

**Tamil Nadu**  
**DATA HIGHLIGHTS : THE SCHEDULED CASTES**  
**Census of India 2001**

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The total population of Tamil Nadu, as per the 2001 Census is 62,405,679. Of this, 11,857,504 (19 per cent) are Scheduled Castes (SCs). The SC population constitutes 7.1 per cent of the country's SC population. Seventy-six (76) SCs have been notified in Tamil Nadu by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 1976. Of these, fifteen SCs namely, Ayyanavar, Bharatar, Kakkalan, Kavara, Kootan, Mannan, Padannan, Panan, Paravan, Pathiyan, Thandan, Vannan, Vetan and Vettuvan have been notified with area restriction in Kanniyakumari district and Shencottah taluk of Tirunelveli district. Kanakkan have been notified in Nilgiri district only. Out of 76 SCs, two SCs i.e., Kakkalan and Padannan have not reported population in 2001 Census.

2. The growth rate of SC population in the decade 1991-2001 at 10.7 per cent is lower in comparison to the overall growth rate of 11.7 per cent of the state. Among major SCs, Paraiyan have recorded the highest growth rate of 38.6 per cent, followed by Arunthathiyar (33.2 per cent) and Pallan (18.5 per cent) during 1991-2001.

### **Population- Size and Distribution**

3. Out of 76 SCs, five SCs Adi Dravida, Pallan, Paraiyan, Chakkiliyan and Arunthathiyar together constitute 93.5 per cent of the SC population of the state. Adi Dravida are numerically the largest SCs with a population of 5,402,755, constituting 45.6 per cent of the state SC population. They are followed by Pallan 2,272,265 (19.2 per cent), Paraiyan 1,860,519 (15.7 per cent), Chakkiliyan 777,139 (6.6 per cent) and Arunthathiyar 771,659 (6.5 per cent). Thirty five (35) SCs have reported population below one thousand. Among the districts Thiruvarur has the highest proportion of SC population to its total population (32.4 per cent) while Kanyakumari has the lowest (4 per cent).

4. As per 2001 Census, 70.1 per cent of them are living in the rural areas and 29.9 per cent in the urban areas of the state. Among the major SCs, Pallan have the highest (76 per cent) rural population, followed by Paraiyan (73.1 per cent), Adi Darvida (69.4 per cent), Chakkiliyan (67.9 per cent) and Arunthathiyar (64.4 per cent).

## Sex ratio

5. The overall sex ratio of the SC population in Tamil Nadu is 999 females per 1000 males, which is higher than the national average of 936 for the SC population in 2001. The sex ratio of SC population has registered improvement over 978 reported in 1991 Census. Among the districts the highest sex ratio (1059), is recorded in Tirunelveli district and the lowest in Salem district (947). At the individual caste level, all the major SCs, except Pallan and Paraiyan, have registered overall lower sex ratio as compared to the state average.

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

Statement - 1 : Sex Ratio							
Age Groups	All SCs (India)	All SCs (Tamil Nadu)	Adi Dravida	Pallan	Paraiyan	Chakkiliyan	Arunthathiyar
All Ages	936	999	992	1013	1015	987	972
0-6	938	959	962	952	969	954	928

6. As may be seen from the Statement above, the child sex ratio (0-6) among SC population of Tamil Nadu is also higher than the national SC population in the corresponding age group. In case of child sex ratio, the position of Paraiyan and Adi Dravida is even better than the rest of state SC population. However, Arunthathiyar, which is comparatively an urbanized SC community, has recorded a lower child sex ratio of 928.

## Literacy and educational level

7. Literacy and level of education are two basic indicators of the level of development achieved by a group/society. Literacy results in more awareness besides contributing to the overall improvement of health, hygiene and other social conditions. According to 2001 Census, percentage of SC literate persons (those who can read and write with understanding) aged 7 years and above is 63.2 per cent, which is lower than

73.5 per cent reported for the state as a whole. The literacy data show that the SC population of the state has made significant improvement during the decade 1991-2001. The literacy rate, which was 46.7 per cent in 1991, has increased by 16.5 percentage points in 2001.

