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An Analysis of the Scheduled Castes' Demographic Characteristics in Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract: A region's or a country's demographic characteristics provide a clear picture of the socio-economic circumstances of its residents. Similar to how demographic characteristics of one class or caste or another reflect that group's socio-economic standing. The Scheduled Castes make up a sizable portion of the state's population and land area in Himachal Pradesh. The Scheduled Castes make up 25.19 percent of the state's total population, according to the 2011 census. This paper makes an effort to analyse the demographic characteristics of Himachal Pradesh's Scheduled Castes. The study is supported by secondary information. According to the data, Himachal Pradesh's Scheduled Castes are undeveloped as compared to the developed classes in the state.

Keywords: Demographic, Region, Scheduled Castes

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INTRODUCTION

In India, 305.9 million people, or one-fourth of the population, belonged to a scheduled population (castes or tribes) in 2011. In other words, as required by the Constitution, every fourth individual in the nation is told that they qualify for special welfare benefits for their upliftment. Separately, 104.5 million people (8.6% of scheduled tribes) and 201.4 million people (16.6%) belonged to scheduled castes. This is a vast area that is almost as big as the entire United States (314 million people as of 2012). The scheduled caste population alone exceeds Brazil's (199 million in 2012), the fifth most populous nation in the world, overall population. The population of scheduled castes is not only sizable but also expanding quickly. In 1951, there were 51.3 million people living there; by 2011, there were 201.4 million people, representing a 2.3% yearly compound growth. In contrast, during the same time period, India's overall population increased at an annual growth rate of 2.0%.

This group of people has historically experienced severe socioeconomic injustice at the hands of upper castes in Indian society. They were forced to work menial duties for the upper castes as part of a contractual system called the "zajmani"

system, which carried a social penalty. These jobs included scavenging, skinning the hides of dead animals, tanning leather, agricultural labour, and more. They were denied access to resources (such as land, water, and village commons) and knowledge (such as education) because they were excluded from the caste system. Since they were untouchable, they had to live in a segregated area and in appalling conditions. The Indian government implemented a number of welfare programmes for their socioeconomic advancement after gaining independence in 1947. The right to own and cultivate land, the reservation of seats in educational institutions and public sector jobs, and the reservation in democratic institutions like the parliament, state assemblies, urban local bodies, and panchayati raj institutions in accordance with their share of the total population were some of the significant measures. Untouchability was also completely outlawed by making it a punishable act under the Constitution. The reservations, which were initially made for a ten-year term, have been in effect ever since. There was a noticeable improvement in their socioeconomic well-being and political mobilisation as a result of the particular steps that the union and state governments of India initiated. Earlier, the British reign brought about economic and administrative improvements. Particularly the commercialization

of agricultural production and agrarian relations, new job opportunities in factories, the public sector, and the military, social reform movements challenging the caste system and caste-based inequality, Mahatma Gandhi's efforts to launch a movement against untouchability in the 1930s, the deterioration of the master-servant relationship in the village social system, political mobilisation, and the establishment of dalit identity by the leaders, such a movement has questioned the caste system and caste. But this made their internal differences, which stemmed from their class, caste, and sub-caste identities, more obvious. For instance, the relatively wealthy and politically savvy scheduled castes (hereafter SCs) have monopolised the majority of the government's handouts. This ultimately strengthened the position of the top people or organisations within the Dalit castes. Examples of communities among the SCs that are generally better off than others are the Mahars in Maharashtra, the Malas in Andhra Pradesh, the Pariahs in Tamil Nadu, and the Chamars in Uttar Pradesh. (Rao, 2009). Additionally, conflicts between lower castes, such as those between the Mahars and Mangs in Maharashtra, the Malas and Madigas in Andhra Pradesh, and the Chamars and Chuhras in the north Indian states, have become obstacles to political mobilisation, further fostering divisions. (Chandra *et. al.*, 2008).

