

## **Traditional Costumes of the Jaunsari Tribe (Uttarakhand)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Jaunsari Tribe is the second largest tribal population in Uttarakhand with the total population of 88,664. The Jaunsar region comes under two divisions one Siwalik in the South and the lesser Himalayas in the North. The significance of the study lies in knowing about the traditional clothing of the Jaunsari Tribe. A field study of the Jaunsari Tribe residing in and around Chakrata, Kalsi, Mohana village and Vikas Nagar, Uttarakhand was conducted. The aim was to learn about the costumes that they wear during daily life, festivals, and traditions. The findings of the study suggest that the younger women wear kurta and salwar while the elder women still wore the Jhaga (kurta) and Ghaghro in their daily life. The married women wore Dhantu on their head as a sign of respect to the elders. In winter they wore Choluri (woollen kurta) on top of the Jhaga. The jewellery worn by them in daily life is nose pin, bali, mangalsutra and toe rings. Men wore typical westernised clothing for the purpose of work. Choga was worn by men in winters to protect themselves from the harsh weather. They wore headgear in the form of a boat shaped cap well. They wore woollen shoes known as kursa in the winters. The men wear kurta and pyjamas in the festival except when they dance they wear Judo.

**Key Words :** Costume, Jaunsari tribe Jewelry, Tradition

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Jaunsari Tribe is the second largest tribal population in Uttarakhand with the total population of 88,664. They also consider their ethnic origin to come from the Pandavas as Draupadi was married to the five Pandavas. Jaunsari is the main language spoken there although the people do understand and speak Hindi and Garhwali. Jaunsari, Baudari, Bawari, Sirmauri are major dialects that are spoken in the region. They are also very famous for their colourful clothes and festivals they earn their livelihood from agriculture and craft (Tripathi, 2016 and Bisht, 2017). The gods that are worshipped in the region are done by people of the Hindu origin and their principal deity is Mahasu. During the festivals there is a large quantity of homemade liquor and meat while the men and women dance in separate groups to the

spellbinding rhythm of the martial drums. Marriage is also a very important social organisation of the Jaunsari tribe. Along with her family members and relatives gives to the boy's house for the marriage ceremony. There is no case of dowry system in the area. While the boy's father presents one rupee to the bride's father at the time of marriage (Bisht, 2017).

According to a study done by Bhatt, 2016 the tradition of traditional dress had faded within the younger generation of Jaunsar however a few people are looking to preserve their tradition through keeping their traditional costume. This study helps in understanding about the traditional clothing of the Jaunsari Tribe. It would help one to learn about the culture and tap into the past of the Jaunsari Tribe whenever one desired. Through this study, researchers could help the society to learn about the traditional costume of the Jaunsari Tribe, including the

costume of both women and men. It would stress on their clothing as well as the jewellery worn by them.

## METHODOLOGY

Keeping in mind the main objectives of the research programme, the study was planned and carried out. Jaunsari Tribe residing in Vikas Nagar, Kalsi, Mohana and in or near Chakrata in Dehradun district were selected. In this research, the researcher has used a snowball sampling method. Snowball sampling is a recruitment technique in which research participants are asked to assist researchers in identifying other potential subjects. Secondary data was collected from scholarly articles, books and significant research produced by recognized scholars and researchers. It critically analyses the existing work and examines contrasting methodologies and perspectives. The museums visited were National Museum, Craft Museum Uttarakhand Emporium Tribal India. Primary data was collected by visiting the places of the tribe in and around Vikas Nagar and Chakrata and asking them about the costumes. The main tool selected for data collection included interview schedule and observation technique. Informal conversation and detailed observations helped to supplement the data gathered.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interviews were conducted with 5-10 families including female and male members of the family. The women who were interviewed were both working and homemakers. It was found that the women got married at the age of 25 years and mostly lived in joint families. The people who were interviewed were mostly residing in the area for more than 30 years and some of them were even born in the region and their family lived there from the start of the time. They wore the traditional costumes only when there was a function or a festival, which they celebrated. The main festivals that they enjoy are mainly Bissu, Diwali and Magh festival.

