

Scheduled Castes in Punjab: Occupational Profile and Segregation



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Abstract

The Scheduled Castes (SCs) are various officially designated groups of historically disadvantaged indigenous people in India. According to Census of India, 2011, the SC'Spopulation in India is 16.6 per cent, and in Punjab, 31.9 per cent population (88,60,179 people) of the state belongs to SC'Swhich is the highest proportion of SC'Spopulation among all the states and union territories. There are thirty nine Scheduled Castes notified in the state of Punjab. In absolute numbers, Punjab holds 10th rank and accounts for 4.4 per cent of the total SC population of the country. The growth rate of the SC population during the decade of 2001-2011 at 26.1 per cent is higher by 12.2 per cent if compared to the overall growth rate of the total population in the state. The SC'S in the state are predominantly rural, as 73.3 per cent of them live in villages. District-wise distribution of the SC population shows that they are mainly concentrated in the districts of Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, Patiala, Sangrur, and Bathinda. These districts account for 50.8 per cent of the total SC population of the State. The overall sex ratio of SC population in Punjab is 910 females per 1000 males which is lower than the national average of 945 recorded for the total SC population. Literacy rate for the SC population in Punjab is 64.81 per cent which is also lower than the national average of 74.04 per cent for overall population. The drop-out rate for SC'S is also high at the primary education level, and therefore, there is a sharper decline in the percentage of SC students at the higher levels of education. The work participation rate of the SC population in Punjab is 36 per cent which is lower than 40.9 percent, aggregated at the national level for all SCs. The work participation rate in Punjab at 36.14 percent for males is higher than their female counterparts (35.18 per cent) at 2011. Among all workers, 79.5 percent are main workers and this proportion is higher than that recorded for all SC'S at the national level (73 per cent).The main objective of this paper is to examine the occupational structure among the Scheduled Caste and its distribution into various occupations as well as sex wise participation in different economic activities.

Keywords: Modernity, Socio-Economic Status.

Introduction

Population is both the 'means' and the 'end' of economic activities. It is, therefore, the most important factor of economic development. Whereas population of a country, on the one hand, may prove helpful in its economic development, on the other hand, it may nullify all its attempts of economic development. Unfortunately, population of India has been proving to be a great obstacle to the economic development and to growth rate of the economy (Jain et al., 2016). The Scheduled Castes (SCs) are various officially designated groups of historically disadvantaged indigenous people in India. The term is recognised in the Constitution of India. During the period of British rule in the Indian subcontinent, they were known as the Depressed Classes. The percentage of people in SC'S is essentially the percentage of people in the lower part of Indian society. In modern literature, the SC'Sare sometimes referred to as adi dravida or Dalits (Wikipedia, 2017). According to Census of India 2011, the SC'S population in India is 16.6 per cent and in Punjab 31.9 per cent population of the state belongs to SCs. As per Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, in the state of Punjab, there are 39 types of SC'Srecorded in the list of The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) order 1950 and (Amendment) Act, 1976, (Amendment) Act, 2002 and (Second Amendment) Act, 2002, Part XIV-Punjab. In literature, some of the common features of SC'Sare found in every state, like, (i) the SC'S

constitute the lowest strata of Indian society; (ii) they had been subjected to a variety of disabilities, deprivations and oppression under the traditional system; (iii) they were placed outside and down below in social and ritual hierarchy under the varna model of society; (iv) they were engaged in manual tasks which were considered impure and unclean; (v) they were considered untouchables; (vi) they were denied entry into temples and to houses of the upper castes; (vii) like the Shudras, they had no access to the study of religious texts; and (viii) generally they lived at the outskirts of the village in poor housing condition. Besides this segregation, the SC'S formed an integral part of social life. At the village level, a large proportion of them worked as agricultural laborers for land owners belonging to high castes. Moreover, they provided a variety of specialized services. They worked as servants, scavengers, sweepers, drummers etc. (Saraf, 2013). Therefore, the main objective of this paper is to examine the occupational structure and segregation of SC'S marginal workers in Punjab. The paper is divided into five sections. Following introduction, second section highlights the Scheduled Castes population in Punjab. The concept and importance of occupational structure is defined in section three followed by methodology and data sources. Section four explains the occupational segregation of SC'S in Punjab and the paper concludes in section five.