One of the Indian states with both scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is Himachal Pradesh. With 2.12 million expected residents in 2011, it was almost as populous as India. One of the Indian states with both scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is Himachal Pradesh. In 2011, its planned population of 2.12 million people represented almost 31.0% of the state's overall population of 6.86 million people. Separately, there were 0.39 million or 5.7% of scheduled tribes and 1.73 million or 25.2% of scheduled castes. More than four-fifths (81.5%) of the state's scheduled population were from scheduled castes. However, at the district level, the share of scheduled tribe population made as high as 81.4 per cent in total population of Lahul and Spiti, and 58.0 per cent in Kinnaur district. While, scheduled caste population was widely distributed across the state, the scheduled tribe population was mainly concentrated in three districts of Lahul and Spiti, Kinnaur, and Chamba, having a combined share of 53.5 per cent in total ST population of the state. Further, there were as many as 57 castes of SCs, against only 10 tribal communities in the state.

Himachal Pradesh had a proportionately higher proportion of SC people than the rest of the country (25.2% compared to 16.6%). Ten out of the state's twelve districts had a higher share of the SC population than the national average, ranging from a maximum of 30.3 percent in Sirmour to a minimum of 7.1 percent in Lahul and Spiti district. There are 57 SC castes in the state, however the top 11 of them together account for roughly nine tenths (89.1%) of the state's entire population. More over half (55.4%) of the state's SC population was made

up of the two largest castes, the Kori/Koli and the Chamar. (census 2011) Demographic features include the components like population distribution, sex ratio, literacy rate, marital status, occupational distribution, religion, population density etc. This paper makes an attempt to analyze the demographic features of the Scheduled Castes in Himachal Pradesh. The study is based secondary data collected for the Scheduled Castes of Himachal Pradesh. The study found that the Scheduled Castes of Himachal Pradesh are still very backward as compared to the developed classes in the state.

Objective of The Study

- To analyze the demographic feature of Scheduled Castes populations in Himachal Pradesh.
- Suggestion for upliftment of Scheduled Castes in Himachal Pradesh.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology is being used to collect facts and figures regarding Himachal Pradesh's Scheduled Castes. The data are gathered from several Census of India publications as well as other pertinent government publications like the Statistical Abstracts of Himachal Pradesh, the Internet, e-journals, journals, and other textbooks on demography and economics. Data gathering, data presentation, and data interpretation are the approaches used in this paper.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Components like population distribution, sex ratio, literacy rate, occupational distribution, etc. are examples of demographic characteristics of a community or a class. The following section discusses the Scheduled Castes of Himachal Pradesh demographic characteristics.

Population Distribution of Scheduled Castes Population in Himachal Pradesh

The scheduled caste population was not dispersed equally across the state. According to the 2011 census, Sirmour had the highest percentage of people who belonged to a scheduled caste out of all the districts, at 30.34 percent, followed by Mandi (29.38 percent), Solan (28.35 percent), Kullu (28.01 percent), Shimla (26.51 percent), Bilaspur (25.92 percent), Hamirpur (24.02 percent), Una (22.16 percent), Chamba (21.52 percent), Kangra (21. From 22.24 percent in 1971 to 25.19 percent in 2011, the state's scheduled caste population as a percentage of the total population increased. Out of the twelve districts, scheduled caste populations were greater than the state average in nine of them: Chamba, Lahaul and Spiti, Hamirpur, Kangra, Una, Mandi, Kullu, Bilaspur, and Sirmour. The percentage of scheduled caste residents decreased in Shimla, Solan, and Kinnaur districts from 1971 to 2011 by 0.35 percentage points, 1.41 percentage points, and 1.87 percentage points, respectively. In the tribally

notified territory, which included Lahaul & Spiti, Kinnaur, and a portion of Chamba, the scheduled caste population was comparatively small. The population of scheduled castes living in tribal areas almost always wishes to be recognised as scheduled tribes rather than scheduled castes, which is likely the cause of this.

