

Understanding The Determinants Of Social Inclusion And Status Transformation Of Scheduled Caste Persons: A Theoretical Study On The Welfare Initiatives Of Tamil Nadu Government In Coimbatore

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Abstract— This study also explores the basic factors for social inclusion and changes in the societal status of Scheduled Caste (SC) persons in the Coimbatore district in Tamil Nadu, along with the welfare measures of the Tamil Nadu government. SC communities continue to encounter structural and social barriers to integration into mainstream society despite numerous constitutional safeguards and targeted developmental schemes. This theoretical article explores state-led strategies in housing, education, employment, and legal empowerment, which operate as catalysts for improving the social standing and inclusion of marginalized groups. Through an analysis of secondary data sets and a comprehensive review of relevant literature, the research highlights important determinants of upward mobility and social integration, including access to quality education, equitable employment opportunities, and community engagement. Data and methods: While the study was limited to a specific geographic area, the findings highlight the crucial role of inclusive governance, effective policy implementation, and mobilization of resources in driving status transformation and building a more equitable and cohesive society. The findings are meant to serve as actionable insights to the policymakers, social workers, and scholars who work to promote the social inclusion of marginalized communities.

Keywords: Social Inclusion, Status Transformation, Scheduled Castes (SCs), Welfare Initiative, Inclusive Governance, Marginalized Communities.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the socio-political context of India, caste is a social characteristic that remains a key determinant of access to opportunities and overall quality of life. Members of Scheduled Castes (SCs) have been historically excluded and have long been the focus of policy interventions to promote social justice and equality despite facing marginalization and systemic discrimination. Tamil Nadu is known for its progressive socio-political movements and welfare-oriented governance. It has also initiated several schemes and programs to address the socio-economic inequalities faced by the SC community. However, processes of social integration and status change are not the only outcomes of social welfare. Social acceptance is a complex and multifaceted process involving both cultural integration and structural empowerment. This study examines these aspects with a special focus on the Coimbatore district to understand how the social policies of the Tamil Nadu government affect the lives of SC residents. The theoretical foundation of this study lies in the theory of social inclusion and the sociology of marginalization, providing a critical perspective for analyzing caste-based inequality and its reintegration. The aim of this study is to assess whether the social policies adopted in Tamil Nadu have resulted in significant changes in the socio-economic conditions of state institutions beyond nominal or formal inclusion. Education, and employment, it studies how various determinants (such as resource access and social cognition) influence government efforts to achieve social change. Focusing on Coimbatore, an economically important and socially diverse district, the study aims to provide contextual insights while contributing to the larger academic debate on social justice and inclusive development based on caste.

II. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Historically in India, Scheduled Castes (SCs) and various marginalized communities have experienced systemic exclusion due to a deeply entrenched caste system and have been placed at the lowest rungs of the socio-economic ladder, leading to discrimination and deprivation. The Indian post-independence constitutional framework and legislation aimed at promoting social justice and equality. Under its progressive policies and robust education system, Tamil Nadu, with targeted initiatives in housing, education, employment, and social welfare, has now become a model state in welfare-oriented governance. However, persisting inequalities and institutionalized societal prejudices still limit the full integration and advancement of marginalized groups. In this context, the current study raises four research questions about the structural and cultural determinants of social inclusion and status transformation of Scheduled Caste persons in the region, with a theoretical emphasis on the welfare measures initiated by the Tamil Nadu government in Coimbatore district.

III. RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE

This study has important implications for scientific research and policymaking. While many studies have documented the socio-economic status of Scheduled Castes in India, few have explored the interplay between changes in national social policies and their actual application at the local level. Understanding these trends is critical to assessing the effectiveness of current policies and developing more responsive governance strategies. Focusing on Coimbatore provides an opportunity to examine these issues and highlight the current impact of social policies in an economically and socially diverse region. This study is participatory and expressive while also providing theoretical arguments for narrative social change.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- The aim is to study the key factors affecting the changes in social inclusion and status of the SC population in Coimbatore.
- To conduct a critical review of the welfare measures taken by the Tamil Nadu government to improve the welfare of SCs.
- Analyze the effectiveness and scope of these welfare programs in changing the socio-economic conditions of the target groups.
- Understand the role of structural and cultural factors in promoting or hindering social integration.
- We provide theoretical insights and policy recommendations based on our findings.

V. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the main reasons for social integration and transformation of the status of Scheduled Caste people in Coimbatore?
- How effective are the Tamil Nadu government's social policies in achieving these goals?
- To what extent have these measures, including education, employment, housing, and public services, resulted in actual improvements in Coimbatore communities?
- Socio-cultural and structural challenges continue to impede progress towards full inclusion.

VI. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Scope

- It mainly focuses on theoretical and qualitative analysis of the changing social inclusion and status of Scheduled Castes (SCs) in Coimbatore.
- To analyze the welfare measures of the Tamil Nadu government for the SC community.
- Secondary sources used:
- Government policy documents
- Academic research and journal articles.
- Official reports and statistics
- Aimed to understand caste dynamics in Tamil Nadu and contribute to broader discussions on social inclusion and equitable development.

Limitations:

- This study did not involve any significant fieldwork or collection of personal data.
- The results are based entirely on secondary data, which may limit the depth of the empirical evidence.
- The regional focus on Coimbatore is likely to limit transferability to other regions and states.
- This study may not reflect the impact of recent policy changes or implementation issues.
- Theoretical frameworks cannot adequately capture the subtle cultural and social differences at the micro-community level.

VII. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Kaur, Devi, and Singh (2024) studied caste-based marginalization in India from a sociological perspective, focusing on the historical and institutional exclusion of Dalits. The article argues that marginalization is a multidimensional phenomenon between social exclusion and social integration. The author emphasizes that the caste system is a rigid social structure that maintains inequality and prevents people from gaining basic rights. Federal Commissioners Dr. Ambethkar and Dr. Gandhi further explored the transition from marginalization to inclusion and provided insights on social justice and reforms. This work makes a significant contribution to our understanding of caste in contemporary Indian society.

Vinay Damodar (2023) shows the impact of education-based social programs on the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) who mainly live in rural areas of Tamil Nadu. The scholarship focuses on scholarship programs such as universities and foreign scholarships. Analyze its role in increasing enrollment and higher education participation rates in border areas. Studies have shown that administrative delays and lack of financial resources are the main obstacles to the effectiveness of the system. Despite these challenges, these programs are critical to reducing dropout rates and improving literacy rates.

Pradhan (2014) published a comprehensive book as part of the Social Inclusion Atlas and Ethnic Profiles (SIA-EP) project conducted by Tribhuvan University from 2011 to 2013. The study combines quantitative and qualitative data to map and analyze social inclusion in Nepal, focusing on caste and ethnicity. Its main components include the Nepal Social Participation Survey, which includes a multidimensional social inclusion index and ethnic profiles of 42 excluded communities. The study provides an overview and analysis of the scope of cultural diversity and social differences in Nepal. It provides an important resource for policymakers, researchers, and educators. This book makes an important contribution to the understanding of systemic exclusion and the development of inclusive development strategies.

VIII. RESEARCH GAP

- This is despite the fact that there are many studies on exclusion and caste-based social programs. There is little location-specific analysis, particularly focusing on Tamil Nadu and Coimbatore.
- Damodar (2023) stressed the importance of educational scholarships for SCs but pointed out that administrative delays and insufficient funding hampered the effectiveness of these measures.
- Most existing studies have not examined the long-term impact of social programs on promoting social mobility and status transformation among marginalized rural communities in rural Tamil Nadu.
- Social services, there is little research on the role of national strategies combining education and resettlement support in promoting inclusive development of SCs.
- There is a large gap in research on the relationship between social policies and caste inequality and local socio-economic conditions in general, and in relation to the Scheduled Castes in Coimbatore in particular.

IX. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Nature of the Study

This is a theoretical study, but it follows a practical analytical model. This study does not involve field research or questionnaire surveys, but rather uses secondary data and existing literature to analyze how social safety programs affect social inclusion and status transformation.

