

MAHARASHTRA

DATA HIGHLIGHTS: THE SCHEDULED CASTES Census of India 2001

The total population of Maharashtra, as per the 2001 Census, is 96,878,627. Of this, 9,881,656 (10.2 per cent) are Scheduled Castes (SCs). The SC population constitutes 5.9 per cent of the country's SC population. Fiftynine (59) SCs have been notified in Maharashtra under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1976. Only one SC, Kaikadi has been notified in the state with an area restriction.

2. The growth rate of SC population in the decade 1991-2001 at 12.8 per cent has been considerably lower if compared to the overall growth rate of 22.7 per cent of the state population. Among the numerically major SCs, Mang have recorded the highest growth rate of 21.2 per cent, followed by Bhambi (16.1 per cent) and Mahar (10.9 per cent). The lowest growth rate (6.2 per cent) is registered among Bhangi at the 2001 Census.

Population- Size and Distribution

3. Out of 59 SCs, Mahar, Mang, Bhambi and Bhangi together constitute 92 per cent of the SC population of the state. Mahar are numerically the largest SC with a population of 5,678,912, constituting 57.5 per cent of the SC population of the state. They are followed by Mang 2,003,996 (20.3 per cent), Bhambi 1,234,874 (12.5 per cent) and Bhangi 186,776 (1.9 per cent). Twenty-eight (28) SCs have returned population below 1000 at the 2001 Census.

4. Of the total SC population, 61.7 per cent are residing in rural area. Mang have the highest (66.9 per cent) rural population, followed by Mahar (65.5 per cent). On the other hand Bhangi, the fourth largest SC of the state is highly urbanized, having 92.7 per cent urban population followed by Bhambi (49.1 per cent). District-wise distribution of SC population shows that Latur district has the highest 19.4 per cent SC population, followed by Bhandara (17.8 per cent), The least proportion of SC population (1.4 per cent) is recorded in Ratnagiri district.

Sex ratio

5. The overall sex ratio of the SC population in Maharashtra is 952 females per 1000 males, which is higher than 922 reported for state population as a whole at 2001 Census. The sex ratio of SC population has registered improvement over 944 reported at 1991 Census. Among the districts the highest sex ratio (1089), is recorded in Sindhudurg district and the lowest 903 in Mumbai (suburban).

The Statement below shows sex ratio and child sex ratio (0-6) of the SC population at the national, state and numerically the largest four SCs in 2001 Census:

Age Groups	All SCs (India)	All SCs (Maharashtra)	Mahar	Mang	Bhambi	Bhangi
All Ages	936	952	956	955	934	960
0-6	938	936	937	946	912	939

6. As may be seen from the statement, the overall sex ratio of the SC population of Maharashtra is higher (952) than the corresponding sex ratio (936) for national SC population. The difference is nominal in case of child sex ratio (0-6). At the individual caste level, Bhambi have the lowest sex ratio in overall and 0-6 age group populations, in comparison to the state SC population as well as the other major SCs.

Literacy and educational level

7. Literacy and level of education are two basic indicators of the level of development achieved by a group/society. The literacy results in more awareness besides contributing to the overall improvement of health, hygiene and other social conditions. According to 2001 Census, percentage of literate persons (those who can read and write with understanding) aged 7 years and above, among SC population of Maharashtra is 71.9 per cent, which is lower than 76.9 per cent reported for state population as a whole. The literacy data show that the SC population of the state has made significant improvement in literacy during the decade 1991-2001. The literacy rate, which was 56.5 per cent in 1991, has increased by 15.4 percentage points in 2001.

8. Among the major SCs, Bhangi are reported to have the highest 77.1 per cent literacy rate, followed by Bhambi (74.9 per cent), Mahar (74.1 per cent) and Mang (62.2 per cent). The female literacy rate of 60 per cent among SC population is lower as compared to 67 per cent among females of the state. As in literacy rate, the highest and lowest female literacy rate of 66.9 per cent and 48.6 per cent have also been recorded among Bhangi and Mang.