Himachal Pradesh: Scheduled Castes Population, 1971-2011

| Sr. No. | District | Scheduled Caste Population as Percent to Total Population | |
|-------------------------|----------------|---|--------------|
| | | 1971 | 2011 |
| 1 | Lahaul & Spiti | 1.28 | 7.08 |
| 2 | Kinnaur | 19.4 | 17.53 |
| 3 | Chamba | 15.19 | 21.52 |
| 4 | Solan | 29.76 | 28.35 |
| 5 | Sirmaur | 30.18 | 30.34 |
| 6 | Kullu | 25.14 | 28.01 |
| 7 | Mandi | 26.11 | 29.38 |
| 8 | Bilaspur | 24.47 | 25.92 |
| 9 | Shimla | 26.86 | 26.51 |
| 10 | Kangra | 16.84 | 21.15 |
| 11 | Hamirpur | 19.09 | 24.02 |
| 12 | Una | 18.37 | 22.16 |
| Himachal Pradesh | | 22.24 | 25.19 |

Source: Calculated from Primary Census Abstract, Himachal Pradesh, 1971 and 2011

Sex Ratio of Scheduled castes Population of Himachal Pradesh

The female to male ratio is crucial to society when discussing the condition of women in the scheduled population in Himachal Pradesh. Any social order will not have an equal distribution of men and women. It implies that there would frequently be a higher proportion of girls than males. The Himachal Pradesh scheduled cast population sex ratio developments from 1971 to 2011 are shown in the table 1.

Table 1. Sex Ratio of Scheduled castes Population of Himachal Pradesh 1971-2011

| Census Year | Sex Ratio (females per 1000 males) Himachal Pradesh |
|-------------|---|
| | Scheduled Caste Population |
| 1971 | 950 |
| 1981 | 959 |
| 1991 | 967 |
| 2001 | 968 |
| 2011 | 973 |

Source: Calculated from Primary Census Abstract, India 2011

Males and females made up the scheduled caste population in Himachal Pradesh, which was

representative of the balance of sexes in society at the time. The sex ratio of scheduled caste population has, nevertheless, been steadily rising over a period of 40 years, from 1971 to 2011. At 950 females for every 1,000 males in 1971, the sex ratio increased to 959 by 1981, 967 by 1991, 968 by 2001, and then to 973 in 2011 before continuing to rise. The scheduled tribe population's sex ratio, on the other hand, showed the most favourable condition in 1971 (1000 females for 1000 males), but it rapidly declined to 978 in 1981. After that, it experienced a rise in the sex ratio, which reached 981 in 1991. In 2001, the sex ratio was 996; in 2011, it was 999. It was stated that the scheduled tribe population has once more attained their ideal sex ratio in 2011.

Table 2. Sex Ratio of Scheduled Castes Population in Himachal Pradesh by Districts, 2011 Sex Ratio (females per 1000 males)

| Sr. No | District/State | Scheduled Castes Population | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------|
| | | Total | Rural | Urban |
| 1 | Kullu | 957 | 958 | 928 |
| 2 | Chamba | 989 | 988 | 1012 |
| 3 | Kangra | 1000 | 1003 | 942 |
| 4 | Shimla | 947 | 966 | 859 |
| 5 | Una | 971 | 973 | 942 |
| 6 | Mandi | 995 | 996 | 980 |
| 7 | Bilaspur | 969 | 970 | 952 |
| 8 | Hamirpur | 1034 | 1038 | 957 |
| 9 | Solan | 925 | 935 | 834 |
| 10 | Sirmaur | 936 | 935 | 952 |
| 11 | Lahaul & Spiti | 937 | 937 | ** |
| 12 | Kinnaur | 984 | 984 | ** |
| Himachal Pradesh | | 973 | 978 | 911 |

Source: Calculated from Primary Census Abstract, Himachal Pradesh, 2011 * **No Urban Population

