education through learner-centred approaches, inclusive curricula, technological integration, and supportive institutional environments. These global commitments have significantly influenced educational reforms in developing countries, including India, where inclusive education has become an important component of national educational policy.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a significant milestone in India's efforts to transform higher education by promoting accessibility, flexibility, multidisciplinary learning, digital innovation, and equitable educational opportunities. The policy particularly emphasizes the educational advancement of socially and economically disadvantaged groups through targeted interventions such as scholarships, Gender Inclusion Funds, Special Education Zones, digital learning initiatives, and flexible academic pathways. These measures aim to reduce disparities in educational participation while improving the overall quality and accessibility of higher education across the country.

Within this national framework, the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir presents a distinctive educational landscape characterized by mountainous terrain, dispersed habitations, infrastructural limitations, socio-economic disparities, and varying levels of access to higher educational institutions. These challenges are particularly evident among marginalized communities such as the Gujjar and Bakarwal tribes, whose seasonal migration patterns, remote settlements, and limited access to educational resources often interrupt educational continuity and reduce opportunities for higher education. Financial constraints, inadequate digital connectivity, insufficient institutional support, and limited educational infrastructure further compound these challenges, affecting enrolment, retention, and academic achievement among learners from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Over the past decade, several governmental and institutional initiatives have been introduced to improve educational access and participation within the region. These include the establishment of new universities and colleges, expansion of skill development centres, scholarship programmes, digital learning platforms, community outreach initiatives, and learner support services. While these interventions have contributed to improving educational opportunities, their implementation has often been constrained by regional infrastructural limitations and the diverse educational needs of marginalized communities. Consequently, disparities in access, participation, and educational outcomes continue to persist despite policy reforms.

Although a growing body of literature examines inclusive education and educational equity in India, relatively few studies provide a comprehensive synthesis of inclusivity and equity strategies specifically

within the context of higher education in Jammu and Kashmir. Existing research generally focuses on individual policy initiatives, tribal education, or access-related challenges without systematically evaluating the effectiveness of current institutional practices and policy implementation. Therefore, there remains a need for an integrated review that critically examines contemporary evidence and identifies practical strategies for strengthening inclusive higher education across the region.

Research Gap

Existing studies have examined various dimensions of inclusive education, tribal education, and educational policy implementation in India. However, limited research has systematically synthesized contemporary evidence regarding the effectiveness of inclusivity and equity strategies in higher education within Jammu and Kashmir. Most studies investigate individual programmes or specific educational challenges without evaluating the collective impact of institutional reforms, policy implementation, and socio-economic factors on equitable educational outcomes. This review addresses this gap by integrating recent literature to provide a comprehensive assessment of existing initiatives, persistent challenges, and future directions for promoting inclusive higher education in the region.

Objectives of the Study

The present systematic review aims to:

1. Examine the existing policies and institutional initiatives promoting inclusivity and equity in higher education in Jammu and Kashmir.
2. Identify the geographical, socio-economic, infrastructural, and institutional barriers affecting equitable access to higher education among marginalized communities.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of current educational interventions implemented to improve participation and educational outcomes.
4. Recommend evidence-based strategies for strengthening inclusive and equitable higher education in Jammu and Kashmir.

Significance of the Study

The present review contributes to the growing body of literature on inclusive higher education by providing a comprehensive synthesis of recent research related to Jammu and Kashmir. The findings are expected to assist policymakers, educational administrators, higher educational institutions, and researchers in designing context-specific interventions that improve educational access, participation, and academic success among disadvantaged learners. Furthermore, the study supports the broader objectives of the National Education Policy 2020 and Sustainable Development Goal 4 by promoting inclusive, equitable, and quality higher education for all.

2. Literature Review

The concepts of inclusivity and equity have become fundamental principles in higher education, reflecting the global commitment to providing equal educational opportunities for learners irrespective of their socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, geographical location, or physical ability. Contemporary higher education systems increasingly recognize that equitable education extends beyond providing access to institutions; it also encompasses meaningful participation, academic achievement, retention, and successful completion of educational programmes. Consequently, governments and educational institutions worldwide have introduced policies and institutional reforms aimed at creating

learning environments that accommodate the diverse needs of students while eliminating structural barriers that hinder educational participation.

