

Inter-castes Differences Among Scheduled Castes in Tamil Nadu: Evidence from Census Data – 1991 and 2011

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Abstract: *Though SCs are considered as a monolithic unit for reservation in education and employment, but the inter-caste differences in SCs are evident and the political attempts to allocate sub-quota within the overall SC reservation were outcomes of acknowledging the inter-caste differences. But the political and academic debates for and against the sub-quota within overall SC reservation have not initiated unbiased and evidence based understanding of the inter-caste differences among SCs. This article attempts to quantify the inter-caste differences among SCs in Tamil Nadu using the census data from 1991 to 2011. First an analysis of the quantifiable development differentials between SCs and non-SC&ST has been attempted and a similar analysis of the same set of variables is done to quantify the inter-caste differences among SCs in Tamil Nadu. The various castes within SCs show remarkable differences in terms of the demographic, educational and workers characteristics. This shows that the inter-caste differences in SCs cannot be brushed aside and there is a need to acknowledge this fact in the first instance for designing intervention programmes for their development.*

Key-words: *Inter-caste differences, Scheduled Castes, Census, Tamil Nadu, Social stratification, reservation, social justice*

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I. Introduction

Scheduled Castes (SCs) in India is always considered as a monolithic unit consisting of many homogeneous castes, which are discriminated and depressed/oppressed in the social hierarchy of the Indian Caste System. The Constitution of India has provided in Article 341 for enlisting castes in every state/Union Territory that could be termed as SCs. Though decennial census in the pre-independence period enumerated the population in all the depressed castes, since 1951, only the people in the enlisted SCs have been enumerated, because the Constitution of India mandates reservation for SCs in proportion to their population in every state/Union Territory.

The idea of SCs as a homogeneous group has always been a contentious issue in the social and political arenas. As early as 1957-58, there was an opinion that the list of SCs should be pruned and even the criteria for identifying castes should be based on economic, social and educational backwardness.¹ The Lokur Committee (1965) that recommended the castes to be included in the list of SCs, highlighted the heterogeneity of SCs as “It has been in evidence for some time now that a lion’s share of the various benefits and concessions earmarked for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is appropriated by the numerically larger and politically well-organized communities. The smaller and more backward communities have tended to get lost in the democratic process, though more deserving of special aid...” The committee recommended a fresh socio-economic survey of SCs to identify the neediest among them and to target government development programmes for such identified communities.

The political reaction to the differences among the SCs in the access to the government programmes was to create quota within quota for SCs. In 1975 Punjab, later followed by Haryana in 1995, introduced exclusive quotas for certain identified SCs within the overall quota for SCs in their States. Andhra Pradesh introduced sub-quota for certain SCs in 2000. All these state level legislations were struck down by the Supreme Court in 2006 on the grounds that the States could not legislate on this matter and that the scheme of the Constitutional provisions did not enable provision of such sub-quotas. In 2008, Tamil Nadu provided three

¹ “the Commissioner (for Scheduled Castes) has suggested in his Report for 1957-58 that if the ultimate goal of classless and casteless society is to be attained, the list of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and even Other Backward Classes will have to be reduced from year to year and replaced in due course by a list based on the criteria of Income-cum-Merit...(T)he Committee recommend that the weaker sections of society should be defined and criteria for special assistance laid down on the basis of economic status and educational social backwardness.” As quoted in Chokkar (2008).

percent sub-quota within 18 percent quota for SCs for Arundhathiyars and a few other SCs. In spite of a pending legal dispute this arrangement continues till date in Tamil Nadu.

There are oppositions to describe the SCs as a heterogeneous group and also to provide sub-quota for specific SCs. Rao Y G (2016) argued forcefully against sub-classification of SCs and sub-quotas based on such sub-classifications. He argued that Article 341 did not provide “to sub-divide, sub-classify or sub-group the castes listed in the Presidential List of Scheduled Castes.” His argument that the Dalit communities which got influenced by the Ambedkarite movement and adopted Ambedkarite ideology had shown substantial progress, though not well founded, highlights the fact that there are differences in the development of various SCs in the post-independent India and that some groups of SCs could leverage the government intervention more than others for development. Rao’s major complaint was ‘in the sub-classification phenomenon the Dalits are in a sense alienating themselves from a collective identity of pain, agony and trauma of centuries-old subjugation and oppression.’

Emancipation of SCs lies in anti-caste ideology and in recognizing the differences within SCs, says Bathran (2016) and emphatically argues, ‘new Dalit middle class in different fields has close alliances with the caste Hindu parties and not with the anti-caste ideology, lower-class Dalits and their caste members.’ Mentioning a recent conflict between Arunthathiyars and Paraiyars in Tamil Nadu, Bathran notes how the Dalit political parties underplay the inter-caste differences within SCs. Consequently, the individual castes within SCs are more interested in protecting their caste interests and purity, says Bathran.