Table reveals that the rural scheduled caste population sex ratio differed from state district to state district. The highest sex ratio was observed in Hamirpur district at 1038, while the lowest sex ratio was in Sirmour district with 935 females per thousand males. Only 5 of the 12 districts had a scheduled caste population sex ratio that was higher than the 978 females per 1000 males state average. These included Hamirpur (1038 girls for every 1000 males), Kangra (1003 females for every 1000 males), Mandi (996 females), Chamba (988 females), and Kinnaur (984 females for every 1000 males). The scheduled caste population's sex ratio fell below the state average in seven districts. There were fewer women than men in the districts of Una (973 women for every 1000 men), Bilaspur (970 women for every 1000 men), Shimla (966 women for every 1000 men), Kullu (958 women for every 1000 men), Lahaul & Spiti (937 women for every 1000 men), Solan, and Sirmour (935 women for every 1000 men). According to the 2011 Census, the sex ratio of the urban scheduled caste population was lowest in Solan (834 females per 1000 males) and greatest in Chamba district (1012 females per 1000 males). In 8

districts (Chamba, Mandi, Hamirpur, Bilaspur, Sirmour, Kangra, Una, and Kullu), the urban sex ratio of the scheduled caste population was higher than the state average of 911 girls per thousand males. The sex ratio fell below the state average in the final 2 districts. As was previously mentioned, neither the Lahaul & Spiti nor the Kinnaur districts had any urban residents in 2011. With 834 females per 1,000 males, Solan district has the lowest urban scheduled caste sex ratio. Shimla also recorded a lower sex ratio than the state norm, with 859 females for every 1,000 males.

Literacy of Scheduled Castes Population in Himachal Pradesh

Table 3. Literacy Rate of Scheduled Castes Population by Districts, in Himachal Pradesh 2011

| Sr. No. | District | Literacy Rate in Percent Scheduled Caste Population | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|---|-------------|-------------|
| | | Persons | Males | Females |
| 1 | Hamirpur | 85.9 | 91.8 | 80.2 |
| 2 | Una | 84.7 | 90.8 | 78.4 |
| 3 | Kangra | 81.3 | 88 | 74.7 |
| 4 | Bilaspur | 81.1 | 88 | 74.1 |
| 5 | Lahaul & Spiti | 79.9 | 89.9 | 69.1 |
| 6 | Solan | 79.8 | 86.7 | 72.5 |
| 7 | Shimla | 78.8 | 85.8 | 71.3 |
| 8 | Mandi | 77.4 | 85.8 | 69 |
| 9 | Kinnaur | 77.3 | 85.5 | 69 |
| 10 | Kullu | 75 | 83.5 | 66.1 |
| 11 | Sirmaur | 74.6 | 81.3 | 67.4 |
| 12 | Chamba | 69.5 | 79.7 | 59.2 |
| Himachal Pradesh | | 78.9 | 86.2 | 71.4 |

Source: Calculated from Primary Census Abstract, Himachal Pradesh, 2011

Regional differences in the population of scheduled castes' literacy rates were observed in Himachal Pradesh. With an 85.9% literacy rate, Hamirpur district had the greatest percentage of scheduled caste citizens. On the other hand, Chamba district had the lowest rate of literacy at 69.5%. At the district level, it was evident that the literacy rates of scheduled caste and scheduled population were comparable. Six districts had scheduled caste populations with literacy rates that were higher than the state average (78.9%). These comprised Lahaul & Spiti, Hamirpur, Una, Kangra, Bilaspur, and Solan. On the other hand, among the scheduled caste population, Shimla, Mandi, Kinnaur, Kullu, Sirmaur, and Chamba districts showed literacy rates that were lower than the state average (Table).

Work Participation Rates of Scheduled castes

In the state, the scheduled caste population's work participation rate ranged from 40.94% in Una to 60.94% in Kullu, with Kullu having the highest

percentage at 60.94%. Nine districts had scheduled caste populations with work participation rates that were higher than the state average (52.14%). These comprised Shimla, Bilaspur, Kinnaur, Mandi, Chamba, Sirmaur, Kullu, Lahaul & Spiti, and Lahaul & Spiti. On the other hand, the scheduled caste population in the Solan, Kangra, and Una districts had a lower labour participation rate than the state average.