Globally, higher education institutions have adopted learner-centred approaches that promote diversity, equal opportunity, and social inclusion. Benabid et al. (2024) emphasized that inclusive higher education requires systematic institutional reforms involving accessible infrastructure, inclusive curricula, financial support mechanisms, and culturally responsive pedagogical practices. Similarly, Paul and Rena (2025) argued that equitable educational systems should foster collaborative governance, community participation, and institutional flexibility to ensure that marginalized learners are able to benefit fully from higher education. These studies collectively suggest that educational inclusion should be viewed as a continuous institutional commitment rather than merely an administrative objective.

Within the Indian context, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has significantly strengthened the national commitment towards inclusive and equitable higher education. The policy advocates multidisciplinary education, flexible academic structures, technology-enabled learning, digital inclusion, and learner-centred teaching practices while emphasizing the educational advancement of socially and economically disadvantaged groups. Raj (2024) observed that NEP 2020 provides a comprehensive framework for reducing educational disparities through institutional autonomy, curriculum flexibility, scholarships, and digital learning initiatives. Jan and Faiz (2025) further highlighted that effective implementation of these reforms can significantly enhance educational accessibility and quality, particularly for students residing in underserved regions.

Several researchers have examined the effectiveness of NEP 2020 in promoting educational equity among marginalized communities. Dabral and Anjali (2025) reported that provisions such as Gender Inclusion Funds, Special Education Zones, and targeted scholarship schemes have strengthened educational participation among disadvantaged groups. Likewise, Sathiyaraj et al. (2025) emphasized that technology-assisted learning, blended instructional approaches, and inclusive institutional policies have considerable potential to improve educational access for tribal students when supported by adequate infrastructure and institutional commitment.

Despite progressive national policies, the educational context of Jammu and Kashmir presents unique challenges that influence the implementation of inclusive higher education. The region is characterized by mountainous terrain, dispersed settlements, infrastructural limitations, socio-economic disparities, and varying levels of digital connectivity. These contextual factors continue to affect educational accessibility, particularly for students belonging to marginalized tribal communities. Akhter and Hussain (2023) observed that geographical isolation and limited educational infrastructure remain significant barriers to higher education among nomadic populations. Their findings suggest that national educational policies require localized implementation strategies capable of addressing region-specific educational challenges.

Among the marginalized communities of Jammu and Kashmir, the Gujjar and Bakarwal tribes experience multiple educational disadvantages arising from seasonal migration, remote habitation, financial constraints, inadequate transportation, and limited access to higher educational institutions. Suri (2014) demonstrated that flexible educational models such as mobile schooling have improved educational access among migratory communities. However, similar flexible approaches have not been

widely integrated into higher education, resulting in continued disparities in enrolment, retention, and academic progression.

Recent empirical studies further support these observations. Rasool and Vyas (2025) found that scholarship programmes, educational welfare schemes, and community-based interventions have increased educational awareness among tribal populations. Nevertheless, inadequate institutional support, financial limitations, and infrastructural deficiencies continue to restrict educational participation. Similarly, Singh and Lone (2025) identified geographical remoteness, socio-economic disadvantage, and insufficient educational resources as major barriers affecting higher education among tribal learners in Jammu and Kashmir.

The rapid expansion of digital education has also highlighted the importance of technological inclusion in achieving educational equity. Kalita and Baishya (2025) reported that although digital learning platforms have expanded educational opportunities, unequal internet connectivity and limited digital literacy continue to widen educational disparities among students residing in remote tribal areas. Ghosh and Banerjee (2026) similarly emphasized that digital technologies contribute to educational equity only when supported by reliable infrastructure, institutional preparedness, and continuous learner support.

The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that educational inclusion requires integrated policy implementation, institutional commitment, financial support, technological accessibility, and culturally responsive educational practices. While recent policy reforms have strengthened the national framework for inclusive education, significant regional disparities continue to persist within Jammu and Kashmir. Therefore, greater emphasis must be placed on localized implementation strategies that address the geographical, socio-economic, and infrastructural realities of marginalized communities while ensuring equitable access to quality higher education.

3. Methodology

This study employs a **Systematic Literature Review (SLR)** methodology to critically examine the effectiveness of inclusivity and equity strategies implemented in higher education within Jammu and Kashmir. The systematic review approach enables the identification, evaluation, and synthesis of published evidence in a transparent and structured manner, thereby improving the reliability and comprehensiveness of the findings.