The goal is not to collect new information but to gather existing information (government policy documents, scientific studies, census statistics, and published research) to draw meaningful conclusions. This approach allowed us to present the constructs of the empirical study while maintaining a theoretical foundation.

Data Sources

Only secondary data were used in this study. Information is collected from relevant and reliable sources;

- Government Report (Tamil Nadu Adhivaidar and Tribal Welfare Department)
- Indian Census Data
- Research papers and scientific journals.
- Books and reports from non-governmental organizations and national commissions.
- Research on social inclusion, shelving, caste system, and social welfare programs

We analyze these sources to understand how public welfare policies contribute (or not) to improvements in educational and economic outcomes.

X. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

It is based on the fundamental understanding that there are multifaceted processes influenced by historical, institutional, economic and educational factors. Based on the literature reviewed, the framework integrates key theoretical and empirical insights and explores the role of welfare initiatives in influencing social inclusion outcomes in the Coimbatore region.

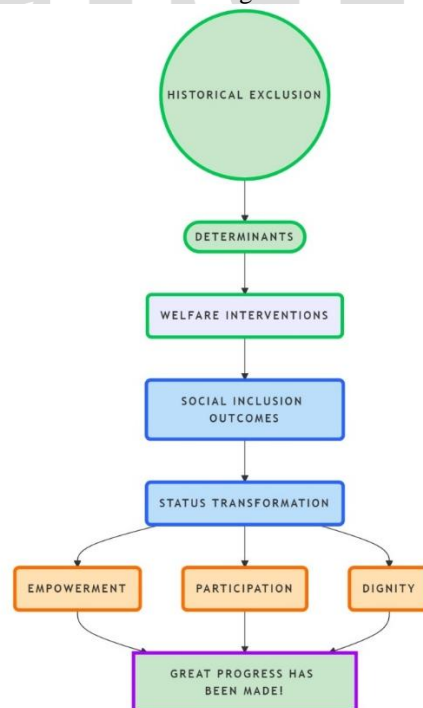


Figure – 1 (Historical Inclusion)

1. Historical Exclusion

(Inclusion and Exclusion: Causes and Determinants)

This is the starting point. It refers to the long-standing social, cultural, and economic marginalization of Scheduled Caste (SC) communities due to the caste-based hierarchical structure of Indian society.

The caste system led to systemic discrimination, denial of opportunities, and social exclusion, creating deep-rooted inequality.

2. Determinants

These are the factors that influence inclusion or exclusion. They include:

- Structural determinants (access to land, education, health, employment)

- Cultural determinants (social attitudes, stigma, caste prejudice)
- Political and institutional factors (representation, policy implementation)

Identifying these determinants is crucial for understanding what hinders or promotes social inclusion and mobility.

3. Welfare Interventions

(The Multiple Dimensions of Social Integration)

These refer to the government welfare schemes and policies implemented by the Tamil Nadu government aimed at uplifting SC persons.

Examples include:

- Educational support (scholarships, reservations)
- Economic empowerment programs (skill training, financial aid)
- Housing, health, and legal safeguards

4. Social Inclusion Outcomes

These are the visible impacts of welfare interventions, such as:

- Improved access to education and jobs
- Increased representation in institutions
- Greater visibility and voice in society

Social inclusion here means active participation and recognition of dignity for SC individuals within mainstream society.

5. Status Transformation

With consistent social inclusion outcomes, a transformation of social status occurs.

Scheduled Caste persons begin to gain respect, break caste-based barriers, and experience upward social mobility.

6. Empowerment – Participation – Dignity

(The Multiple Dimensions of Social Integration)

These are the core indicators of social integration:

- Empowerment: Ability to make decisions and claim rights.
- Participation: Active involvement in social, political, and economic spheres.
- Dignity: Recognition as equal citizens with value and worth.

7. Great Progress Has Been Made

This is the culmination of all efforts: from exclusion to inclusion.