### Women's costume :

#### *Dhantu (head gear):*

The Dhantu was worn by married women. It was a sign of respect for the elders in the family. The fabric used for making Dhantu was approximately a square piece 1m x 1m. The square piece of cloth that was folded into a triangle and then tied at the back of the head of the

women (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1 : Women wearing Dhantu on head**

There was embroidery done on one side of the triangle. The embroidery was called Sangutti. Sangutti was named on the cloth; the border on the Dhantu was done with a gold thread and motif like a leaf and a line was embroidered with it. Sangutti was stitched with coloured cotton threads and displayed chain, running and satin stitches. In the middle of the Dhantu, a floral motif was 32 made and embroidered with a thread of golden, red, green etc. printed Dhantu was available in the market for the people to wear. The Dhantu was also available in different colours like red, black, blue, brown etc., off white colour was not used as it was not an auspicious attire for married women. Fabric materials used in Dhantu were Chenille, cambric, velvet.

#### *Jhaga (Kurti) :*

The upper garment that they wear is called a Jhaga. The fabric material of the dress was heavy weight cotton. They also wore subtle colours and avoided the bright colours in the dress.



**Fig. 2 : Elder women wearing costume in daily life**

The elder lady's upper garment was also different from that of a young married woman. The neckline was collared, the sleeves of the women were straight sleeves that had a cuff at the end. The Jhaga was till the wearer hip level and slit was provided on both sides so that the wearer can move freely, in the front a zip or button placket was provided that came till the wearers mid breast and below that a bow was made with the same material the kurti was made in. It was sewn on it as a decorative piece. In some the kurti there were frills also attached near the zip (Fig. 2).

### **Ghaghro :**

The name "ghaghro," which refers to the bottom garment, is used. The fabric in which the garment was made was medium-weight cotton. It is a skirt created from 6-7 metres of pleated fabric and the width of the pleat is 1.5 inch.

The ghaghro was embellished with lace above the hem line to give an attractive look. The lace provided was also in contrast with the colour of the ghaghro. The ghaghro is made with fabric that has solid colour like wine, brown, green, blue. They avoid printed patterns on fabric because they like to stay simple (Fig. 3)



**Fig. 3: Ghaghro**

### **Wasket (Saluka):**

In the winters, in the village, women wore kurta and salwar that were made of thick cotton fabric over which they wore sweaters so that they can keep themselves warm in the cold weather especially in the morning and evening.

Women used to wear a coat or kurti that is made of the goat's fur to protect them. The women of the age

group in 30 – 50 years women mostly wear sweaters and waskets (half jacket). These waskets are made in different colours and were similar to those that were made for the man. The wasket that women wore mostly in the material of wool, but it was also made in heavy materials like the thick cotton. The neckline of the saluka is U shaped and in some of the saluka, there were strips that were attached on the border of it and on top of the pockets. The pocket style was also different, and the buttons were mostly decorative (Fig. 4).



**Fig. 4: Wasket**

### **Overcoat (Choluri):**

The ladies, who are in their 60's, used to wear woolen kurti. Also wear 2-3 layers of kurtis to keep themselves warm. The Choluri has a plain pattern with solid colour. It has A-line in shape and reaches the hip of the wearers (Fig. 5).









**Fig. 5: Choluri**

The choluri has panels, which give the shape of the garment. The neckline of the wearer is oval, overlapping a bit when covered. A button is provided to close the kurta at the waist which gives it shape and gives the bottom a fuller look as it is A-line in shape. In the sleeves, also it can be seen that there is a panel provided near the armhole area for the free flow hand movement of the lady. Two pockets were provided on either side of the seam, the style of the pockets were Inseam.

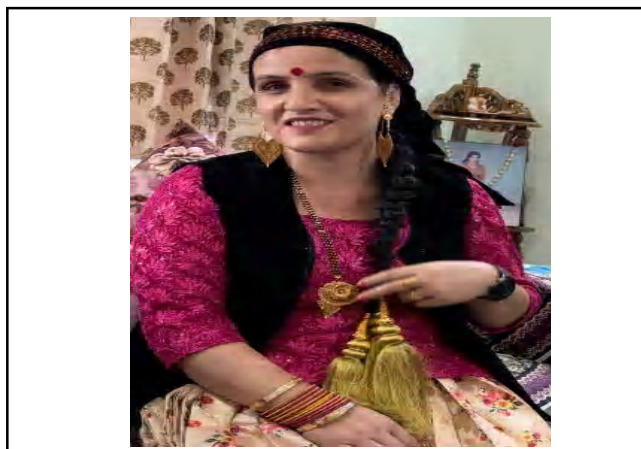
**Jewellery :**

Following are the jewellery worn by women (Table 1):

