

REGIONAL PATTERN OF WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION AMONG SCHEDULED CASTE AND NON-SCHEDULED POPULATION: NSSO REGION BASED STUDY

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Abstract: Indian Society is characterised by the division and hierarchy, where caste system provides for the ordering of groups in society and caste continued to define the socio-economic status over the geographical space. The paper, based on the NSSO Unit level data, tries to unfold the geographical pattern of workforce composition and the existing gap between the scheduled caste and Non Scheduled population. The analysis tries to see the spatial manifestations of inequality among the social groups in the employment status.

Key Words: WPR, Regional Analysis, Inequality, Sopher' Index, Casualisation

Introduction

Several historical factors have affected the levels of inequality in employment opportunity over a period. Subbarao conceptualization of Indian diversity is important to understand the foundation of regional differences in social phenomena. Social inequality is a keynote of the caste system; it is the theme of the social etiquette of the Hindus. Attitudes of social inequality are not only strongly impressed upon the culture, but they are also binding upon the least privileged Hindus (Cox O.C.1948).

The word caste is derived from the Latin 'castus' and implies purity of bread and essential principle is mainly concerned with eating and drinking (Risely,1915).One caste cannot exist in an otherwise casteless society, for castes are interdependent social phenomena. Repulsion, hierarchy and hereditary specialization: caste includes three elements which divided Hindu society into a considerable number of diminutive societies in opposition(Cox O.C.,1948).

The caste system provides for the ordering of groups in society once and for all time. There is no provision for initiating change; and when change became inevitable it must be explained away. Conscious striving among persons to enter new functional fields or to achieve advanced social position is taboo. Change has occurred in society; but change of society is

absent. Caste, as an empirical reality, can be relocated in the form of jatis in a specific rural and urban context (Dumont, 1980).

The system has expired but caste identities remain and show no sign of going, it seems, caste system is dead but its ghost remains, and this system has collapsed today because all its functions have collapsed due to several factors like ethical, political, social, economic, and technological so functional significance of the caste system vanished, the need for hereditary occupation is now redundant, and social mobility is much more, and The information age has thrown up an opening for new occupations, which cannot be classified into the sphere of the four traditional varnas (Nadkarni,2003).

With the new forces, of emergence of the larger markets and decline of the village based subsistence production, urbanization and above all the rise of democracy based on adult franchise; the caste based mode of social production, the jajmani system's sustainability started breaking down, with widespread acceptance of new value like equality, self respect and human dignity, in a changed scenario of socio-economic reality and as a apathy pointed out by the Srinivas that caste itself got a new lease of life through realities of democratic polity, but caste as a system got died- though he also maintained

that caste as a system is dying but individual caste is flourishing (Srinivas,2003).

Indian society is characterized by the division and hierarchy. Here, regional identities are getting stronger but the content of the regional identities are also changing (Singh, 1992). Despite of all this, caste continued to define the socio-economic status due to rural base of majority of population and these change do brought differentiation in social space over the geographical space.

A positive change on various socio-economic parameters has been recorded but that change has touched merely less than half of their population. In fact, the gap between the mainstream and scheduled caste population still persists. The basic reasons behind their low socio- economic conditions are illiteracy, lack of required skills, inequalities in agrarian structure due to failure of land reforms, lack of income generating assets and ineffective implementations of the welfare schemes (Singh,2009).It must be recognized that work is not only a way to livelihood; it defines the conditions of existence (Raju,2010). An analysis of a population's economic composition unfolds the diverse economic, demographic and cultural attributes of an area, which form the basis for region's social and economic development.

"NSS defined workers as "persons who were engaged in any economic activity (any activity resulting in production of goods and services that add value to national product was considered as an economic activity) or who, despite their attachment to economic activity, abstained from work for reason of illness, injury or other physical disability, bad weather, festivals, social or religious functions or other contingencies necessitating temporary absence from work, constituted workers. Unpaid helpers who assisted in the operation of an economic activity in the household farm or non-farm activities were also considered as workers."¹ Workers are further categorized as

self-employed, regular salaried/wage employee and casual wage labour. Work participation rate (WPR), is the ratio of the working population (in particular age group) with that of the total population (in the same age group). The labour force participation rate gives the supply side;work participation rate is the result of an interaction between the supplyof and demand for labour. Work participation gives the picture of the labour distribution."

The research paper aims to see the geographical pattern of workforce participation rate and inequality in WPR among scheduled castes and Non-scheduled population, and also try to see the growth rate of scheduled caste and non-scheduled workers. The paper is an attempt to find the proportion of social groups in various employment categories and try explore the level of casualization in work among the social groups.