It acknowledges that, despite ongoing challenges, significant progress has been made through sustained welfare policies and social change.

This flowchart illustrates a transformative journey from historical exclusion to empowerment and dignity driven by welfare initiatives that address key determinants of exclusion. It aligns well with the multiple dimensions of integration and shows how targeted government action can lead to inclusive development and status transformation for Scheduled Caste communities.

XI. ANALYTICAL APPROACH

This study adopted the above conceptual framework to analyze the data and existing literature. The study examined the accessibility of social security system in Tamil Nadu, looking at various aspects of inclusion and removal of barriers. The selection of the Coimbatore district as a case study gives the entire scheme more regional focus and relevance.

This approach can help you understand:

- Which social policies are effective?
- Where is the blank space?
- What factors facilitate or hinder change in the SC community?

The model is not mathematical, but it is logical and interpretable, and it guides the structure of the analysis in the rest of the document.

Scope and Focus

The research focus is limited to the following contents.

- Caste communities in Coimbatore
- Education, including economic education and social education.
- Social Projects of Tamil Nadu Government
- We do not collect raw data but conduct qualitative analysis based on published reliable information to understand social reality.

XII. SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY IN TAMIL NADU: A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

Historical Development of the SC Welfare System in Tamil Nadu

The history of Scheduled Caste (SC) welfare in Tamil Nadu is deeply rooted in the state's tradition of governance focused on social reforms and justice. Influenced by early 20th-century reformers like Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, Tamil Nadu became a confident place and a pioneer in implementing SC reservations and educational concessions. After independence, specialized bodies like Adi Dravida and the Tribal Welfare Board were set up as a strategic step towards centralizing social welfare management. While these initiatives initially targeted social exclusion, they gradually evolved into a more comprehensive program with a development focus specifically targeting rural areas in Coimbatore.

The government, ever since the 1970s, has instituted social schemes in the form of scholarships, which have enormously improved the schooling of AS children. Education made free, including hostels and meals. From welfare policies to capacity-building policies, skill upgrades, and entrepreneurship incentives, it is introduced in the form of housing schemes and legal assistance. Digital governance has been promoted intensely in the last few years in the nation to optimize social policies in real time and integrate growth. Tamil Nadu's multidimensional approach to welfare, now synchronized with the larger objectives of

human development and allowing scope for the upliftment of the Scheduled Castes, is one of inclusion and dynamism in the sphere of policies.

Major Initiatives in Coimbatore District

Coimbatore is among the fastest growing districts of Tamil Nadu and is a thriving socio-economic environment, yet Scheduled Caste (SC) communities are still confronted by traditional disadvantages. Efforts to rectify these issues were initiated by the state government of Tamil Nadu through various social programs aimed towards them. These involve education, economic independence, housing, health care, and legal support, among others. Social programs for bridging social differences and the holistic growth of indigenous SC communities are described in this section.

Educational support

- Scholarships are provided to SC students at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- Textbooks, school uniforms, bicycles, and laptops are distributed free of charge.
- Construction and maintenance of hostels for boys and girls of SC background.
- Pathway courses to support preparation for additional courses and entrance exams.
- Inspiring first-generation learners and promoting girls' education.
- We will begin to integrate digital skills and life skills training into the curriculum.
- Monitoring dropout rates and intervention programs in rural schools.

Enhance economic strength.

- Skill development programs are carried out through Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and Government Skill Centers.
- TAHDCO supports self-employment programs through subsidized loans.
- It provides machines to small SC entrepreneurs and helps them obtain licenses and access to markets.
- Partner with local businesses to host job fairs and career opportunities for Coimbatore teens.
- Promoting cooperative business models and Self-Help Groups (SHGs).
- Financial education programs and awareness campaigns on microfinance.
- Sewing and income-generating activities for SC women include food processing, etc.

Housing and Health Programs

- Periyar Ninaivu Samathuvapuram Integrated Housing Cluster Development Project.
- Providing free housing to landless families in SC through the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board.
- Construction of toilets and sanitation facilities in SC-dominated areas.
- Join the Prime Minister Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS).
- Mobile medical units and health camps in remote villages in Coimbatore.
- Provide support programs and nutrition packages for pregnant women.
- Hygiene and maternal and child health awareness education programs at the community level.