Table 4. Work Participation Rates of Scheduled castes Population in Himachal Pradesh by Districts, 2011

| Sr No. | District | Work Participation Rate (Percent) | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | | Persons | Males | Females |
| 1 | Kullu | 60.94 | 64.59 | 57.13 |
| 2 | Kinnaur | 60.47 | 64.28 | 56.59 |
| 3 | Lahaul & Spiti | 59.15 | 62.91 | 55.13 |
| 4 | Mandi | 56.09 | 59.29 | 52.86 |
| 5 | Chamba | 55.97 | 60.09 | 51.8 |
| 6 | Sirmaur | 55.81 | 62.16 | 49.02 |
| 7 | Bilaspur | 54.21 | 58.91 | 49.35 |
| 8 | Hamirpur | 53.02 | 56.7 | 49.46 |
| 9 | Shimla | 52.16 | 59.24 | 44.68 |
| 10 | Solan | 51.98 | 60.53 | 42.74 |
| 11 | Kangra | 44.67 | 54.8 | 34.54 |
| 12 | Una | 40.94 | 53.5 | 28 |
| Himachal Pradesh | | 52.14 | 58.77 | 45.32 |

Source: Primary Census Abstract, Himachal Pradesh 2011

Similarly, at the state level, male work participation rate (58.77 per cent) of scheduled caste population was higher than the female work participation rate (45.32 per cent) by 13.45 per cent points. However, this male - female difference often varied from one district to another among the scheduled caste population. There were some districts in the state, in which the male - female difference in work participation rate of the scheduled caste population increased further, while in others it decreased. Out of the total of twelve districts, male - female difference in work participation rate of the scheduled caste population was recorded to be the highest in Una district (25.50 per cent points), followed by Kangra (20.26 per cent points), Solan (17.78 per cent points), and Shimla (14.56 per cent points). That was higher than the state difference (13.45 per cent points) (Table 4.3).

On the other hand, Mandi and Hamirpur districts have the lowest male-female participation rate differences, with 6.43 percent points and 7.24 percent points, respectively. Their disparity was mostly brought on by the high involvement percentage of women. In the districts of Una, Kangra, and Solan in the state of Himachal Pradesh, the female participation rate of the scheduled caste population was quite low, whereas this disparity was relatively significant in the districts of Kullu, Kinnaur, and Lahaul & Spiti. There may be a

number of reasons for the high participation rates among females in the scheduled caste community in the tribal districts. First off, the desire of the locals to rely on regional resources linked to primary economic activities like grazing, logging, and subsistence farming resulted in a greater rate of female scheduled caste participation in the labour force in these tribal districts. The expanding tendency in cash crops in the agricultural sector, together with horticultural, cottage, and industrial activities, led to a relatively high rate of work participation among women in the scheduled caste population of the district of Kullu. Such occupations typically don't call for a formal education, and the family's financial situation may force both men and women to work to support their families. Five of the twelve districts (Una, Kangra, Solan, Shimla, and Sirmaur) found a male-female gap in the scheduled caste population's rate of employment participation to be higher than the state average of 13.45 percent points. The male-female disparity in the remaining eight districts (Sirmaur, Lahul & Spiti, Chamba, Bilaspur, Mandi, Kullu, Hamirpur, and Kinnaur) was less than the state average.

SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

The demographic characteristics of the scheduled castes in Himachal Pradesh are the subject of the analysis presented above. We can infer from this data that the scheduled castes make up a sizable portion of the entire population of Himachal Pradesh. As a result, they play a significant part in the socioeconomic growth of the state. However, the demographic characteristics of the scheduled castes of Himachal Pradesh paint a picture of extreme backwardness. When compared to the more established classes in the state, they are still very behind. Himachal Pradesh is a hilly region with varying geographical conditions throughout. It is crucial to promote, strengthen, and expand the Scheduled Castes-oriented society so that sustainable development initiatives can be taken for the society's most marginalised groups. This includes developing self-reliance and self-respect within the Scheduled Castes community as a whole. The government should prioritise hiring people from Scheduled Castes and set aside specific monies for them during the course of the five-year plan. In addition to

giving Scheduled Castes access to traditional skills to add value to the products, health and education should be prioritised as important focal areas. The government should implement social schemes and five-year plans to guarantee that all members of Scheduled Castes are literate.

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