The paper is based on the analysis of the unit level data of 66TH Round: schedule 10: Employment and Unemployment (July 2009-June 2010). And NSSO regions are taken to show the geographical pattern in the study.

In the present study, the Social groups of Scheduled Caste and Non-Scheduled, are taken for the analysis. Non-Scheduled Population is referred to Total population minus both Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population, and referred as the General population in the paper.

The present study attempts an analysis of workforce structure based on the '**usual status**' by taking also into consideration the subsidiary economic status of persons categorised 'not working'" or the Usual Status (PS+SS) categorization for short(from NSSO) for the age group 15-59 years (working age group).Workforce Participation Rate = ((total no. of workers in the age group)/(total population in the age group))*100. To show the **disparity** among Scheduled Caste and General Population (mentioned as 'Others' in NSSO),

¹ Report of NSS, (July, 2009 - June, 2010), "Key Indicator of Employment and Unemployment in India", page A-4.

Sopher’s Index of Disparity, modified by A. Kundu is used:

$$Ds = \log(X2/X1) + \log((Q-X1)/(Q-X2))$$

where, X2 > X1 and Q > 200

Here, Non-Scheduled population or General population is taken as X2, as they are considered as the forward group, and X1 is Scheduled caste

Compound Annual Growth Rate has been calculated for annual average growth rate by using:- $r = [(Yf/Yb)^{1/n} - 1] * 100$

Where, Yf = Final Year

Yb = Base year

n= Number of years

Status Of Workforce Participation Rate

The analysis is confined to the working age population of 15-59 years, as the changes in workforce structure of 0-15 and 60-plus population have different developmental connotations. India is characterised by the low work participation rate. The table 1.1 shows that the Workforce Participation Rate of usual status (ps+ss), which is more for Scheduled Caste (SCs), i.e., 62.9%, in comparison to Non

Scheduled population or the General population (Gen), i.e. 53.6%, in all the segments whether its gender, but here again the question arises that in what type of work they are engage, in which sector they are located, in multifaceted dimensions of the working world where they locate themselves, whether it is the scenario of the particular regions and locations, or has the geographical spread been fairly distributive.

Table 1.1: Workforce participation rate of age group 15 to 59 among Scheduled caste and General population in 2009-10 (66th NSSO round).

WORK PARTICIPATION RATE, 2009-10(15 to 59 Age Group)		
	SCHEDULED CASTE	GENERAL POPULATION
TOTAL	62.92	53.68
MALE	86.12	82.20
FEMALE	38.89	23.80

Source: Computed by author using NSS unit level data on employment and unemployment, 66th Round, Schedule 10, 2009-10.

Regional Dimension Of Workforce Participation Rate

The regional profile of female workers shows a high degree of variations as compared to that of male workers. The frequency distribution table 1.2 shows that number of regions are more towards the lower side of the rate of workforce participation for females and regions are more at higher side for the males. In comparison to scheduled caste and general population, the rate of workforce participation in more number of regions for the scheduled caste population is high. There are 40 regions for general female population (i.e. 71.4% of the total regions) which have below 30 per cent workforce participation rate and 15 regions (i.e. 26.8% of the total regions) for the scheduled caste females with the same share of workforce participation rate, while, at the male side no region is there with below 30 per cent workforce participation rate. Numbers of regions are more towards the higher end of the

table for males and towards the lower end for the females, and also within social groups the more is with scheduled castes. Uneven development and a high degree of social stratification not only leads to varying participation rates for women workers across geographical limits but these variations also exist across various segments of population within a geographical area (Kak,19994). The highest work force participation among scheduled caste workers is reported in the regions of Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh Central recorded highest workforce participation for total scheduled caste workers, total female scheduled caste workers, rural scheduled caste workers and rural scheduled caste female workers; Madhya Pradesh South Western also recorded high workforce participation rate for males Scheduled caste workers. The highest workforce participation rate for general population workers is recorded in the regions

of Tamil Nadu, Saurashtra and Maharashtra Eastern.

The lowest workforce participation rate for total and rural Scheduled caste females is there with the Western Uttar Pradesh, the reason here lie with the mind-set of the dominant society, in which the notion of working females of a house is associated with the economically & social not well off cultures. In both the social groups the workforce participation rate is low in the regions of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. In those areas where there has been a more intensive programme of agricultural development, it is likely that female participation rates are lower than elsewhere (Nayyar, 1987). Scheduled caste females and general females both have higher rates of workforce in southern state regions and Himachal Pradesh and Uttrakhand regions.