Educational levels attained by major SCs							
Name of SC	Literate without educational level	Below primary	Primary	Middle	Matric/Secondary /Higher Secondary Intermediate etc.	Technical & Non-technical diploma	Graduate & above
All SCs	2.1	29.4	26.3	16.6	20.5	0.4	4.8
Mahar	2.0	28.2	24.9	17.2	22.1	0.3	5.3
Mang	2.8	37.0	29.3	14.1	14.2	0.2	2.4
Bhambi	1.8	26.3	26.7	16.5	22.2	0.7	5.6
Bhangi	1.8	30.9	33.3	18.8	13.5	0.1	1.6

9. Out of the total SC literates, 31.5 per cent are literates without any educational level or have attained below Primary level. The literates, who have attained education up to Primary and Middle levels, constitute 26.3 per cent and 16.6 per cent respectively. 20.5 per cent are having educational level up to Matric/Higher Secondary levels, implying that every 5th SC literate is a Matriculate. Literates with educational level of Graduation and above are 4.8 per cent. Individually, Bhambi (5.6 per cent) have the highest percentage of Graduation & above educational level.

10. The educational level table also shows that the drop out is conspicuous after the Primary level and again after Matric/Secondary levels. This pattern is consistent for all the major SCs.

11. Population in the age group 5-14 years are the potential students. 79.3 per cent of the SC population in this age group is attending various educational institutions. In this regard, Mahar have the highest 81.5 per cent school going children.

Economic activity

Work Participation Rate (WPR)

12. The work participation rate (WPR) is the percentage of workers to the total population. The WPR of the SC population is 41.9 per cent at 2001 Census, which is lower than 42.8 per cent recorded at 1991 Census. The male WPR has been 50 per cent and the female WPR 33.5 per cent in 2001.

13. At the individual caste level, the WPR varies from the highest 43.5 per cent among Mang to the lowest 31.7 per cent among Bhangi. Bhangi have also recorded the lowest female WPR of 20.6 per cent.

Category of Workers

14. There has been a decline in the main workers from 92.5 per cent at 1991 Census to 81.9 per cent at 2001 Census. This, in turn, has resulted in corresponding increase in the marginal workers from 7.5 per cent in 1991 to 18.1 per cent in 2001. Out of the total workers, 'agricultural labourers' constitute 46.1 per cent, which is higher than 45.6 per cent for SC population at national level. 'Other workers' account for 37.3 per cent. Only 12.9 per cent has been returned as 'cultivators'; remaining 3.7 per cent have been workers in 'household industry'. Thus, there is a slight shift in the category of workers among SC population; the workers engaged in agricultural activities (cultivators plus agricultural labourers) constitute 59 per cent of the total work force against 64.3 per cent recorded in 1991 Census.

15. At the individual caste level, Mang have recorded the highest 57.9 per cent agricultural labourers, followed by Mahar (48.5 per cent), Bhambi (29.3 per cent); where as the lowest 1.6 per cent is registered in case of Bhangi, who are primarily in the category of 'Other workers'.

Marital status

16. Marital status is one of the important determinants of fertility and growth of a population. The 2001 Census data on marital status shows that 49.4 per cent persons among the SCs of Maharashtra are 'never married'. The 'currently married' constitute 45 per cent while 5 per cent are 'widowed'. Only 0.6 per cent are 'divorced and separated'.

17. Majority of girls and boys among SCs in Maharashtra are getting married after attaining the legal age of marriage. Marriages of SC girls below 18 years (1.3 per cent) are lower than that recorded among SC population at national level (2.8 per cent). Similarly, the incidence of marriage among boys below 21 years at 1.2 per cent is significantly lower than 3.1 per cent aggregated at national level for SC population.

18. The mean number of children ever born per ever married SC women of all ages as well as 45-49 years age group are 3.1 and 3.7 respectively, which are almost equal to the corresponding figures of 3.2 and 4.2 for SC population at national level.

Religion

19. Of the SC population of Maharashtra, 67 per cent are Hindus and 32.9 per cent are Buddhists. There is a small 5,983 (0.1 per cent) Sikh population among SCs. Maharashtra numerically the largest SC in the state have recorded 56.2 per cent Buddhists, 43.7 per cent Hindus and 0.1 per cent Sikhs at 2001 Census.