Aim of the Study

The study shows social and economic development of any region depends on the number of persons who are economically active and the quality and regularity of their work. Occupation is a very important socio economic attributes of population. It exerts significant influence on social, cultural and economic characteristics of any region. The census of India classified the total population of any area into two groups viz. workers and non workers. The workers are further classified under different occupations, gender, rural-urban and age groups. The workers are sub-divided into main workers, marginal workers and non-workers. The main workers are the workers who work for the period of six months or more in a year, and marginal workers are the workers who work for less than six months. The persons who did not work at all are categorised as non-workers. In this paper we have discussed the occupational structure of marginal workers in Punjab.

Scheduled Castes Population in Punjab

As per the Census 2011 data, the total population in India is 121,05,69,573, out of which 16.6 per cent people belongs to SC'S (Table 1). In the state of Punjab, the population in the year 2011 is 2,77,43,388, out of which 31.9 per cent people belongs to SCs. Therefore, around one third people of Punjab are SCs, which is a bigger proportion and almost two times than the national ratio. The same distribution is found between male SC'S and female SCs, i.e. the proportion of SC'S in male and female population in India is 16.6 per cent and 16.7 per cent respectively, and in case of Punjab, the proportion of SC'S in male and female population is 31.7 per cent and 32.2 per cent respectively. Therefore, it is

observed that the proportion of SC'S in male and female categories is same as that of in total population at both national as well as Punjab state level.

Table 1
Scheduled Castes Population in Punjab, Census 2011

Population	India	Punjab
Total Population (number)	1210569573	27743388
Total SC'S Population (number)	201378086	8860179
SC'S to Total Population (percent)	16.6	31.9
Total Males	623121843	14639465
SC'S Males	103535314	4639875
SC'S Males to Total Males (percent)	16.6	31.7
Total Females	587447730	13103873
SC'S Females	97843058	4220304
SC'S Females to Total Females (percent)	16.7	32.2

Source: Census of India, 2011.

Occupational Structure

The Concept and Methodology

The study of occupational structure occupies an important position in the field of population geography. The social and economic development of any region depends on the number of persons who are economically active and the quality and regularity of their work. The proportion of economically active population in various occupations indicates the economic profile of various groups of society. The occupational structure of a society is the product of a number of intimately related factors. The nature and variety of physical resources base, of course, lays down the basic foundation in the form of good land for agriculture, indented coast for fishing, thick vegetation cover for forestry, rich geological strata for mining, etc. (Chandana, 1986). The occupation depends upon the degree of economic development and sophistication of a country (Ghosh, 1985). The occupational structure is essential to understand the Scheduled Caste and its distribution into various occupations as well as sex wise participation in different economic activities.

Occupation is a very significant socio economic attributes of population. It exerts significant influence on social, cultural and economic characteristics of any region. It refers to profession or any type of work, one is engaged in. Besides physical resources base and advancement of science and technology status of schedule caste in society and their historic background are the most important influencing factor in case of occupational pattern of scheduled castes. The census of India classified the total population of any area into two groups viz. workers and non workers (Goswami, 2014). The workers are further classified under different occupations, gender, rural-urban and age groups. The workers are sub-divided into main workers, marginal workers and non-workers. The main workers are the

workers who work for the period of six months or more in a year, and marginal workers are the workers who work for less than six months. The persons who did not work at all are categorised as non-workers.

Occupational Structure of SC'S in Punjab

In spite of various protective, promotive and developmental measures initiated by the government for the social and economic upliftment of scheduled castes, the target groups are not able to overcome the age old deprivation of caste system. The problem of illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, social oppression and atrocities are still haunting the dalits in Indian society (Maurya, 2001). Economic development experienced in the Punjab during the post independence period has brought many changes in the manner in which caste works in the region today. The new agrarian technology led to the disintegration of the traditional structures of patronage and loyalty. The process of development during the last five decades has created avenues of employment in urban, semi-urban and rural areas that are caste free

in nature. The occupational diversification of the Scheduled Castes of Punjab has been quite significant, at least in some parts of the State. However, a large majority of them still lives in conditions of deprivation (Surinder S. Jodhka, 2000).