The workforce participation rate for scheduled caste is lowest in north plains and this belt

also have low female workforce participation for both the social groups, as there, the northern Brahmanic culture complex is the largely dominant ideological force, and it is the Brahmanic culture complex that is the model aspired to when castes attempt to raise their status and when individual families gain more wealth and also in the North the seclusion of females is more pervasive and practiced more strictly. In the south it is not so strict (Miller, Barbara, 1982). The Scheduled caste have low work participation in the regions of north plain, these regions also have low work force participation rate for general population. In sectors for the social groups, urban sector shows low workforce participation rate than rural. The workforce participation rate distribution of scheduled castes follow the same pattern of general population, but the rate of participation for scheduled caste is higher than general population.

Table 1.2: Frequency distribution of regions showing workforce participation rate for Scheduled caste and General Population workers.

WPR	SOCIAL GROUPS	NUMBER OF REGIONS					HIGHEST	LOWEST
		<30	30-50	50-70	70-90	>90		
T	SC			44	12		MP Central	UP Western
	GEN		16	39	1		Himachal Pradesh	Bihar Northern
M	SC				42	14	MP South Western	MP South Western
	GEN			2	51	3	Tamil Nadu Coastal	MP South Western
F	SC	15	24	14	3		MP Central	UP Western
	GEN	40	14	2			Himachal Pradesh	Bihar Northern
R	SC			36	19	1	MP Central	Bihar Northern
	GEN		8	43	5		Maharashtra Eastern	Bihar Northern
RM	SC				38	18	MP South Western	MP South Western
	GEN			1	45	10	Tamil Nadu Coastal	Uttrakhand
RF	SC	13	18	21	4		MP Central	UP Western
	GEN	28	18	10			Maharashtra Eastern	Bihar Northern
U	SC		16	39	1		Tamil Nadu Southern	MP Northern
	GEN		37	19			Tamil Nadu Inland	Bihar Northern
UM	SC			3	45	8	Gujarat Dry and Saurashtra	MP Northern
	GEN			3	53		Maharashtra Eastern	MP South Western

UF	SC	38	15	3			Tamil Nadu Southern	Bihar Northern
	GEN	53	3				Tamil Nadu Inland	MP Northern

Source: Computed by author using NSS unit level data on employment and unemployment, 66th Round, Schedule 10, 2009-10.

Regional Dimension Of Age Specific WPR

Age of a person governed the potentiality to work and so the different age groups display varying participation rates. Workforce Participation Rate in all the regions is more for scheduled caste in all age cohorts. The Scheduled caste’s more rate of participation in workforce in age groups below 25 age shows the compelling economic forces in their society that make it necessary for every member of the family to participate in economic struggle with a view to augmenting the family income. The workforce participation rate in India for scheduled caste in the age group associated with the age of attaining higher education is more, i.e. 29.6% and 52.9% for 15 to 19 age group and 20 to 24 age group, respectively

while for the generals the workforce participation rate is 18.5% and 42.5% in these two age groups. The gap in Workforce Participation Rate of scheduled caste and general population is 11.1% and 10.4 % for the two age cohorts (15 to 19 and 20 to 24). Fig. 1.2 shows Workforce Participation Rate is low for the 15 to 19 age groups in both the social groups, followed by the age group 20 to 25, but in all the age groups the workforce participation rate for scheduled caste population is more, also the important thing to notice here is the gap between the workforce participation rate of scheduled caste population and general population is low in the age group above 25 while the gap is more in age group 15 to 19 and also in 20 to 24.