Legal and Social Protection

Preventing discrimination and confirming constitutional rights Legal & social protection, which is framework for the protection of Scheduled Castes (SCs) in Tamil Nadu. At the center of this framework is the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Act that permits the setting up of SC/ST police stations in places such as Coimbatore and expedites investigations into atrocities. Far-reaching awareness of their rights and strengthening of legal status and access to legal rights in communities across Coimbatore has been achieved through legal literacy programs, mobile counseling centers, and education camps.

On the other hand Tamil Nadu is promoting social inclusion through interventions like "Samathuvapuram" (Caste-based) blended into a community-based initiative. Such efforts are particularly supported by non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations. But challenges in law enforcement persist, including delays in justice and intimidation of victims. These gaps ought to be addressed through raising awareness among the police, instituting witness protection mechanisms and increasing institutional accountability. For Scheduled Castes, Coimbatore is a case study of Implementation Legal and social protection.

XIII. DETERMINANTS OF SOCIAL INCLUSION AND STATUS TRANSFORMATION

Education

Particularly in districts such as Coimbatore, education has come to serve as one of the more prominent vehicles for integration into one's society and for the upward mobility within which social status is enmeshed for the SC (Scheduled Caste) community of Tamil Nadu. Many programs funded by the government, including scholarships and free tuition, as well as focused work to make infrastructure improvements have driven much higher literacy and attendance in schools in the children in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Foundational education is also vital for mobile individuals and thriving communities.

Yet there are still barriers at the third stage. Numerous SC students struggle with economic hardship, limited social connections and cultural alienation that make it challenging for them to gain entry into college or vocational centers. On the other hand, targeted interventions in the form of competitive examination coaching, bridging programs and caste-sensitive teaching can ameliorate these issues. Education is crucial for building identity and civic engagement and for driving systemic change. The promise of education is embodied in its potential to deliver these citizenship rights, yet it is only through substantial and continuous policy innovation that the benefits of education can be realized, and only through ongoing opportunities and institutional reform that they can be fully actualized.

Employment and Economic Mobility

Scheduled Caste (SC) community, employment is integral for both its social inclusion and economic mobility. In Coimbatore, even with the expansion of industrial and service sectors in the city, SC representation in formal employment continues to be abysmally low. Measures such as the reservation policy and the TAHDCO scheme have been attempted by the government to plug this gap. But systemic discrimination in the hiring process and work environment still makes it hard for the people of Coimbatore to gain equal access to employment opportunities.

Vocational training and further education enabled a generational transition away from the caste system to semi-skilled and skilled jobs. But the vast majority of peoples in Coimbatore remain employed in the informal economy, where poor working conditions and minimal social safety nets are barriers to upward mobility. While the empowerment of women through self-help groups and microcredit has been beneficial, consideration to marginalized communities in terms of access to resources and market access are still barriers to removing challenges to access to capital and markets. Thus, any advance toward realizing employment's transformational potential through sweeping labor market reforms and sustained enforcement of anti-discrimination laws depends on expanding the pathway to economic independence.

Access to Public Services

Access to essential public services like housing, healthcare and sanitation, and social security are an important set of factors for social integration and well-being of the Scheduled Caste communities. Coimbatore is building toilets, and there are focused social schemes to fill-in infrastructure gaps in SC colonies community health centers and subsidized housing. It is against this background that these advances matter, in addressing historical marginalization and raising the standard of living of the most underprivileged elements of society.

Nonetheless, institutional barriers continue to limit service delivery efficacy. In Coimbatore, bureaucratic delays, lack of education and implicit caste discrimination exclude families from fully utilizing social services. While digital platforms have enhanced the transparency of services, they also carry the risk of excluding those who for one reason or another are digitally illiterate. Malnutrition, insufficient prenatal care, and health-related hazards associated with work are some of the factors that negatively affect the health profile of SC community. A bigger challenge is closing these gaps by building more inclusive governance and accountability mechanisms, which are essential to achieving equitable access to public services and real social change.