In spite of intense political discussion on sub-classification of SCs, academic exercises to quantify the relative development of various SCs have been sporadic. One of the earliest of the studies on intra-SCs development differentials was by Wankhede (2001). This study traced the educational development of six SCs in Maharashtra between 1961 and 1981. Identifying the differences in literacy rate, and completion rates for primary education, matriculation and higher education, Wankhede concluded that the issue of treating them (SCs) as a homogeneous category was to be questioned seriously. For instance, highlighting the inter-caste development differentials among SCs he said ‘the *mang* caste shows continued poor literacy rates and education levels all through the three decades. The *mahars* have a special history of social, political and cultural movements and therefore show better response in education including higher/technical education.’ A more recent study on the same issue was carried out by Kumar and Somanathan (2016). This is a national level study of the educational differences between 24 SCs and 17 STs, in which each caste had at least 1% of the SC and ST population respectively. They used the census data for four decades from 1961 to 2001, and found the castes that were educationally forward in 1961 continued to grow faster throughout these four decades. Further, the role of individual States in providing effective access to education also made considerable differences between castes in educational attainment. For instance, three major groups in Tamil Nadu, namely Adi Dravida, Pallan and Paraiyan, not only had higher literacy rates and school completion rates than the national average in 1961 but continued to increase their lead in 2001 as well. Though one could identify some causal factors for the differences in educational achievement of different SCs, they beg for sound evidence. Before that there is also an important need to see the differences between SCs in other indicators of socio-economic development, such as sex ratio, labour force participation and its distribution across sectors and locations. This gap in our understanding of the heterogeneity of SCs is the basis of this study.

II. The Research Issue

Unlike in other states, Tamil Nadu has a long history of reservation based on castes since 1921, including reservation for SCs. The Dravidian politics was based on the plank of casteless society and that reinforced not only reservation but also development programmes targeted at the depressed communities. Thus the development of SCs in Tamil Nadu should be on a higher trajectory and the inter-caste differences in SCs should also be lower. We analyse the development of SCs in two parts. In the first part we compare the demographic and development characteristics of SCs with the non-SC&ST in Tamil Nadu and gauge the relative development of SCs. In the second part we analyse the inter-caste differences in the demographic and development characteristics of SCs in Tamil Nadu. For this analysis we use the data from the Primary Census Abstracts and SC tables in three censuses – 1991, 2001 and 2011.

III. SCs in Tamil Nadu

In this analysis we consistently divide the total population into two distinct groups, SCs and non-SC&ST. For the computation of non-SC&ST we used the ST tables as well, that is, from the Tamil Nadu’s total population and other sub-classification data we deducted the relevant SC and ST data to arrive at non-SC&ST data. Since ST is not the focus of this study we have not included ST data in the analysis.

Table 1: Population Growth, Sex Ratio and Urbanization

Particulars	1991	2001	2011
Total Population (Million)	55.86	62.41	72.14
Total Population – Decadal Growth Rate	15.0	11.72	15.60
Non-SC&ST Total Population (Million)	44.57	49.90	56.91
Share in Total Population(%)	79.79	79.96	78.88
Decadal Growth Rate (%)		11.96	14.05
SCs Total Population (Million)	10.71	11.86	14.44
Share in Total Population(%)	19.18	19.00	20.01
Decadal Growth Rate (%)		10.74	21.75
Urbanization – State Average	34.15	44.04	48.31
Urbanization – Non-SC&ST	37.52	47.77	52.28
Urbanization - SCs	21.32	29.93	34.37

In Table 1, we divide the state population into SCs and non-SC&ST. With the decline in the growth rate of total population from 1991 to 2001, the share of SCs moderately declined whereas there was a moderate increase in the share of non-SC&ST. Between 2001 and 2011 SCs registered higher growth rate in population so the share of non-SC&ST in total population declined from 79.96% to 78.88% in this decade. Therefore, the growth of population in Tamil Nadu in the last decade was largely propelled by the growth of SCs population.

Tamil Nadu is one of the most urbanized states in India. Yet the urbanization of the non-SC&ST is far higher than the urbanization of SCs. Urbanization of non-SC&ST increased by 10.25 and 4.51 percentage points in 2001 and 2011 respectively; whereas the urbanization of SCs increased by only 8.61 and 4.44 percentage points during the two decades. Therefore, in spite of higher population growth in the last decade, the urbanization of SCs was far lower than that of others.

The trend in the sex ratio and population of children in the age group 0-6 years show the sex preference at birth and fertility behaviour of the community. Table 2 shows the relevant data in the three censuses.