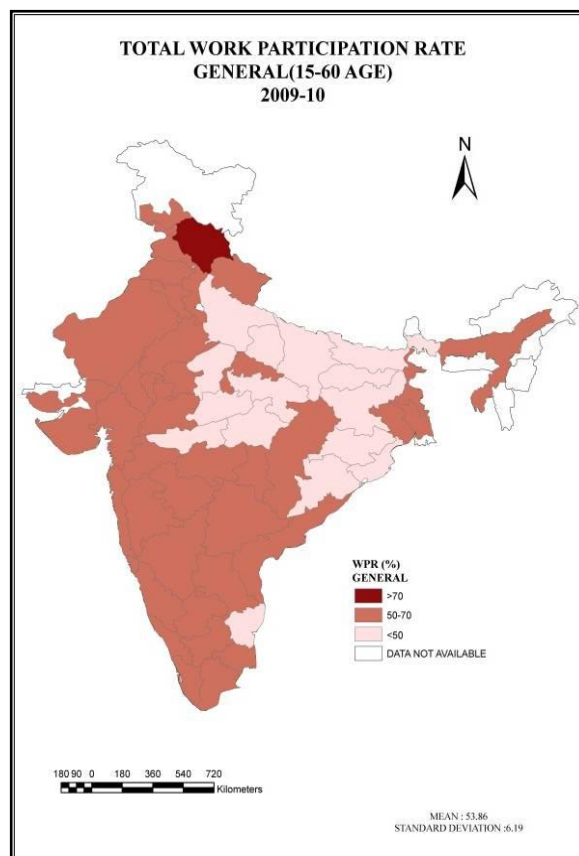
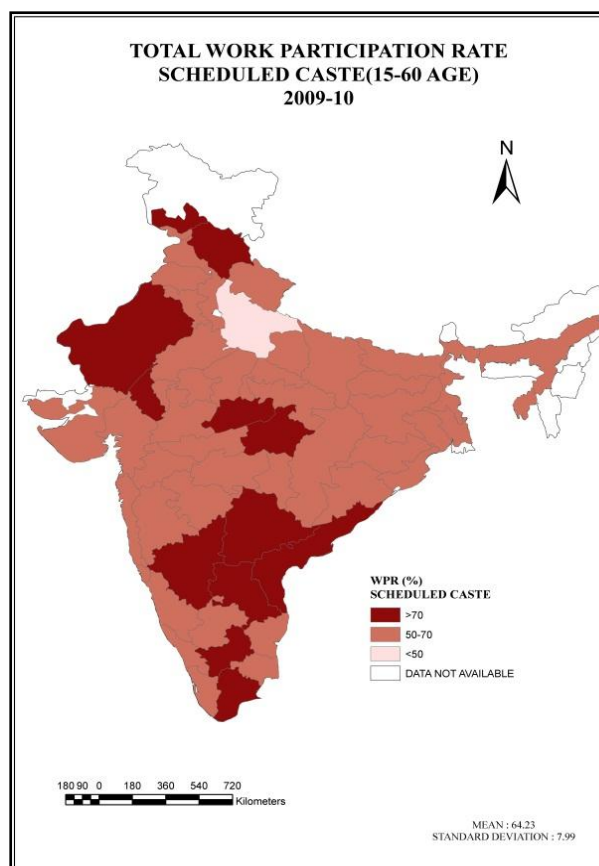


Figure 1.1: SC and General Population WPR.