Social Attitudes and Cultural Change

These second-generation challenges stem from general policy interventions that address structural inequalities through caste-based quotas which, while providing short-term benefits to marginalized sections, cannot alone uproot long-established social attitudes based on caste across generations. In Coimbatore, caste-based prejudice is not simply embedded in social practices but also becomes evident through communal interactions and everyday discrimination, despite legal protection. Such mindset acts as a barrier in the way of SC people to enjoy their rights and attain status in the society. Cultural change is a slow but significant factor of social change. Social integration means not just having access to material resources, but also symbolic inclusion and recognition. ESG's role in highlighting vulnerable segments is crucial civil society organizations, educational institutions, media and campaigns play an important role in changing public perceptions and challenging caste-based stereotypes. Attitudes can be changed through awareness-raising activities, cultural exchange between classes or involvement in cultural narratives.

Dalit identity and pride is also creating avenues for new dialogues and resisting social hegemony. There is a growing demand for accountability from digital platforms, with young people, in particular members of Scheduled Castes, pleading with these platforms to take notice of caste discrimination, on the ground and online. Such cultural awareness has an important bearing on contesting exclusionary behaviors and norms and on promoting inclusion. But such change must be grounded in systemic reform of the institutional environment that validates these identities. Normalizing cooperation and solidarity between the classes is a key step in that orientation, towards what could lead to a long-term change of mindsets. For this reason, changing social attitudes is an invisible, yet effective, axis to promote social integration and change of status.

Interaction between Politics and Social Change

The relationship between policy intervention and social change is complex and interrelated. Political measures can promote inclusion, but their success ultimately depends on how society perceives and implements them. In Coimbatore, while progressive social policies are well entrenched in Tamil Nadu, social resistance and administrative activism often limit the possibilities for change. The top-down nature of many social programs must be balanced with bottom-up participation by the SC communities themselves. When beneficiaries are involved in planning and monitoring, policies can be better implemented and based on real-world evidence. Civil society organizations, local leaders, and village committees play a key role in mediating the relationship between the state and society.

Furthermore, educational, empirical evidence suggests that policy success in employment and services must be accompanied by parallel cultural changes. Legal and bureaucratic measures alone cannot overthrow existing social classes. Instead, achieving sustainable inclusion requires a comprehensive approach that combines political reform and social awareness. Finally, coordination between policymaking and social change is very important. This will determine whether the social schemes will be just temporary relief or they will play a significant role among the Scheduled Caste communities in Coimbatore and truly transform their social status.

XIV. DISCUSSION

Effectiveness of social welfare measures in Coimbatore

The Tamil Nadu government has launched various social initiatives in Coimbatore to promote social inclusion and change the status of the Scheduled Castes. Educational programs such as free education and scholarships have increased student literacy and school attendance, especially in rural Coimbatore. Business programs such as TAHDCO and CMEDP training programs support skills development and entrepreneurship. However, bureaucratic delays, lack of knowledge, and underutilization of resources hamper its effectiveness. Access to health and housing programs has improved, but gaps in quality and coverage

remain. Urban-rural differences still exist. To maximize impact, it is important to strengthen government systems and increase community engagement.

Success Stories and Limitations

In Coimbatore, especially through educational support, vocational training, and women-led self-help groups, the Scheduled Castes have made significant progress at the individual and community levels. These activities include higher education, promotion of entrepreneurship, and social empowerment. However, caste-based discrimination still exists. Cross-sectored coordination is lacking; challenges remain, including inadequate access and inadequate distribution. Many families in Coimbatore are unaware of the benefits available to them, and a lack of impact evaluations limits understanding of long-term outcomes. Digital barriers also lead to the exclusion of those who cannot use technology. These limitations hinder the full achievement of inclusion goals. Strong implementation and targeted communication are critical to widespread success.