The sex ratio in the state has increased steadily from 974 in 1991 to 987 and 995 in 2001 and 2011 respectively. We are yet to reach parity in sex ratio. Nevertheless, the SCs have shown considerable improvement in this aspect. It has increased to 999 in from 978 and then to 1004 in 2011. The sex ratio in the SCs has always been higher than that of non-SC&ST. It is a long way to go for the non-SC&ST to catch up with the SCs in this respect.

The percentage of 0-6 population in the state declined steadily in the state from 13.3 per cent in 1991 to 10.29 per cent in 2011, that is, a decline of 3.1 percentage points, this may be due to decline in the fertility. However, between 1991 and 2011, the percentage of 0-6 population declined by 4.52 percentage points for SCs, and only 2.26 percentage points for non-SC&ST. The fact is the decline in the proportion of 0-6 population was faster for SCs than others, in spite of the other factors such as higher population growth and lower urbanization for SCs compared to non-SC&ST.

The sex ratio in the 0-6 population shows the sex preference at birth in a community. The 0-6 sex ratios in the state as well as for SC and non-SC&ST groups have been consistently less than the overall sex ratios in the respective groups. Further, the 0-6 sex ratios declined in 2001 and marginally increased in 2011. Furthermore, the gap between the overall sex ratio and 0-6 sex ratio has also been increasing over time. For instance, the gap was 13 in 1991 and 46 in 2011 for SCs and the corresponding figures for non-SC&ST were 30 and 53. The overall gap shows the male preference at birth, but it is more among the non-SC&ST than among SCs.

Table 2: Trend in Sex Ratio and 0-6 population

Particulars	1991	2001	2011
Sex Ratio – State Average	974	987	995
Sex Ratio - SC	978	999	1004
Sex Ratio – Non-SC & ST	973	984	993
0-6 Population State	7.48	7.24	7.42
% to State Total Population	(13.39)	(11.59)	(10.29)
Sex Ratio 0-6 - State	948	942	943
0-6 Population State - SC	1.66	1.56	1.59
% to Total SC Population	(15.54)	(13.12)	(11.02)
Sex Ratio 0-6 - SC	965	959	958
0-6 Population State – Non-SC&ST	5.72	5.58	5.73
% to Total Non-SC&ST Population	(12.83)	(11.19)	(10.07)
Sex Ratio 0-6 – Non SC&ST	943	937	940

The growth in literacy rate in Tamil Nadu has always been above the national average. Even the literacy gaps between rural-urban and male-female has been lower than the national average. The literacy rate in Tamil Nadu increased from 54.31% in 1991 to 64.94 in 2001 and then to 72.28% in 2011. The rate of increase in literacy rate has been a little lower in the second decade. The male-female literacy gap was 19 percentage

points in 1991, which narrowed down to 15.50 percentage points in 2001 and then to 11.33 percentage points in 2011. Similarly the urban-rural literacy gap also reduced from 21.20 percentage points in 1991 to 15.13 percentage points in 2001 and then to 12.81 percentage points in 2011. We find the literacy gaps in terms of both sex and location are substantial and the narrowing of these gaps have not been fast enough to reach universal literacy in the next one or two decades.

If we look at the literacy rates in the SCs, they are less than the state averages. The literacy gap between the SC and non-SC&ST communities has been declining; it has declined by more than half, from 19.61 percentage points in 1991 to 8.62 percentage points in 2011. This is a phenomenal increase in the literacy rate of the SCs.

The male-female literacy gap in SCs was 19.73 percentage points in 1991, which was higher than the state average. This gender gap has declined to 12.58 percentage points in 2011, which was also higher than the corresponding state average. The urban-rural literacy gap in SCs was 17.97 percentage points and it declined to 9.00 percentage points in 2011. The urban-rural literacy gap in SCs has been higher than the state average in 1991, but it has declined perceptibly to less than the state average in 2011. This is a significant achievement because the gap is narrowed, that is, rural literacy rate for SCs has increased, in spite of substantial rural presence of the SCs.

Table 3: Trend in Literacy Rates by Communities

Particulars	1991	2001	2011
Literacy Rate	54.31	64.94	72.28
Male Literacy Rate	63.78	72.64	78.31
Female Literacy Rate	44.78	57.14	66.98
Rural Literacy Rate	47.07	58.19	66.56
Urban Literacy Rate	68.27	73.32	79.37
SC Literacy Rate	38.80	54.90	65.81
SC Male Literacy Rate	49.23	63.58	71.81
SC Female Literacy Rate	29.50	42.68	58.58
SC Rural Literacy Rate	34.97	51.58	62.09
SC Urban Literacy Rate	52.94	62.66	71.09
Non-SC&ST Literacy Rate	58.41	67.71	74.43
Non-SC&ST Male Literacy Rate	67.72	75.17	80.29
Non-SC&ST Female Literacy Rate	48.57	60.97	69.48
Non-SC&ST Rural Literacy Rate	51.17	60.83	68.66
Non-SC&ST Urban Literacy Rate	70.48	75.23	80.84