Table 1 : Jewellery Worn by Women	
Jewellery	
1. <i>Tungal</i> : Tungal is an earring . It is mostly made in gold and has a geometrical shape. Its hanging earring is worn with the help of a hook at the back of ears.	
2. <i>Galo Band</i> : This is a traditional choker that is worn during festivals. The base of the choker is made up of chenille fabric, mainly red is used but other bright ones are also used. It is a delicate chain of squares made of 24 carat of gold.	
3. <i>Sooch</i> : This is a silver necklace that is worn by the women in the tribe. The shape of the pendant is in the shape of a pan.	
4. <i>Nath</i> : The nath is worn by them on their nose which is made of gold.	
5. <i>Kanthi</i> : This necklace is worn by women. The circular piece has joints that attach it to the other sides. The circle has a flower motif on it.	
6. <i>Timothiya</i> : The pendant of the necklace is made of gold. The beads are hollow but they give appearance to the pendant, which has a traditional design on it.	

**Hairstyle :**

The women used to keep their hair tied in a bun or they used to plait their hair. The married women covered their hair with Dhantu, the style of the hair tied was not visible. The women usually tied plates and at the end of it they wore parranda locally known as Banchara of different kinds. The plaits carried a family’s affection when they left the area and got married (Fig. 6).



**Fig. 6: Parranda (Banchara)**

**Footwear:**

The women often walk barefoot, but when they go outside, they wear slippers with a tiny heel and a pattern on the front.

**Men’s Clothing:**

In winter, they used to wear Jeans or pant with shirt or T-shirt over this they used to wear other woollen garments which are described below:

**Kurta:**

The men wear kurta pyjamas in the festivals. The kurta comes till the wearer’s mid-thigh, and is influenced by the climate. In the summer, they dress in cotton or other light materials, while in the winter, they also wear a waistcoat. People are free to wear any colour they choose. The sleeves are mainly long and are loosely fitted.

**Pyjama:**

They wear straight loose-fitting cotton pyjamas with a kurta on top to complete their outfit. The pyjama is made of the same cotton fabric as the kurta and extends all the way to the wearer’s ankle. They use nara to tie the pyjamas on their waist (Fig. 7).



**Fig. 7: Male in traditional costume**

**Choga:**

Men used to wear a coat that is known as choga. It was A-line in shape and the shape has been achieved by adding a lot of panels in it.



**Fig. 8 : Choga**

It comes till the wearer mid-thigh. The Choga was made up of goat's fur and the colour depends on what kind of colour the goat is (Fig. 8). The collar of the choga was extended and embroidery was done on by the machine (Fig. 9).



**Fig. 9 : Choga's collar**

**Waistcoat :**

The men wear a waistcoat on top of the kurta. The waistcoat reaches the wearer's waist and is sleeveless. They have a chinese collar and are open from the front with buttons attached (Fig. 10).



**Fig. 10 : Waist Coat**

The waist coat also had lining inside it that protected the wearer from the harsh fabric and it also makes it more durable. A pocket was also provided inside of the waist coat

**Jhangel :**

A Jhangel is worn beneath the choga that is woollen pyjama made of the goat's fur. The weave done in the fabric is twill weave. Jhangel was made by joining the panel together. These panels help in giving it shape and fit that helps the wearer to move it. The Jhangel is loose till the knee area and then it is fit to ankles (Fig. 11).



**Fig. 11 : Jhangel**

**Kursa:**

Shoes that are made up of goat’s fur, these are knitted and are worn for walking in the snow. The colour of these shoes depends on the colour of the goat’s fur. The shoes were made using braiding as the goat hair that was spun into threads. They also have laces that help them to tie it around their legs (Fig. 12).



**Fig. 12 : Kursa**

**Headgear (Digwa):**

They used to wear caps on their heads. The cap is round in shape and at the front side, there is a stripe of border or embroidery attached to give an aesthetic look to the cap. It is worn to protect the head from dust and dirt when they go out to work in the field and it also represents the Jaunsari people.

It is made up of wool to protect the head. A boat shaped cap was also used to be worn by males occasionally. The cap has influenced a lot of the culture of Himachal Pradesh as they share the border with it (Fig. 13).