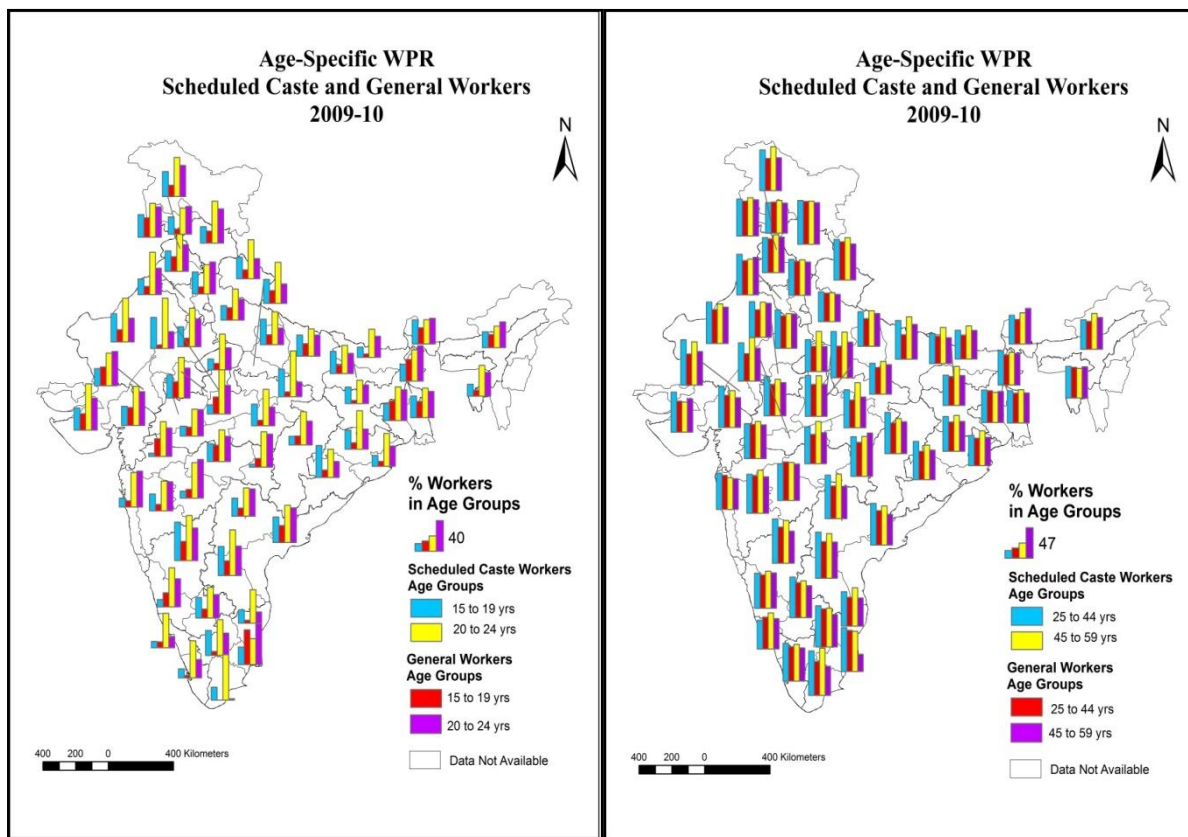


Figure 1.2 Workforce Participation Rate for the different age groups among SC and General Population

Growth Rate Of Workforce Participation Rate

The growth rate in Workforce Participation Rate (table 1.3) shows that there is decline in workforce participation. The decline is more for the females, the more with the Scheduled caste females. The growth rate of rural females in both the social group shows a decline, with comparative more declines among Scheduled caste rural females. In urban sector, the Scheduled caste female shows a decline in participation rate, while for general urban female the growth rate is positive. This decline in workforce participation rates is, however, not confined to women, it is, in fact, present in each and all the four population segments and the rate of decline is more for the scheduled caste in comparison to general population across the gender and sectoral dimensions. The decline in workforce participation is interpreted by many as positive sign, as fewer jobs were created due to an improvement in

several other socio-economic indicators, and many young individuals, previously employed in menial jobs have quit, and joined back school, this is evident from increased attendance and decline in child labour. Participation of women in the labour force has declined sharply, also because of an improvement in other socio-economic indicator.

Growth rate of workers in both the social groups is less in compare to the growth rate of population among the scheduled castes and general workers. Table 1.3 shows the comparison to the population growth rate and worker growth rate, as population increase at the rate of 2%, while workers with 0.2% for scheduled caste while for general population the rate of growth is 0.1%, but there is decline in workers with the rate of -1.2%. Among Scheduled caste workers the highest growth rate is in urban sector, where scheduled caste urban males workers accounted 2.2% growth

rate. And growth rate of scheduled caste rural workers is in negative, with -1.4% for females, though the rate of growth for rural males is 0.5% among scheduled caste workers. Growth rate of scheduled caste male workers is more than the scheduled castes female workers (i.e. 0.9% and -1.1% respectively). Among General

workers the rate of growth is positive only for the urban sector (i.e. 0.4 per cent), across the gender. In rural areas the rate of growth of general population is in negative, but the workers are declining with faster rate than the population.

Table 1.3: Growth rate in workforce participation rate in India, 1999-00 to 2009-10.

WORK PARTICIPATION RATE (15 to 60 Age Group)								
WPR	1999-00		2009-10		Workers Growth (%)		Population Growth (%)	
	SC	GEN	SC	GEN	SC	GEN	SC	GEN
Total	68.9	56.4	62.9	53.7	0.2	-1.2	2.0	0.1
Male	87.9	83.1	86.1	82.2	0.9	-0.8	1.9	0.1
Female	49	28.6	38.9	23.8	-1.1	-2.6	2.1	0.0
Rural	71.8	61	65	56.9	-0.1	-1.6	1.8	-0.3
Rural Male	89.5	85.9	87.4	84	0.5	-3.6	1.7	-0.6
Rural Female	53.5	36.1	42.2	29.1	-1.4	-2.1	1.8	-0.5
Urban	57.1	49.1	55.3	49.1	1.9	0.4	2.9	0.9
Urban Male	81.5	78.9	81.7	79.7	2.2	0.4	2.7	0.8
Urban Female	29.5	16.2	26.3	23.8	0.9	0.4	3.0	1.0

Source: Computed by author using NSS unit level data on employment and unemployment, 66th Round, Schedule 10, 2009-10 and 55th round Scheduled 10.1, 1999-2000.