Research Design

The study adopts an integrative review design, synthesizing evidence from peer-reviewed journal articles, government reports, policy documents, and scholarly publications to evaluate institutional initiatives, educational policies, and barriers affecting equitable access to higher education.

Data Sources

Relevant literature was collected from the following electronic databases:

- Google Scholar
- ERIC
- Shodhganga
- Government Reports
- Peer-reviewed Journals

Search Strategy

A systematic search was conducted using combinations of the following keywords:

- Higher Education
- Inclusivity
- Equity
- Jammu and Kashmir
- National Education Policy 2020
- Tribal Education
- Educational Access
- Gujjar
- Bakarwal

Boolean operators **AND** and **OR** were employed to refine search results and retrieve studies most relevant to the objectives of the review.

Table 1. Search Strategy

Component	Description
Research Design	Systematic Literature Review
Databases	Google Scholar, ERIC, Shodhganga, Government Reports
Publication Period	2010–2026
Language	English
Keywords	Higher Education, Inclusivity, Equity, Jammu and Kashmir, NEP 2020, Tribal Education
Search Operators	AND, OR
Analysis Technique	Thematic Analysis

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Studies were included if they:

- Were published between **2010 and 2026**.
- Were written in English.
- Focused on higher education, inclusivity, educational equity, tribal education, or educational policies.
- Were peer-reviewed journal articles, government reports, or policy documents.

The following were excluded:

- Newspaper reports
- Opinion articles
- Editorials
- Conference abstracts
- Duplicate publications
- Studies unrelated to higher education

Data Analysis

Relevant information from the selected studies was extracted and analysed using **thematic analysis**. The findings were grouped under major themes including educational policies, institutional initiatives,

infrastructural challenges, socio-economic barriers, digital inclusion, and educational outcomes. This thematic synthesis facilitated the identification of recurring trends, research gaps, and evidence-based recommendations for promoting inclusivity and equity in higher education in Jammu and Kashmir.

4. Findings and Discussion

The reviewed literature demonstrates that significant progress has been made in promoting inclusivity and equity within higher education in Jammu and Kashmir through various governmental and institutional initiatives. The implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, expansion of higher educational institutions, scholarship programmes, digital learning initiatives, learner support services, and skill development programmes collectively reflect a growing commitment towards creating an inclusive educational environment. Nevertheless, the evidence also indicates that these initiatives have not fully eliminated disparities affecting marginalized communities.

One of the most significant findings emerging from the review is that **geographical remoteness** continues to influence educational participation. Many students residing in remote and mountainous areas encounter difficulties in accessing higher educational institutions due to inadequate transportation facilities, dispersed settlements, and limited institutional infrastructure. These challenges become more pronounced among tribal communities whose settlements are often located far from urban educational centres.

Another important finding concerns the educational experiences of the **Gujjar and Bakarwal communities**. Although various scholarship schemes and welfare programmes have improved educational awareness and enrolment, seasonal migration patterns, financial constraints, and limited institutional flexibility continue to interrupt academic continuity. Existing educational policies provide valuable support; however, greater adaptation to the unique educational needs of these communities remains necessary.

The review further reveals that **digital inclusion** has emerged as both an opportunity and a challenge. The expansion of online learning platforms and digital educational resources has increased educational accessibility for many learners. However, unequal internet connectivity, inadequate digital infrastructure, and varying levels of digital literacy continue to create disparities in learning opportunities, particularly for students residing in geographically isolated areas. Consequently, digital transformation alone cannot achieve educational equity without simultaneous investment in infrastructure and learner support.

Institutional support services also play a crucial role in promoting equitable educational outcomes. Student counselling, mentoring programmes, financial assistance, remedial instruction, and learner support services have demonstrated positive contributions towards improving retention and academic performance. Nevertheless, the reviewed studies indicate that the availability and effectiveness of these services vary considerably across institutions, thereby limiting their overall impact.

The literature additionally highlights the importance of culturally responsive educational practices. Inclusive curricula, multilingual instructional approaches, community engagement, and recognition of local socio-cultural contexts contribute significantly to improving student participation and educational success. Institutions that integrate learner diversity within their teaching practices are better positioned to foster inclusive learning environments and reduce educational inequalities.