Table 2 depicts district wise SC marginal workers available for work, as per Census of India 2011 data. In India, number of marginal workers are 2,41,21,271 out of which 51.3 per cent (1,23,70,514) are males and 48.7 per cent (1,17,50,757) are females. On the other hand in Punjab, 6,61,269 persons are marginal workers, out of which 56.9 per cent (3,76,195) are males and 43.1 per cent (2,85,074) are females. Thus, it is observed from the census data that the proportion of scheduled castes male workers is comparatively higher than the proportion of female workers which indicates a low economic status of women in society. The females are generally engaged in household domestic works or other unorganized sectors of economy and therefore, many of them remain unaccounted.

Table 2: District Wise Marginal Workers Available for Work , Punjab 2011

National / State / District	Total			Rural			Urban		
	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female
India	24121271	12370514	11750757	21396947	10711162	10685785	2724324	165935	1064972
Punjab	661269	376195	285074	546903	303020	243883	114366	73175	41191
Ferozpur	87581	35677	51904	80295	30861	49434	7286	4816	2470
Amritsar	57623	32159	25464	41511	22096	19415	16112	10063	6049
Ludhiana	53015	31236	21779	36183	21195	14988	16832	10041	6791
Bathinda	47730	21739	25991	39755	16811	22944	7975	4928	3047
Jalandhar	43338	28148	15190	29677	19424	10253	13661	8724	4937
Gurdaspur	42530	31539	10991	34597	25877	8720	7933	5662	2271
Hoshiarpur	40137	28141	11996	35290	24747	10543	4847	3394	1453
Mansa	35390	11666	23724	32255	9983	22272	3135	1683	1452
Patiala	34299	21517	12782	28176	17613	10563	6123	3904	2219
Muktsar	32431	13022	19409	28108	10380	17728	4323	264	1681
Tarantaran	31537	21190	10347	30274	20418	9856	1263	772	491
Sangrur	30185	19140	11045	25758	16025	9733	4427	3115	1312
Moga	28329	17881	10448	25329	16006	9323	3000	1875	1123
Faridkot	18385	10125	8260	15268	8017	7251	3117	2108	1009
SBS Nagar ¹	16614	11306	5308	14632	9903	4729	1982	1403	579
Kapurthala	16546	10741	5805	13810	9233	4577	2736	1508	1228
Rupnagar	12573	8887	3686	10496	7300	3196	2077	1587	490
Barnala	12334	7615	4719	9632	5830	3802	2702	1785	917
SAS Nagar ²	10659	7426	3233	7237	5247	1990	3422	2179	1243
Fatehgarh Sahib	10033	7040	2993	8620	6054	2566	1413	986	427

1. SBS Nagar: Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar (Nawanshahr).

2. SAS Nagar: Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar (Mohali).

Source: Census of India, 2011

Table 2 also depicts data about 20 districts of Punjab. Ferozpur has the highest proportion of marginal workers 13.2 per cent (87,581) and Fatehgarh Sahib has the least 1.5 per cent (10,033) in Punjab. In India, 88.7 per cent (2,13,96,947) marginal workers reside in rural areas whereas in case of Punjab 82.7 per cent (5,46,903) marginal workers reside in rural areas. In most districts of Punjab, the percentage of marginal workers resides in rural areas

is more than the percentage of marginal workers reside in urban areas because the cost of living is low in rural areas as compares to urban areas.

Table 2 also depicts the district wise distribution of the SC population which shows that they are mainly concentrated in the districts of Ferozpur, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur and Bathinda. These districts account for 56.2 per cent (3,71,954) of the total population in Punjab while the remaining districts account for the residual 43.8 per cent (2,89,315) of the SC population of state. Patwardhan (1974) in her study analyzed the kind and degree of mobility among Scheduled Castes

in an urban context. She found that untouchables were still facing ritual, economic and social disabilities.

As per Census of India (2011), total industrial category of marginal workers are classified into four parts namely Cultivators, Agricultural labour, Household Industry workers and other workers. Cultivator is a person or thing that cultivates something. Agricultural labour who tills the soil for living or works with his/her hands. Household industry workers are an industry conducted by one or more members of the household at home or within the village in rural areas and only within the precincts of the house where the households lives in urban areas.

Table 3 depicts the district wise marginal workers available for work in India and Punjab. At National level the share of Cultivators is 10.7 per cent (25,86,865), Agricultural labour 59.7 per cent (1,44,01,416), Household industry workers 4.2 per cent (10,15,960) and other workers is 25.4 per cent (61,17,030). In Punjab Cultivators accounts for 3.6 percent (23,601), Agricultural labour 44.7 per cent

(2,95,452), Household industry workers 4.3 per cent (28,446) and other workers is 47.4 per cent (3,13,770). Therefore, both at national level as well as at state level the share of marginal workers engaged in agricultural and other sectors is higher as compare to cultivator and household industry workers.