When the literacy rates in SCs (and possibly STs) are lower than the state averages, obviously the literacy rates in non-SC&ST should be higher than the state averages. If we compare the male-female and urban-rural literacy gaps between SCs and non-SC&ST, we find some differences in the trend. The male-female literacy gap for SCs have been higher than for non-SC&ST and this gap has narrowed faster for non-SC&ST than for SCs. Though the urban-rural literacy gap was almost equal for both non-SC&ST and SCs, but SCs have narrowed this gap faster than the non-SC&ST.

Table 4: Education Completion Rates (%)

Level of Education	1991			2001			2011		
	Total	SC	Non-SC&ST	Total	SC	Non-SC&ST	Total	SC	Non-SC&ST
Literacy Rate	54.31	39.37	58.27	64.94	54.90	67.71	71.85	65.18	73.89
Literacy without formal education	13.56	12.90	13.77	NA	NA	NA	3.19	2.84	3.26
Primary Education	17.71	13.64	19.22	40.24*	38.52*	40.83*	24.89	24.88	24.90
Matric/Secondary	17.49	10.93	19.22	NA	NA	NA	24.67	24.53	24.85
H.Sc/Diploma/Certificate	2.94	1.25	3.37	14.47**	9.88**	15.69**	11.28	8.49	12.09
Graduate and Above	2.62	0.76	3.09	3.52	1.50	4.04	7.80	4.40	8.76

Note: * -refers to upto primary school including non-formal education; ** -refers to from primary school upto H.Sc/Diploma.

Though literacy has spread faster among the SCs, education beyond secondary school is still relatively inaccessible to most of the SCs. Clearly the gap in the literacy rates between SCs and non-SC&ST declined from 18.9 percentage points in 1991 to 8.71 percentage points in 2011. The quality of literacy also improved substantially for both SCs and non-SC&ST. In 1991 literacy without formal education and with primary education were the major components, whereas in 2011 literacy with primary and secondary education were the major components, this highlights the fact that spread of access to schools has been uniform across communities. The difference in completion rates for SCs and non-SC&ST was less for up to secondary

education. Proportion of population with H.Sc and equivalent years of education like diplomas and certificates increased from 2.94 in 1991 to 11.28 in 2011, an increase of 8.34 percentage points in two decades. This increase was 7.24 percentage points for SCs and 8.72 percentage points for non-SC&ST, in other words, the SCs are fast catching up with the non-SC&ST in completing this level of education. When we move to graduation and above, that is, higher education, the scenario is inversed. The proportion of population completed higher education has increased by 5.18 percentage points, and the corresponding increase for SCs was 3.64 percentage points and for non-SC&ST was 5.67 percentage points.

Workforce participation is an indicator of the economic status of a community. The effectiveness of workforce participation in improving the earnings capacity depends on the type of work that the people get. Generally, non-farm activities not only need literacy and special labour skills but also provide higher real wage rates. Within the farm activities the cultivators get larger share of the farm produce than the agricultural workers. Hence we give here in Table 5 the share of cultivators and agricultural workers in the total workers by communities.

We find in the state, the decline in the share of cultivators is very sharp from 23.4% in 1991 to nearly half of it, that is, 12.9% in 2011. But the share of agricultural workers has not fallen by an equal quantum during these two decades. As a result, the share of non-farm workers has marginally increased by only 3.90 percentage points in the two decades.

The scenario in the SC community is in total contrast to the general scenario. We find the share of cultivators has more than halved, and the share of agricultural workers has only declined by less than one fourth for SCs. Consequently the share of non-farm workers in the SC community has increased from 17 per cent in 1991 to 42.6 per cent in 2011. Thus we find, the relatively lower level of literacy rate in the rural SC community, has kept them overwhelmingly as agricultural workers and those who have got some amount of education and labour skills have become non-farm workers. In this process, the share of cultivators in this community has declined by more than half in these two decades.

Table 5: Share of Cultivators and Agricultural Workers in Total Workers by Communities

Particulars	1991	2001	2011
% Cultivators to Total Workers	23.4	18.4	12.9
% Agri.Workers to Total Workers	32.6	31.0	29.2
% Non-farm Workers to Total Workers	44.0	50.6	47.9
SC % Cultivators to Total Workers	18.0	10.3	7.0
SC % Agri.Workers to Total Workers	65.0	58.5	50.4
SC% Non-farm Workers to Total Workers	17.0	31.2	42.6
Non-SC&ST % Cultivators to Total Workers	24.7	20.2	14.4
Non-SC&ST % Agri.Workers to Total Workers	23.5	23.7	23.1
Non-SC&ST % Non-farm Workers to Total Workers	51.8	55.1	62.5

In the non-SC&ST communities, the decline in the share of cultivators was compensated by the increase in the share of non-farm workers, and the share of agricultural workers remaining the same in the two decades under review. On the whole, the share of cultivators has declined, may be due to increasing urbanization and conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural activities. There has been decline in the share of agricultural workers as well, and correspondingly the share of non-farm workers increased.