Overall, the findings suggest that inclusivity and equity cannot be achieved solely through policy formulation. Sustainable improvement requires effective implementation supported by adequate infrastructure, institutional commitment, technological accessibility, financial assistance, and continuous engagement with local communities. Educational institutions must therefore adopt flexible and learner-centred approaches that address the diverse needs of students while promoting equal opportunities for academic success.

Table 2. Summary of Major Findings

Theme	Major Findings
Policy Framework	NEP 2020 provides a strong foundation for inclusive and equitable higher education.
Institutional Expansion	New universities and colleges have improved educational accessibility.
Financial Support	Scholarships and welfare programmes encourage enrolment but require wider coverage.
Digital Education	Technology enhances learning opportunities but the digital divide persists.
Tribal Education	Seasonal migration, geographical remoteness, and socio-economic challenges continue to affect participation.
Institutional Support	Counselling, mentoring, and learner support services improve retention and academic success.
Future Need	Greater institutional flexibility and localized implementation strategies are required.

5. Policy Implications

The findings of this review indicate that achieving inclusive and equitable higher education in Jammu and Kashmir requires stronger collaboration between policymakers, higher educational institutions, and local communities. Educational policies should prioritize the development of infrastructure in underserved areas, strengthen digital connectivity, expand scholarship programmes, and improve institutional support mechanisms for marginalized learners.

Higher educational institutions should adopt learner-centred pedagogical approaches, establish mentoring and counselling systems, promote multilingual educational resources where appropriate, and enhance faculty development programmes focused on inclusive teaching practices. Strengthening collaborations with community organizations can further improve educational awareness and encourage greater participation among disadvantaged populations.

6. Limitations of the Study

This study is based exclusively on secondary sources obtained through published literature, policy documents, and government reports. Consequently, the findings depend upon the quality and availability

of existing research. Since the review does not incorporate primary data collected directly from students, teachers, or educational institutions, some recent institutional developments may not be fully represented. Furthermore, differences in research methodologies across the reviewed studies may influence the comparability of findings.

7. Future Research Directions

Future studies should investigate the long-term effectiveness of inclusive educational policies through empirical research involving students, teachers, and institutional administrators across different regions of Jammu and Kashmir. Comparative studies examining educational inclusion across different states and union territories may provide valuable insights into effective institutional practices.

Further research should also explore the impact of digital education, artificial intelligence-assisted learning, multilingual instructional approaches, and flexible academic models on improving educational participation among marginalized communities. Evaluating the effectiveness of learner support services, scholarship programmes, and institutional interventions using longitudinal research designs would further strengthen evidence-based educational policymaking.

8. Conclusion

Inclusivity and equity remain fundamental pillars for achieving quality higher education and sustainable social development. This systematic review examined existing policies, institutional initiatives, and educational practices aimed at promoting inclusive higher education in Jammu and Kashmir. The review indicates that although considerable progress has been achieved through the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020, institutional expansion, scholarship schemes, digital learning initiatives, and learner support programmes, significant challenges continue to affect equitable educational participation among marginalized communities.

The findings demonstrate that geographical remoteness, infrastructural limitations, socio-economic disparities, limited digital connectivity, and inadequate institutional flexibility remain important barriers to educational inclusion. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that combines effective policy implementation with context-specific institutional reforms. Strengthening educational infrastructure, expanding digital access, enhancing learner support services, promoting culturally responsive pedagogical practices, and increasing community participation can substantially improve educational outcomes.

In conclusion, sustainable educational equity in Jammu and Kashmir depends not only on expanding access to higher education but also on ensuring meaningful participation, academic success, and equal opportunities for all learners. Continued collaboration among policymakers, educational institutions, researchers, and local communities will be essential for developing an inclusive higher education system that contributes to regional development and supports the broader objectives of the National Education Policy 2020 and Sustainable Development Goal 4.