Regional Pattern Of Disparity In Workforce Participation Rate Among Scheduled Caste And General Population

Regional inequality is not a currently emerged phenomenon, historical processes forced a pattern of development which is not entirely in accordance with the pattern that would have emerged according to the natural process of development (Chand &Puri, 1983). In view of the vital role of workforce participation in economic development of people of a region, an attempt has been made in the following section to study the inter-regional disparities in educational sector and identify those districts, which are lagging behind. Table 1.4 shows that, the disparity is more for the females as there is huge gap in the share

of the scheduled caste and general population’s female workforce participation. More number of regions, showing high disparity, for females across sector. In rural areas, most of the families still adhere to the age old traditional norms in which women confinement to the house are considered to be the symbol of status, while women belonging to the low income families, landless labourers or farmers are forced, as a response to their family needs, to seek employment (Nayyar, 1987), so the more number of regions have more scheduled caste female workers than the females from general population, hence more disparity is for females.

Table 1.4: Frequency distribution table showing the number of regions with disparity in workforce participation rate.

DISPARITY IN WPR	NUMBER OF REGIONS					HIGHEST	LOWEST
	< -0.4	-0.4 to -0.2	-0.2 to 0	0 to 0.2	> 0.2		
T		5	48	3		Maharashtra Inland Central	MP Central
M		1	41	14		Tamil Nadu Coastal	MP South
F	17	17	18	4		J & K Mountain & Jhelum Valley	MP Vindhya
R		7	41	8		Maharashtra Eastern	MP Central
RM		2	33	20	1	Maharashtra Eastern	MP South
RF	13	16	16	10	1	Maharashtra Inland	MP Central
U		3	50	3		WB Western Plains	Tamil Nadu Southern
UM		1	35	20		MP Northern	MP South
UF	13	19	16	3	4	Bihar Northern	Tamil Nadu Southern

Source: Computed by author using NSS unit level data on employment and unemployment, 66th Round, Schedule 10, 2009-10.

Distribution of regions for males are more in the range of -2 to +2, as for all the social groups, males are the bread earner in the family, so, registering low disparity among the scheduled caste males and general male workers. If one compares the two sectors, namely rural and urban, the distribution of regions concentrated from -2 to +2 for males and skewed more towards negative value of disparity for females. Highest disparity is found there in Maharashtra Inland for the total workforce participation and Maharashtra Eastern recorded high disparity for rural areas including both, rural males and females. Lowest disparity is in regions of Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh Central, Madhya

Pradesh South and Madhya Pradesh Vindhya recorded more disparity towards negative side, as there the share of scheduled caste workers is very high in comparison to the general population workers, so the region has more negative values for the disparity. Tamil Nadu Southern also has negative disparity in urban areas. Fig. 1.3 shows the disparity in distribution pattern of workforce participation rate in which it is clear that plains of Uttar Pradesh i.e Central Uttar Pradesh, Eastern Madhya Pradesh and Coastal Tamil Nadu have more disparity with below -0.4 disparities, and the Coastal Maharashtra, Bengal and Himachal Pradesh have low disparity.