Analyzing the demographic and development differentials between SCs and non-SC&ST over two decades from 1991 to 2011, we discern the following:

- There was a sudden increase in the population of SCs between 2001 and 2011.
- The increase in total population of SCs has not resulted in higher urbanization and that the rate of urbanization of SCs was lower than that of non-SC&ST.
- The increase in the total population of SCs has also not increased the proportion of 0-6 population, though it has been slightly higher than that of non-SC&ST.
- Only in 2011 the sex ratio of SCs crossed 1000, and the non-SC&ST is yet to reach this level of sex ratio. The 0-6 sex ratios have been consistently lower than the overall sex ratio for both SCs and non-SC&ST. The gap in between overall sex ratio and 0-6 sex ratio sadly reflects that the sex selection at birth has been increasing for both SCs and non-SC&ST. But the gap in the sex ratios was a little lower for SCs.
- Literacy rates for SCs have been lower than that of non-SC&ST, but the literacy gap is declining in all dimensions – rural and urban, male and female and SCs and non-SC&ST.
- There is a perceptible increase in access to education for SCs up to secondary level, and then a substantial decline in the access to the post-secondary and higher education for SCs when compared to non-SC&ST.
- Higher level of work participation rates for SCs is not a sign of better economic status, as the proportions of agricultural workers to total workers are higher for SCs compared to non-SC&ST.

Thus there are some signs of development such as increasing literacy rates across groups. At the same time, the development differentials between SCs and non-SC&ST remain wide and some cases like urbanization and proportions of agricultural workers to total workers have been higher for SCs compared to non-SC&ST. Similarly though the trend in overall sex ratio of SCs is encourage, but the gap between overall sex ratio and 0-6 sex ratio has been increasing and the proportion of 0-6 population has not been increasing as much as the population growth of SCs are all worrying trend in the demographic characteristics.

IV. Inter-castes differences in SCs

The Directorate of Census Operations – Tamil Nadu, enumerated population in 76 castes, which are bundled as SCs. Of these, 14 castes are listed as SCs only in Kanyakumari District and Shenkottah Taluk of Tirunelveli District.² Similarly two castes are listed as SCs only in The Nilgris District.³ In other words, these castes are not listed as SCs if they are in other districts.

Of the 76 castes in SCs, 10 major castes form 98.4 per cent of the SC population. Hence we treat each of them separately in this analysis. The remaining 66 castes are grouped in three categories - (1) Castes (A) are those with population in the range 50,000 to 10,000, and there were 7 castes in 1991 and 5 castes in 2011 in this group;⁴ (2) Castes (B) are those with population in the range 10,000 and 2000⁵ and there were 16 castes in 1991 and 20 castes in 2011 in this groups; and (3) Castes (C) are all other sub-castes with less than 2000 persons. In this group, there were 43 castes in 1991 and 41 castes in 2011.

In this analysis of 76 SCs, we compare the census data of 1991 with 2011, leaving out 2001.⁶ The annual growth rate of population in each of these castes has not been similar. Arunthathiyar registered highest annual growth rate of 4.4 per cent followed by Devendrakulanathan's 3.5 per cent and Adi Dravida's 1.9. Among the major castes Chakkilian and Madari have shown negative growth rate in population and the other five major castes had annual population growth rate less than the SCs average of 1.7. Smaller castes (A) and (C) registered negative growth rate of -3.2 per cent. Even smaller Castes (B) also had a below average annual population growth rate of 1.4. Therefore, in terms of population size and growth rate, Adi Dravidar, Arunthathiyar and Devendrakulanathan are predominant among the SCs. Mostly the smaller castes by population size continue to become even smaller in terms of absolute population size.

