

Struggle for Inclusive Development: A Case Study of the Maset Community of Haryana, India

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Abstract

The present study focuses on the Maset community, a nomadic community in Haryana, India, and their struggle for basic rights, entitlements and policy measures for inclusive development. The community is primarily engaged in their traditional occupation of showcasing magic tricks and uses a pellet drum, flute, and rubber/plastic-made snakes and mongooses as their main gimmicks. They have their own dialect called Parsi. The community faces challenges in fulfilling basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing, as well as access to basic amenities like safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, and healthcare. The community is divided into six main gotras and follows their traditional caste (Jati/Biradari) Panchayat system. Women are not allowed to present their opinions in the Panchayat, and the community is not allowed to access police or the court of law. The community is stigmatised by society and accused of committing petty theft while performing their act. Despite possessing civil identity cards issued by the state/central government, the community faces discrimination and exclusion from mainstream society. The study emphasises the importance of policy measures for the community's inclusive development, which includes education and skill-building programs, health and welfare schemes, and measures to protect their cultural heritage.

Keywords: Nomadic Community, Traditional Occupation, Stigma, Inclusive Development, Cultural Heritage

Introduction

In the intricate tapestry of India's social landscape, various communities exhibit distinct ways of life, shaped by historical legacies, cultural practices, and economic circumstances. The Maset community, much like other nomadic groups, has a distinct identity through their traditional occupation of showcasing magic tricks, an art passed down through generations. The community's unique practices were part of a larger ensemble of such groups, also including Bhopas, Saperas, Bauls, Madaris, Banjara, Bedias, and Nats (Kishwar 2017). The Maset community, a nomadic group residing in the state of Haryana, stands as a

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