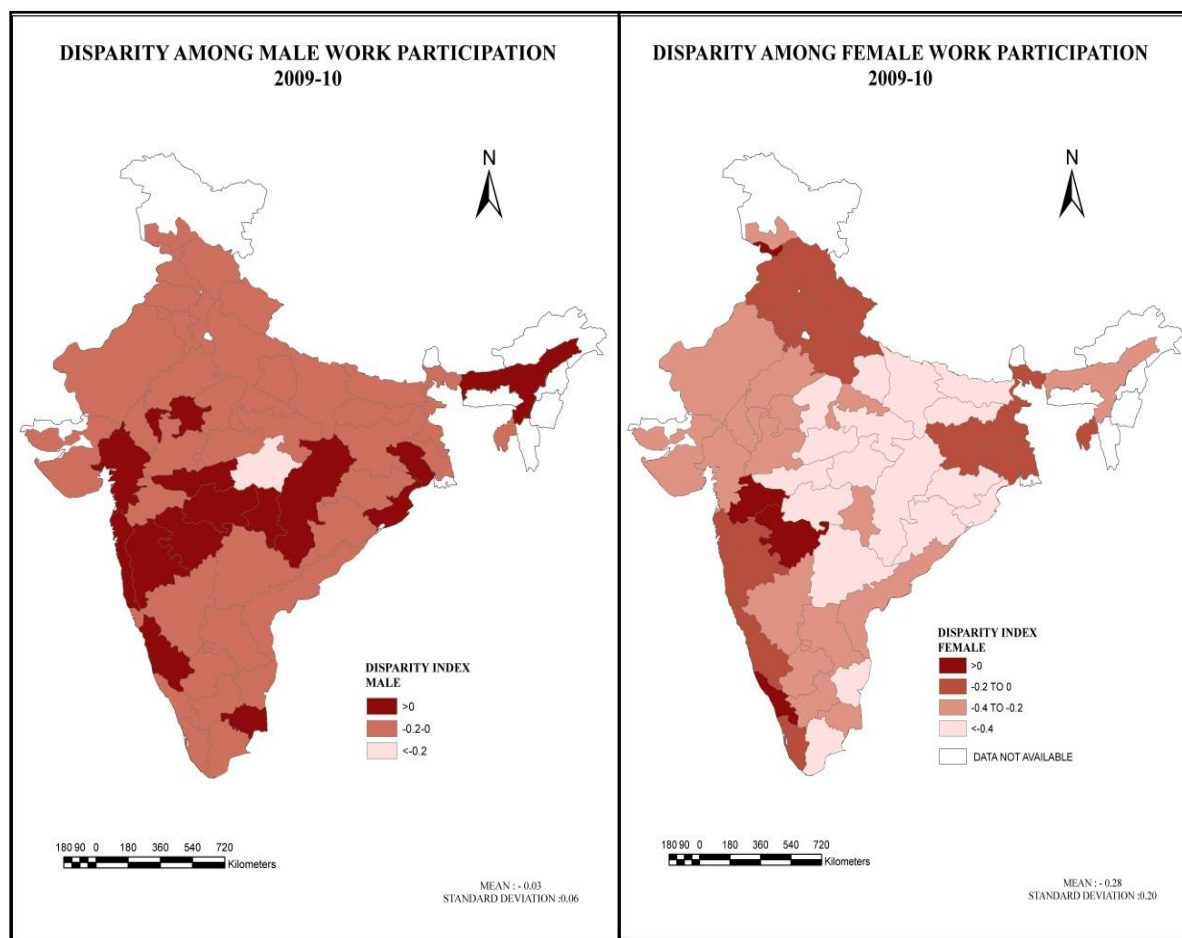


Figure 1.3: The Gender wise Disparity in workforce participation rate for scheduled caste and general population from 1999-00 to 2009-10. (Source: Computed using NSS unit level data on employment and unemployment, 66th Round, Schedule 10, 2009-10 and 55th round 1999-00).

Employment Status

According to the status of employment, employed persons are categorized into three groups. These are (i) self-employed (ii) regular wage/salaried employees (iii) casual labour. Regular salaried defined by NSS as these were persons who worked in others’ farm or non-farm enterprises (both household and non-household) and, in return, received salary or wages on a regular basis (i.e. not on the basis of daily or periodic renewal of work contract). Self Employed defined as persons who operated their own farm or non-farm enterprises or were engaged independently in a profession or trade on own-account or with one or a few partners were deemed to be self-employed in household enterprises. The essential feature of the self-employed is that

they have autonomy (i.e., how, where and when to produce) and economic independence (i.e., market, scale of operation and money) for carrying out their operation. Categories of self-employed persons: own-account workers, employers and helpers in household enterprise. Casual labour defined as a person who was casually engaged in others’ farm or non-farm enterprises (both household and non-household) and, in return, received wages according to the terms of the daily or periodic work contract, was a casual wage labour.²

²Report of NSS, (July, 2009 - June, 2010), “Key Indicator of Employment and Unemployment in India”, page A-3-4.

Table 1.5: Employment status of scheduled caste workers and general population workers in 2009-10

Work Status	SCHEDULED CASTE			GENERAL POPULATION		
	Regular Salaried	Self Employed	Casual Labour	Regular Salaried	Self Employed	Casual Labour
T	13.5	33.4	53.1	25.4	56.4	18.2
M	15.3	31.6	53.1	26.8	54.9	18.3
F	9.6	37.4	53.1	20.2	61.7	18.2
R	7.1	34.5	58.3	10.7	64.9	24.4
RM	8.1	32.8	59.1	11.9	62.9	25.2
RF	5.1	38.2	56.6	7.2	70.6	22.2
U	41	28.4	30.6	49.1	42.6	8.3
UM	42.3	27.2	30.5	48.3	43.4	8.3
UF	36.5	32.4	31.1	20.2	61.7	18.2

Source: Computed using NSS unit level data on employment and unemployment, 66th Round, Schedule 10, 2009-10