Table 6: Population distribution of Major Sub-castes in SCs

Castes	1991	2011	1991-2011 (AGR)	Castes	1991	2011	1991-2011 (AGR)
All SCs	1,07,12,266 (78.7)	14,43,84,445 (65.6)	1.7	Kuravan	86,460 (71.0)	1,40,754 (46.5)	3.1
Adi Dravida	52,39,405 (79.0)	72,42,176 (65.8)	1.9	Valluvan	71,517 (69.5)	90,938 (50.2)	1.4
Pallan	19,17,391 (86.1)	23,29,117 (71.8)	1.1	Adi Andhra	54,855 (22.3)	58,362 (9.0)	0.3
Paraiyan	13,42,281 (83.0)	18,22,524 (69.3)	1.8	Devendra kulanathan	50,709 (40.3)	85,933 (34.2)	3.5
Chakkilian	7,69,104 (82.4)	7,42,597 (65.5)	-0.2	Castes (A)	1,80,072 (72.7)	1,19,500 (55.1)	-1.7
Arunthathiyar	5,79,347 (74.6)	10,84,162 (59.1)	4.4	Castes (B)	76,957 (80.8)	98,085 (49.3)	1.4
Madari	3,10,731 (81.7)	2,47,454 (72.6)	-1.0	Castes (C)	33,437 (70.3)	12,215 (33.6)	-3.2

Note: figures in brackets show percentage of rural population. AGR-Annual Growth Rate.

Generally the SCs have higher proportion of rural population than non-SC & ST castes. On an average, the proportion of rural population in SCs was 78.7 per cent in 1991 and then declined to 65.6 per cent in 2011. Of the 10 major castes, Adi Andhra is the most urbanized group with only 9 per cent of rural population in 2011.

² Ayyanavar, Bharatar, Kootan or Koodan, Kavara, Kakkalan, Mannan, Paravan, Pathiyan, Panan, Padannan, Thandan, Vannan, Vetan and Vetuvan.

³ Kanakka, Padanna

⁴ In 1991 there were 7 castes with more than 10,000 population of which three dropped to less than 10,000 in 2011. Domban with less than 10000 population in 1991 is a new entry in this group in 2011.

⁵ In 1991 there were 16 castes in this group. Of these Domban entered the group with more than 10,000 population, and another 8 castes had less than 2000 population in 2011. Thus only 7 of these castes continued in 2011 and another 13 entered, taking the total to 20 castes in 2011.

⁶ In a preliminary analysis we found that the inclusion of 2001 does not add to our understanding of trends in development differentials between SCs.

On the contrary among the major castes Pallan, Parayan, and Madari have very high proportion of rural population both in 1991 and 2011. Adi Dravida has slightly higher proportion of rural population than the average in these two years. Therefore, 6 major castes and almost all other smaller castes have rural population slightly lower than the all SCs average. Another distinct feature is the urbanization of Chakkilian and smaller castes (B) with population 10,000 to 2000. These castes had higher level of rural population in 1991 and then declined to less than the overall average in 2011, that is, these castes have been urbanizing faster than other SCs. So there has been extreme variability in terms of growth rates of population and urbanization between the castes in the SCs, and there seems to be no correlation between population growth and urbanization.

The overall sex ratio of the SCs increased from 978 to 1004, whereas the 0-6 sex ratio has declined from 965 to 958 in spite of an increase of 25 percentage points in literacy rate during 1991-2011. Except Adi Dravidar, Chakkilian and Arunthathiyar, other 7 major castes have sex ratios more than 1000 in 2011. Even the other three major castes have a sex ratio closer to 1000 in 2011. Devendrakulanathan had sex ratio of 1005 even in 1991. Castes groups A and B also have a sex ratio of more than 1000 in 2011. Only very small castes (C) has a smaller sex ratio of 970 in 2011. Thus, we find the variability in the sex ratio between castes is less than the variability in population and urbanization.

We had already seen that the gap between overall sex ratio and 0-6 sex ratio for SCs widened from 13 in 1991 to 46 in 2011. This is because of the fact that while the general sex ratio increased from 978 to 1004, the 0-6 sex ratio declined from 965 to 958 between 1991 and 2011. In the 0-6 sex ratio, five major castes and castes groups (B) and (C) have less than the average sex ratio. The gap between the two sex ratios has widen in all the castes, thus, there is some uniformity in the 0-6 sex ratio behavior. But the contrasting trend in the overall sex ratio and 0-6 sex ratio across time and castes should be probed further to understand the sex selection at fetus and at birth.

There was a 25 percentage point increase in the literacy rate of SCs between 1991 and 2011. Only five major castes and caste group (A) have fallen below the average in 1991 and 2011. The spread of literacy has been more or less uniform across castes. Therefore the variability in the 0-6 sex ratio is greater than that of sex ratio and literacy rates between the castes in SCs. On an average, lower literacy rates coexist with either lower sex ratio or lower 0-6 sex ratio or both. In the 10 major castes, improvement in literacy rate is associated with increase in sex ratio and 0-6 sex ratio, and here too the notable outliers are Adi Dravidar, Chakkilian, Arunthathiyar and Madari. These castes had not only below average literacy rates, but also sex ratio and 0-6 sex ratio in 1991 and 2011.