Table 3 also shows the district wise division of marginal workers on the basis of industrial category in Punjab. Out of 20 districts of Punjab, Firozpur has the highest proportion of cultivators 31.1 per cent (7,338 Cultivators) as well as agricultural labour 19.4 per cent (57,269 Agricultural labourers), district Ludhiana has highest household industry workers 16.2 per cent (4,605 Household industry workers) and also highest other workers 11.0 per cent (34,524 other workers). On the other hand, the lowest proportion of cultivators is in Barnala 0.007 per cent (161 Cultivators), agricultural labour in SAS nagar 0.6 per cent (1,846 Agricultural labourers), household industry workers in Muktsar 1.1 per cent (303 Household industry workers) and other workers again in Barnala district 1.5 per cent (4669 other workers).

Table 3: District Wise Marginal Workers Available for Work, Punjab 2011

National / State / District	Total	Cultivators	Agricultural Labour	Household Industry Workers	Other Workers
India	24121271	2586865	14401416	1015960	6117030
Punjab	661269	23601	295452	28446	313770
Firozpur	87581	7338	57269	1199	21775
Amritsar	57623	1694	22520	3069	30340
Ludhiana	53015	1470	12416	4605	34524
Bathinda	47730	952	30205	1149	15424
Jalandhar	43338	1149	10555	2089	29545
Gurdaspur	42530	1533	13279	2332	25386
Hoshiarpur	40137	1294	13222	1605	24016
Mansa	35390	977	23134	1709	9570
Patiala	34299	768	14181	1221	18129
Muktsar	32431	414	22298	303	9416
Tarantaran	31537	985	14912	1760	13880
Sangrur	30185	926	12445	1099	15775
Moga	28329	1032	13699	1818	11780
Faridkot	18385	466	11354	784	5781
SBS Nagar ¹	16614	461	3519	900	11734
Kapurthala	16546	566	6306	632	9042
Rupnagar	12573	749	2754	802	8269
Barnala	12334	161	7017	487	4669
SAS Nagar ²	10659	364	1846	466	7983
Fatehgarh Sahib	10033	302	2522	417	6792

1. SBS Nagar: Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar (Nawanshahr). 2. SAS Nagar: Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar (Mohali).

Source: Census of India, 2011.

The Constitution (Schedule Castes) order 1950 and (Amendment) Act, 1976 (Ammendment) Act, 2002 and (Second Amendment) Act, 2002 Part XIV-Punjab classified the Schedule Castes in Punjab

into 39 categories. Table 4 depicts the classification of marginal workers on the basis of schedule castes (Second Amendment Act, 2002). In Punjab, Schedule castes are classified into 39 categories. The total number of Marginal workers available for work under these categories are 6,61,269 out of which 56.9 per cent (3,76,195) are male workers and 43.1 per cent (2,85,074) are female workers.

Table 4: Marginal Workers Available for Work Classified on the basis of the Caste, Punjab 2011