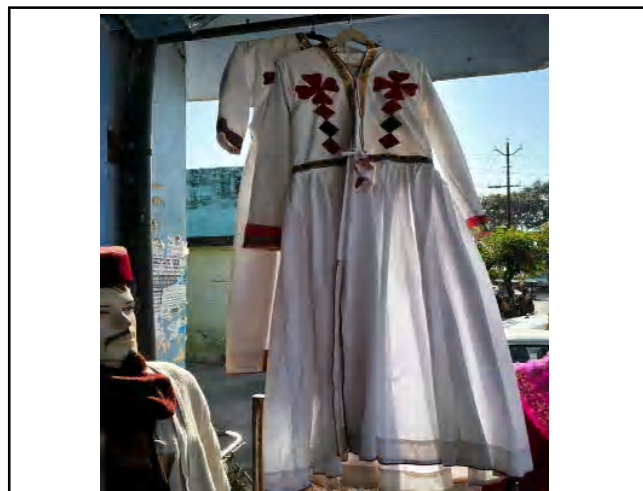


**Fig. 13 : Digwa**

**Judo:**

It was usually worn by men in festivals and during other cultural activities. The fabric was usually cotton and came up to the wearer’s ankle.

It was a long frock style dress. In this dress, gathers were made on the waistline. This dress was made of white cotton fabric. On the bodice, embroidery was done. The motif usually has pan ka patta on it (Fig. 14). Hemlines were finished with facing and the sleeves were till the wrist. Laces/ borders were attached on the neckline, sleeves and on the waist. The colours added to the sleeves are red, green, the motifs were also in the colour of green and red. At the hemline the same or contrasting colour of cloth was attached in order to conceal it.



**Fig. 14 : Judo**

**Summary and Conclusion:**

They consider their ethnic origin to come from the Pandavas as Draupadi was married to the five Pandavas. Jaunsari is the main language spoken in the Jaunsar Bawar area. Although the people do understand and speak Hindi and Garhwali as well. Jaunsari, Baudari, Bawari and Sirmauri are the major dialects that are spoken in this region. Festivals like Bissu, Diwali, and Magh were celebrated by the people. When wearing the traditional outfit, no special makeup was applied. Some elderly ladies had tattoos but did not associate them with any cause. People still used to live in extended families and celebrate every holiday with zeal and joy. People from the city return to their villages to engage in the festivities. They also wore traditional clothes to every function.

The female clothing included a Jhaga, kurta, ghaghro

and Dhantu. The kurti style varied according to age group. The younger ladies wore scoop necks, whereas the older women wore collared necklines. The younger females wore brighter and more colourful fabrics. The elderly ladies, on the other hand, dressed in more solid and basic tones such as blue, black, and brown. For a festive occasion, they usually wore a bright shade of these hues. The women in Himachal also knot their heads with a scarf. This is similar to the wearing of Dhantu by women in the Jaunsar Bawar region of Uttarakhand. Only the married women have to wear the Dhantu which was embroidered or printed. Women's jewellery differs from what they wore on a daily basis. The role of the size and weight of the jewellery was important in their daily life. They wore small bali and jhumke, while the women who were married had a mangalsutra on their neck and wore sindoor. On the festive occasions the women wore nath on the nose, tungal on their ears, galo band on their neck and sooch etc. The bride wore red bangles, Har, nath, and maang tika on her head.

The male attire does not change much. They wore a kurta and pyjamas to festivities. It can be supplemented by a waistcoat if needed. Though during the festival of Bissu, they changed into Judo. The judo was a frock style dress that the men wore and was a long sleeved garment which had gathers at the waist. It is an attire which is only worn for that cultural activity. They change back into their traditional outfit after performing it.

They also had headgear which had two styles that were known as Digwa. The cap was in boat shape and had a strip for aesthetic purposes, while the other cap was round in shape and had embroidery done on it on the front part of the cap.

The males had different winter clothing as well; to stay warm, they wore chogas, coats like garments over their t-shirt. Below it, they wore Jhangel as well. To keep

them warm, it was a knitted pyjama made of goat's fur. Due to the rugged terrain in the Jaunsar Bawar area, people did not have easy access to expensive products. People participated in events barefoot, especially for the most of the time. If seen wearing shoes, they were rubber slippers. They also wore woollen shoes known as kursa, which were constructed by braiding goat hair spun into threads that protected them from the snow.

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