Table 7: Literacy Rate and Sex Ratio of Major Sub-castes in SCs

Castes	1991	2011	Castes	1991	2011
All SCs			Kuravan		
Sex ratio	978	1004	Sex ratio	979	1021
0-6 sex ratio	965	958	0-6 sex ratio	937	963
Literacy rate	39.5	65.2	Literacy rate	36.2	60.6
Adi Dravida			Valluvan		
Sex ratio	975	996	Sex ratio	960	1021
0-6 sex ratio	974	951	0-6 sex ratio	962	942
Literacy rate	36.1	62.8	Literacy rate	55.1	75.7
Pallan			Adi Andhra		
Sex ratio	994	1016	Sex ratio	911	1013
0-6 sex ratio	962	965	0-6 sex ratio	976	959
Literacy rate	41.1	66.5	Literacy rate	43.5	68.6
Paraiyan			Devendrakulanathan		
Sex ratio	993	1013	Sex ratio	1005	1010
0-6 sex ratio	957	961	0-6 sex ratio	956	942
Literacy rate	42.8	67.4	Literacy rate	49.3	71.1
Chakkilian			Castes (A)		
Sex ratio	970	999	Sex ratio	983	1024
0-6 sex ratio	949	955	0-6 sex ratio	967	983
Literacy rate	27.5	55.3	Literacy rate	39.8	61.9
Arunthathiyar			Castes (B)		
Sex ratio	947	990	Sex ratio	989	1009
0-6 sex ratio	944	960	0-6 sex ratio	950	942
Literacy rate	30.8	58.2	Literacy rate	44.8	65.4
Madari			Castes (C)		
Sex ratio	959	1003	Sex ratio	957	970
0-6 sex ratio	988	951	0-6 sex ratio	938	904
Literacy rate	27.3	50.6	Literacy rate	46.3	71.9

Compared to differences in literacy rates, completion rates of education at different levels show greater inequality among the castes in SCs. The literacy rate without formal education has uniformly for all the castes and so too the increase in completion rate of primary school between 1991 and 2011. Secondary school

completion rate has increased for all the castes, but with some noticeable differences between castes. Among the major castes, Chakkilian, Arunthathiyar, Madari and Kuravan have been turning out lower completion rates from secondary to higher education levels than the SCs average in both 1991 and 2011. These communities have some definite reasons for their inaccessibility to from high school and beyond. The stellar performance in completion rate from high school to higher education has been the Devendrakulanthan. The improvement in completion rates at the higher secondary and graduation level for Devedrakulanthan stands out distinctly from other castes. Next in the list of higher completion rates of higher education are Valluvan and Adi Andhras. All the three communities have larger urban population which could be one of the reasons for this achievement. Even smaller casts in the groups (B) and (C) have shown above average completion rates of higher secondary and graduation. Thus urbanization plays an important role in accessing post-secondary education for SCs.

Table 8: Differences in Education Completion Rates among SCs (%)

Castes	Literacy without formal education		Primary School		High School		Higher Secondary		Graduate and Above	
	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011
All SCs	12.9	2.8	13.6	16.8	10.9	24.5	1.3	8.5	0.8	4.2
Adi Dravidar	12.5	3.0	14.1	16.1	12.4	26.2	1.3	9.0	0.8	4.5
Pallan	14.0	2.6	14.4	17.8	10.4	23.8	1.4	9.0	0.9	4.7
Paraiyan	14.2	2.5	15.1	17.8	11.4	24.9	1.4	9.0	0.8	4.2
Chakkiliyan	12.0	2.3	9.4	18.0	5.4	19.0	0.5	4.8	0.2	1.4
Arundhadhiyar	11.4	2.4	11.0	17.1	7.2	20.9	0.8	6.3	0.4	2.6
Madari	12.1	2.5	8.7	16.6	5.5	17.1	0.7	3.6	0.4	1.0
Kuravan	12.4	2.5	12.5	18.7	9.5	20.2	1.2	6.5	0.6	2.9
Valluvan	13.4	3.1	18.5	16.6	19.0	26.9	2.5	13.1	1.7	8.6
Adi Andhra	11.9	3.0	14.7	17.5	14.3	26.4	1.4	8.5	1.1	5.5
Devendrakulanathan	15.3	2.5	16.8	17.2	14.9	23.1	1.5	11.1	0.8	9.2
Castes (A)	13.9	2.9	13.4	17.9	10.3	21.5	1.4	6.8	0.7	2.9
Castes (B)	15.0	2.7	14.7	17.8	12.4	20.6	1.9	9.6	1.1	4.7
Castes (C)	13.1	5.8	15.1	15.3	13.8	25.2	2.4	8.9	1.9	5.8