References

1. Adhikary, S. (2025). The National Education Policy 2020: Addressing and Reinforcing Educational Exclusions in India. *Jharkhand Journal of Development and Management Studies*, 23(1). <https://doi.org/10.70994/jjdms.10673.10688>
2. Akhter, S., & Hussain, M. (2023). Access and affordability in higher education: A study of nomadic tribes of Jammu and Kashmir. *International Journal of Political Science and Governance*, 5(2), 16–18. <https://doi.org/10.33545/26646021.2023.v5.i2a.251>
3. Arif, M. S., Shaoan, M. M. R., Ismail, A. H., & Okafor, M. U. (2025). A case study of patriarchy and girls educational exclusion in tribal Balochistan. *Discover Sustainability*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-025-01552-8>
4. Benabid, A., Imadi, I. E., & Al-Qatawneh, K. (2024). Encouraging Quality. In *Advances in higher education and professional development book series* (pp. 145–178). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3904-6.ch007>
5. Dabral, S., & Anjali, A. (2025). Inclusive and Equitable Education in NEP 2020: A Study of Scheduled Castes and Marginalized Communities. *Journal of Mountain Research*, 20(1). <https://doi.org/10.51220/jmr.v20-i1.48>
6. Deb, J. P., & Lal, D. (2026). A Systematic Mapping of the Intellectual Landscape of India's National Education Policy 2020. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology (IJISRT)*, 1865–1865. <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26feb738>
7. Ghosh, P., & Banerjee, S. (2026). *Digital Solutions for Fostering Educational Equity & Social Justice* (pp. 121–135). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781394389223.ch6>
8. Ghosh, S. (2020). TOWARD AN EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION: A REVIEW OF STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES. *REDSHINE Publication eBooks*. <https://doi.org/10.25215/1300741481.15>
9. *INQUIRY*. (2025).
10. Jan, U., & Faiz, J. (2025). ACCESS, EQUITY, AND QUALITY IN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM. *The Social Science Review a Multidisciplinary Journal.*, 3(6), 103–111. <https://doi.org/10.70096/tssr.250306016>
11. K, C. D. J., & H, Dr. S. R. (2026). Empowering Nomadic Youth: A Case Study on the Need for Targeted Policy Interventions to Promote Inclusivity in Higher Education. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Applied Science*, 11(1), 484–493. <https://doi.org/10.51584/ijrias.2026.11010041>
12. Kadenhe, T., Muchovo, B., Mguni, T. B., Gadlula, S., Setoboli, T., & Chasokela, D. (2025). Addressing Social Marginalisation in Education to Foster Inclusion: A Comprehensive Examination of Higher Tertiary Education. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 4617–4627. <https://doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2025.9010355>
13. Kalita, A., & Baishya, P. (2025). Technology-Mediated Learning and the Digital Divide: Challenges Faced by Scheduled Tribe Students in Higher Education in India. *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research*, 7(4). <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2025.v07i04.54371>
14. Krishnakumari, S., Yamuna, D., Sathiyaraj, A., & Geetha, C. (2025). Transforming Tribal Women's Lives through Education: Integrating Cultural Relevance, Skill Development, and Gender-Focused