Caste	Total	Male	Female	Cultivators	Agricultural Labour	Household Industry Workers	Other Workers
All Schedule Castes	661,269	376,195	285,074	23,601	295,452	28,446	313,770
Mazhabi, Mazhabi Sikh	224,830	120,158	104,672	5,394	128,093	7,954	83,389
Chamar,	127,582	78,294	49,288	4,022	43,653	7,417	72,490
Ad Dharmi	60,332	42,524	17,808	1,943	14,557	2,617	41,215
Mahatam, Rai Sikh	59,089	22,600	36,489	7,091	39,056	1,134	11,808
Balmiki, Chuhra, Bhangi	52,277	33,019	19,258	1,103	18,857	1,647	30,670
Bazigar	19,190	9,525	9,665	396	11,245	528	7,021
Dumna, Mahasha, Doom	15,352	11,860	3,492	356	3,962	702	10,332
Bauria, Bawaria	12,885	5,598	7,287	298	9,200	236	3,151
Megh	9,317	4,351	4,966	239	5,192	316	3,570
Sansi, Bhedkut, Manesh	9,046	5,451	3,595	219	3,707	427	4,693
Dhanak	6,752	3,889	2,863	116	1,687	95	4,854
Kabirpanthi, Julaha	4,247	2,759	1,488	198	616	286	3,147
Sirkiband	3,404	2,243	1,161	91	603	193	2,517
Od	3,358	1,498	1,860	61	1,952	40	1,305
Pasi	2,337	1,254	1,083	30	868	73	1,366
Batwal, Barwala	1,471	1,168	303	22	465	90	894
Kori, Koli	1,440	788	652	35	418	77	910
Sarera	999	664	335	44	338	77	540
Deha, Dhaya, Dhea	877	443	434	3	4	58	812
Mochi	607	283	324	3	17	237	350
Sikligar	574	300	274	7	71	178	318
Barar, Burar, Berar	533	410	123	15	125	31	362
Gandhila, Gandil Gondola	521	360	161	2	287	28	204
Khatik	518	243	275	9	82	20	407
Sapela	338	237	101	2	15	6	315
Bangali	247	202	45	2	17	4	224
Bhanjra	227	173	54	7	37	20	163
Nat	145	79	66	1	35	4	105
Darain	131	75	56	4	37	43	47
Gagra	58	34	24	4	25	0	29
Marija, Marecha	33	26	7	0	0	3	30
Sanhai	28	10	18	0	3	17	8
Dhogri, Dhangri, Saggi	21	12	9	0	4	0	17
Sansoi	18	10	8	0	3	0	15
Dagi	13	8	5	0	4	4	5
Perna	8	5	3	0	0	1	7
Chanal	2	2	0	0	1	0	1
Pherera	1	1	0	0	0	0	1

1. Includes Jatia Chamar, Rehgar, Raigar, Ramdasi, Ravidasi, Ramdasia, Ramdasia Sikh, Ravidasia, Ravidasia Sikh

Source: Census of India, 2011.

Table 4 shows that the Mazhabi, Mazhabi sikh caste has the highest marginal workers 34 per cent (2,24,830) and Pheresa caste has the least number of marginal workers (1 worker only). The major dominated castes in work sector are Chamar, Jatia Chamar, Rehgar, Rajjar, Ramdasi, Ravidasi, Ramdasia, Ramdasia Sikh, Ravidasia, Ravidasia Sikh 19.3 per cent (1,27,582), Mahatam, Rai Sikh 8.9 per cent (59,089), Ad Dharmi 9.1 per cent (60,332),

Balmiki, Chuhra, Bhangi 7.9 per cent (52,277), Bazigar 2.9 per cent(19,190),. Thus, the data reveals that out of 39 castes, the above mentioned 6 castes have 82.1 per cent of marginal workers and remaining 33 has 17.9 percent marginal workers respectively. Caste wise occupational distribution shows that more than 30 per cent (7,091) of cultivators belong to Mahatam and Rai Sikh. Nearly 40 per cent (1,28,093) of agricultural labour and around 28 per cent (7,954) of household industry workers belongs to Mazhabi and Maznabi Sikh.

Conclusion

Occupational structure is the produce of the total population base and depends upon a variety of demographic as well as social, economic and physical factors. In this paper we have discussed the occupational structure of marginal workers in Punjab. In Punjab the percentage of marginal workers in rural area 82.7 per cent (5, 46,903) is more than urban area 17.3 per cent (1, 14,366). After 70 years of Independence still majority of SC's population lives in rural areas. When we study marginal workers on the basis of classification of work, it was found that in Punjab majority workers are engaged as Agricultural Labour 44.7 per cent (2, 95, and 452). As per the Constitution of Second Amendment Act, 2002 there are 39 Schedule Castes. Out of 39 Schedule Castes, Mazhabi, Chamar, Ad Dharmi, Rai Sikh, Balmiki and Bazigar together constitute 82.2 per cent of the total SC population. While six SCs, namely Sapela, Bangali, Bhanjara.....down to Gagra have below 5,000 populations. Marija, Sanhai, Dhogri.....down to Pherera, the eight castes are very small having a number less than 1,000. Caste wise occupational distribution shows that more than 30 per cent (7,091) of cultivators belong to Mahatam and Rai Sikh Caste. Nearly 40 per cent (1, 28,093) of agricultural labour and around 28 per cent (7,954) of household industry workers belongs to Mazhabi and Maznabi Sikh Caste.

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