Policy Implications and Areas of Improvement

This theoretical study highlights the important policy implications for improving social services for Scheduled Castes in Coimbatore. The key is to improve administrative efficiency and enhance accessibility through streamlined processes and a comprehensive digital platform. To prevent fragmentation of services, a departmental coordination and integrated system is needed to track beneficiaries. Long-term strategies must focus on achieving sustainable inclusion through skills development and promoting inclusive employment. Education is about digital skills, and it must be accompanied by career guidance and mentoring. Active community involvement in planning and monitoring ensures cultural relevance and accountability. These measures will help improve the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of social policies.

XV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study examines theoretical and practical aspects of social welfare measures aimed at promoting social inclusion and status change. Government programs, including education, health care, access to economic resources, and legal protections, have improved. However, institutional caste-based discrimination and administrative inefficiency hamper full participation. Real change requires not only material benefits but also changes in social attitudes and organizational practices. While there are signs of improvement, progress has been uneven. The lack of regional strategies and impact evaluation limits long-term effectiveness. In order to link policy to practice, a community-centered approach is important.

Summary of Findings

Social welfare schemes and educational achievements in Tamil Nadu, especially in Coimbatore, have had a positive impact on the income development and health of the Scheduled Caste people.

- Educational support such as scholarships and special schools, free hostels, etc. have increased the literacy rate of SC students and reduced the dropout rate of SC students.
- While economic measures such as skills development and entrepreneurship programs have their benefits, their effectiveness varies by region and gender.
- Suburban and rural areas do not have equal access to care and coverage.
- Factors such as class discrimination, lack of institutional awareness, low digital literacy, and administrative delays limit the inclusiveness and effectiveness of social welfare programs.
- Public participation, political accountability, and coordination among different stakeholders are important aspects of progress.

Theoretical Implications

This study highlights the value of a multidimensional theoretical framework, including structural functionalism, which combines critical theory and approaches to analyzing social inclusion. Amartya Sen's approach to empowerment is based on independence from resource allocation, shifting the focus to strengthening the dignity and autonomy of the Scheduled Castes. This paper also draws on theories of micro-inequality and social capital to show that participation is relational and contextually shaped. Social policies must challenge not only material deprivation but also aspiration standards. Theoretical considerations go beyond data to perception and must examine power structures and historical injustices. This approach expands our understanding of caste-based exclusion. Future research focusing on culture needs to reform participation models by integrating field and institutional dimensions.

Recommendations to Policy Makers and Stakeholders

- Strengthen administrative capacity: Streamline project implementation by improving departmental coordination and timely allocation of funds. We will implement a digital surveillance system to track beneficiaries and ensure digital access to services for rural and vulnerable groups.
- Carry out publicity activities to raise awareness of the existing social security system in remote and poor areas. Use community leaders and civil society organizations as local news brokers.
- Ensure inclusive implementation: Women, design interventions targeting subgroups within the SC population such as persons with disabilities and landless workers. Establish a complaint mechanism and conduct regular social audits to ensure accountability.
- Investing in talent development: Tailoring vocational training to the socio-economic realities of the SC community in Coimbatore; scaling up mentoring programs and digital literacy activities.
- Systematic participation: Design of social welfare programs; establishment of community advisory committees with representatives of the SCs at the district to facilitate monitoring and evaluation.

- Closing the gap between education and employment: Connecting education programs to employment opportunities through public-private partnerships and a comprehensive jobs commitment.

Suggestions for Future Research

- Future research should include field studies to test the theoretical claims made in this study. Longitudinal studies that track the impact of specific social programs over time can provide deeper insights.
- Gender-specific research is needed to understand how the participation of women in socially disadvantaged areas differs from that of men.
- A comparative study of urban and rural SC populations in Tamil Nadu can highlight the role of spatial dynamics.
- Research on the role of the private sector and NGOs in the government initiatives taken for the welfare of residents in Coimbatore SC is still limited and needs further exploration.
- Future theoretical research should examine the role of class in determining access to resources and opportunities. We can also look at intersectional approaches and consider how they impact the region.

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