- Strategies. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Science and Technology*, 12(5), 222–229. <https://doi.org/10.32628/ijrst25125122>
15. Kumar, A. (2020). *EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA: BRIDGING GAPS FOR A JUST SOCIETY*. <https://doi.org/10.25215/1300495081.02>
 16. Kumari, P. (2023). *Towards Inclusive Progress: A Comprehensive Inquiry into the Socioeconomic Status and Empowerment of Tribal Women in Kathua, Jammu and Kashmir*. 4343–4349. <https://doi.org/10.53555/kuey.v30i1.8012>
 17. Mahata, A. (2025). Empowering Tribal Women Through Education: Evaluating Government Policies And Grassroots Interventions. *Bharati International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development (BIJMRD)*, 3(6), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.70798/bijmrd/03060001>
 18. Mahmood, A. (2026a). Impact of Migration and Remoteness on Tribal Students' Cognitive Skills and Nep 2020 Implementation. *Zenodo (CERN European Organization for Nuclear Research)*. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18789088>
 19. Mahmood, A. (2026b). Impact of Migration and Remoteness on Tribal Students' Cognitive Skills and Nep 2020 Implementation. *Zenodo (CERN European Organization for Nuclear Research)*. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18789087>
 20. Mangamma, P. (2025). Implementation Challenges of NEP 2020: A Policy Review. *International Journal for Research in Applied Science and Engineering Technology*, 13(8), 2023–2027. <https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2025.73914>
 21. Manhas, R. M. D. (2020). EQUITY, ACCESS, AND INCLUSION IN EDUCATION FOR MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS. In *REDSHINE Publication eBooks*. <https://doi.org/10.25215/9141002113.08>
 22. Najjar, S. A., Zargar, W. A., & Khan, B. A. (2026). Vulnerabilities among children of migrant rag pickers in UT Jammu and Kashmir: examining in the context of sustainable development goals 4 and 10. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 10, 1695642–1695642. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2025.1695642>
 23. Nazeer, N., & Bohet, A. K. (2026). Silenced Voices to Scholarly Triumphs: Decoding Systemic Barriers for Women in STEM Higher Education Across Kashmir. *Canadian Journal of Science Mathematics and Technology Education*, 26(1). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42330-026-00448-7>
 24. Paul, L., & Rena, R. (2025). Empowering Diversity: Advancing Social Inclusion for Equitable Access in Higher Education Systems. *Rajagiri Journal Of Social Development*, 17(2), 104–119. <https://doi.org/10.5958/2583-7087.2025.00008.2>
 25. Raj, R., & Tandil, Dr. S. (2025). National Education Policy 2020 and Tribal Education in India: Inclusion, Equity, and Indigenous Futures. *Zenodo (CERN European Organization for Nuclear Research)*. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18164834>
 26. Raj, S. B. E. (2024). Pathways to inclusive higher education: learnings from India's National Education Policy 2020. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 11(1), 82–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2024.2382376>
 27. Rana, V. (2025). The Convergence of Patriarchy, Conflict, and Electoral Politics: Challenges and Opportunities for Bakerwal Women in Kashmir. *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research*, 7(4). <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2025.v07i04.51019>

28. Rasool, I., & Vyas, S. (2025a). Empowerment through Education: An Analysis of Tribal Welfare Policies for Women in Jammu & Kashmir. *RESEARCH REVIEW International Journal of Multidisciplinary*, 10(5), 160–163. <https://doi.org/10.31305/rrijm.2025.v10.n5.015>
29. Rasool, I., & Vyas, S. (2025b). Marginalization, mobility, and livelihood: An empirical study of Gujjar and Bakarwal tribes in Jammu and Kashmir. *International Journal of Sociology and Humanities*, 7(2), 439–442. <https://doi.org/10.33545/26648679.2025.v7.i2f.237>
30. Sathiyaraj, A., Geetha, C., Krishnakumari, S., & Yamuna, D. (2025). Tribal Higher Education and Social Inclusion: A Critical Review of Access, Diversity, and Equity Frameworks for Inclusive Growth in the Digital Era. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Science and Technology*, 12(5), 230–239. <https://doi.org/10.32628/ijrsrst25125120>
31. Shah, B. H. (2025). “Higher Education Access and Employability in Remote Areas of Jammu and Kashmir”: A Study. *International Journal of Education Culture and Society*, 10(5), 274–278. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijecs.20251005.13>
32. Singh, S. K., & Lone, F. (2025). Overcoming Educational Barriers: A Study on Tribal Learners in Shopian District, Jammu & Kashmir. *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research*, 7(3). <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2025.v07i03.48367>
33. Suri, K. (2014). Education, conflict and development: A case study of mobile schools for pastoralists in Jammu and Kashmir. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSRJRME)*, 4(1), 12–19. <https://doi.org/10.9790/7388-04151219>
34. Wahid, S. N. Abd., Ali, W., & Baloch, N. U. (2025). Exploring Sociocultural Constraints on Females’ Higher Education in Balochistan: A Mixed-Methods Study. *KOMUNITAS INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INDONESIAN SOCIETY AND CULTURE*, 17(2), 126–137. <https://doi.org/10.15294/komunitas.v17i2.31610>
35. Wani, S. A., Ali, A., & Srivastava, M. (2023). Learner support services at distance higher education institutions in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. *AAOU Journal/AAOU Journal*, 18(3), 246–261. <https://doi.org/10.1108/aaouj-02-2023-0026>
36. Yasinzai, F., & Ahad, A. (2025). Equity, Inclusion, and Access in Higher Education: Challenges, Progress, and Future Directions. *Research Journal of Psychology*, 3(4), 292–295. <https://doi.org/10.59075/rjs.v3i4.270>