Table 8: Work-force participation of Castes in SCs

Castes	1991	2011	Castes	1991	2011
All SCs			Kuravan		
% TW/Pop	48.4	49.0	% TW/Pop	48.3	46.0
% Cultivator/TW	14.7	7.0	% Cultivator/TW	11.9	4.4
% Agri.Lab/TW	65.0	50.4	% Agri.Lab/TW	31.2	23.0
Adi Dravida			Valluvan		
% TW/Pop	44.9	47.0	% TW/Pop	41.1	42.5
% Cultivator/TW	15.5	6.9	% Cultivator/TW	12.1	5.7
% Agri.Lab/TW	63.5	47.8	% Agri.Lab/TW	50.2	28.3
Pallan			Adi Andhra		
% TW/Pop	52.3	51.6	% TW/Pop	34.1	37.9
% Cultivator/TW	22.3	10.6	% Cultivator/TW	7.7	2.0
% Agri.Lab/TW	64.1	55.7	% Agri.Lab/TW	21.7	7.4
Paraiyan			Devendrakulanathan		
% TW/Pop	50.2	49.3	% TW/Pop	52.2	48.7
% Cultivator/TW	14.9	7.2	% Cultivator/TW	4.0	5.9
% Agri.Lab/TW	67.4	55.7	% Agri.Lab/TW	32.5	35.0
Chakkilian			Sub-Castes (A)		
% TW/Pop	55.3	54.8	% TW/Pop	50.2	48.8
% Cultivator/TW	5.0	2.4	% Cultivator/TW	12.0	4.1
% Agri.Lab/TW	77.1	59.4	% Agri.Lab/TW	51.0	39.0
Arunthathiyar			Sub-castes (B)		
% TW/Pop	51.7	52.0	% TW/Pop	42.9	46.4
% Cultivator/TW	7.5	3.8	% Cultivator/TW	12.3	5.9
% Agri.Lab/TW	69.3	50.5	% Agri.Lab/TW	44.8	33.2
Madari			Sub-castes (C)		
% TW/Pop	57.5	59.7	% TW/Pop	46.7	43.6
% Cultivator/TW	2.8	1.9	% Cultivator/TW	11.4	3.7
% Agri.Lab/TW	77.9	68.2	% Agri.Lab/TW	44.7	22.9

The overall SCs work participation rate is slightly more than that of non-SC&ST. But the SCs are predominantly agricultural labourers compared to non-SC&ST. Therefore higher participation in agricultural labour force is the main reason for the SC's higher participation rate. Between castes in SCs, we find those castes with less than the average work participation rate (%TW/Pop) have lower agriculture labour ratio (%Agri.Lab/TW) and/or lower ratio of cultivators (%Cultivator/TW). Adi Dravidar, Kuravan, Valluvan, Adi Andhra, and caste groups (A), (B) and (C) had less than average level of work participation rates in both 1991 and 2011. Notably, Paraiyan and Devendrakulanathan slipped from above average to below average work participation rate between the two years. All these SC castes also had below average agriculture labour ratio, except Paraiyan. Among the castes with lower agricultural labour ratios, only Adi Dravidar and Paraiyan had slightly higher than the average ratio of cultivators. Pallan, Chakkilian, Arunthathiyar and Madari, are the castes with high work participation rates and agriculture labour ratio. Among these four castes, only Pallan has higher ratio of cultivators.

To recapitulate, the relative development of SCs compared to non-SC&ST is still much to be desired. Though there are some significant improvements in literacy rate and school education, generally the access to higher education is not equally distributed between the SCs and non-SC&ST. The SCs generally have higher overall sex ratio than the SC&ST, the decline in percentage of 0-6 population and lower 0-6 sex ratio show the general trend is catching up with the SCs as well. The lower urbanization of SCs is reflected in higher labour force participation and higher ratio of agricultural labour.

Many of these trends are also observable among the sub-castes in the SCs. But there is no significant relationship between the variables across the sub-castes. Out of 76 castes, 10 castes have 98.2 per cent of the total SC population, they become dominant within SCs. Yet within these 10 sub-castes the differences in the various development indicators as well as the trend in such indicators between the censuses show the high level of heterogeneity among the SCs. The sheer growth rate of population differs considerably between the sub-castes, even among the major sub-castes. So too the levels of urbanization and literacy rate differ between the sub-castes. The labour force participation rate and ratio of agricultural workers to total workers are also different among the different sub-castes. What is important is no two sub-castes exhibit the same characteristics in terms of the variables we have taken in the study. The sub-castes are different in terms of individual characteristics, hence they have different trajectories of development and some have also exhibited stagnation. To cut the long story short, there is enough of evidence to show the heterogeneity among the SCs and there could possibly be different sets of reasons for each of these communities to have been oppressed and the process of subsequent development.

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