The table 1.5 shows that the share of scheduled caste population is more in casual labour across gender and sector. Casual labour for both the social groups is high in the rural sector. The share of general population is more in self-employed. But it is clear that the proportion of regular salaried is relatively less for both the social groups and in comparison low for scheduled castes. Rural females experience the lowest share of regular salaried for scheduled castes as well as general females. Highest share of self-employed is with the general females of rural sector. Females have more share in self-employed in comparison to males and generals females are more in this in comparison to scheduled caste females. The percentage share of male workers in self-employment is also quite high but the self-employment among women workers has been a matter of concern, particularly in feminist discourses, as self-employed women workers not only significantly outnumber men, their conditions of work are also qualitatively different from men as they constitute a very large component of 'unpaid family labour' who are 'workers' in statistical discourse but have no control over either the means of production or returns to work (Raju, 2010). Though women numbers in jobs have risen, but still they are employed mostly in low paying jobs due to several reasons like family constraints,

gender discrimination which usually produced different results for similar qualified men and

women and also as men and women choose different jobs because of the gender division of labour in the family (Roth,2004). Being oriented to work in caste specific occupations may at times make women pull out or be pushed out of the labour market. Wherever women do manage to pull themselves out of these social restrictions, lack of education and skill formation relegates them to the lower rungs of the job market as unskilled casual workers (Kak,1994).

Regional Dimension Of Work Status Among Scheduled Caste And General Workers

Fig. 1.4 shows the share of work categories of workers (Self-employed, Regular Salaried and Casual Labours) among General population and Scheduled caste, respectively. The work status of scheduled caste workers clearly depicts that the share of Casual workers is more in regions while for the general workers, the share of self-employed is more. The regular salaried workers are more in General population. Regions of Andhra, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu shows more share of casual workers for scheduled caste population. While, Goa, Maharashtra coastal shows more share of regular salaried. Regions like Uttar Pradesh western, West Bengal Central, Himachal Pradesh shows more share of self-employed among scheduled

caste workers. While in general population, the share of self-employed is more. This shows

more casualisation is there among scheduled caste workers.

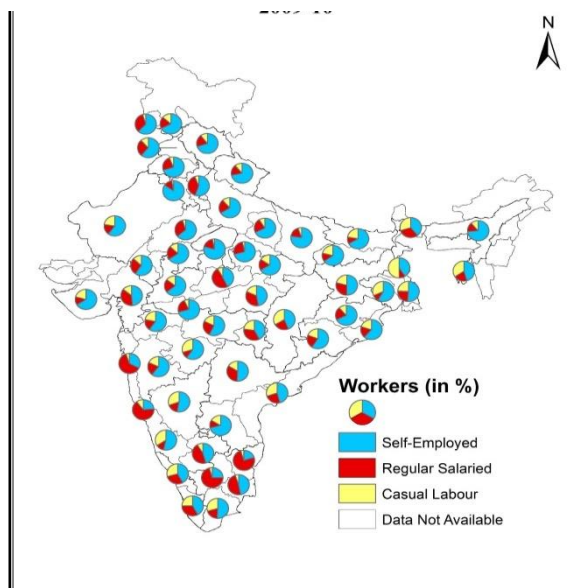
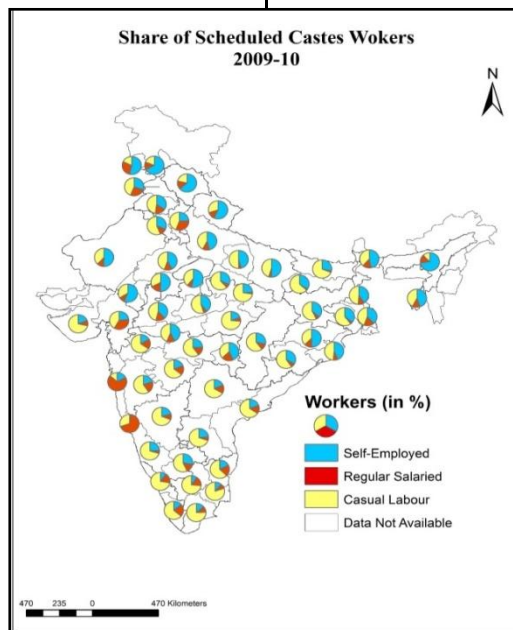


Figure 1.4: Work Status of Scheduled Caste and General Population in India (Source: Computed by Author from NSS unit level data of 66th Round)

Summary

The high workforce participation rate for scheduled caste in comparison to General population indicates to the compulsions of Scheduled Caste to remain economically active even in the age group of below 25 years of age. The Scheduled caste’s more rate of

participation in workforce in age groups below 25 age shows the compelling economic forces in their society that make it necessary for every member of the family to participate in economic struggle with a view to augmenting the family income.

The engagement of Scheduled Castes in employment activities in the age of acquiring education resulted in the engagement of Scheduled Caste in work which is less skilled and not requires the educational desirability. So Scheduled Caste workers are more into casual labour which clearly indicating that though the Scheduled Castes are more into the work but which makes them more vulnerable due to casualization of their work.

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