8. Among the major SCs, Paraiyan are reported to have the highest literacy rate of 65.9 per cent, followed by Adi Dravida (65.3 per cent), Pallan (65 per cent), Arunthathiyar (53.7 per cent) and Chakkiliyan (50.9 per cent). The female literacy rate of 53 per cent among SC population is lower as compared to 64.4 per cent among females of the state. As in literacy rate, the highest and lowest female literacy rate of 55.4 per cent and 40.8 per cent have also been recorded among Adi Dravida and Chakkiliyan.

<b>Statement - 2 : Educational levels attained by major SCs</b>							
<b>Name of SC</b>	<b>Literate without educational level</b>	<b>Below primary</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>Matric/Secondary /Higher Secondary Intermediate etc.</b>	<b>Technical &amp; Non-technical diploma</b>	<b>Graduate &amp; above</b>
<b>All SCs</b>	9.1	19.9	31.9	18.4	17.4	0.6	2.7
<b>Adi Dravida</b>	6.6	19.0	31.7	19.8	19.2	0.6	3.0
<b>Pallan</b>	10.7	19.3	31.9	17.7	16.5	0.7	3.0
<b>Paraiyan</b>	11.2	19.4	31.3	18.0	16.8	0.6	2.8
<b>Chakkiliyan</b>	12.7	25.7	34.1	15.5	10.8	0.3	0.9
<b>Arunthathiyar</b>	10.5	23.6	34.0	16.1	13.5	0.5	0.7

9. Out of the total literates, 29 per cent are literates either without any educational level or have attained below Primary level. The literates, who have attained education up to Primary and Middle levels, constitute 31.9 per cent and 18.4 per cent respectively. 17.4 per cent are having educational level up to Matric/Higher Secondary etc. levels, implying that every 6<sup>th</sup> SC literate is a Matriculate. Literates with educational level of Graduation and above are 2.7 per cent. Individually, Adi Dravida and Pallan (3 per cent each) have highest percentage of Graduation and above educational levels.

10. From the educational level table, it also emerges that the drop out starts after the Primarily level and it increases with each subsequent level of education.

11. Population in the age group 5-14 years are the potential students. 83.1 per cent of the SC population in this age group is attending various educational institutions. At the individual caste level, Adi Dravida, Pallan and Paraiyan have more percentage of school going children than the overall state SC population.

## **Economic activity**

### **Work Participation Rate (WPR)**

12. The work participation rate (WPR) is the percentage of workers to the total population. The WPR among SC population is 48.1 per cent in 2001, which is higher than 44.7 per cent for the state population as a whole. The WPR of SC population however, has declined marginally, if compared to 48.4 per cent reported in 1991 Census. The male WPR has been 55.8 per cent and female WPR 40.3 per cent at 2001 Census.

13. At individual caste level, the WPR varies from the highest 55.4 per cent among Chakkiliyan to the lowest 44.4 per cent among Adi Dravida. Adi Dravida has also recorded the lowest female WPR of 35.1 per cent.

### **Category of Workers**

14. There has been a decline in the SC main workers from 94.7 per cent in 1991 to 79.0 per cent in 2001 Census. This, in turn, has resulted in corresponding increase in the marginal workers from 5.3 per cent in 1991 to 21 per cent in 2001. Out of total workers, 'agricultural labourers' constitute 58.5 per cent, which is higher than 12.9 percentage points when compared to 45.6 per cent registered at national level for SC population. 'Other workers' account for 29 per cent. Only 10.2 per cent workers have been returned as 'cultivators'; remaining 2.3 per cent are workers in 'household industry'. Thus, there is a structural change in the category of workers among SC population; the workers engaged in agricultural activities (cultivators and agricultural labourers) constitute 68.7 per cent of the total work force against 79.7 per cent recorded in 1991 Census.

15. At the individual caste level, except Adi Dravida (56.7 per cent), other SCs have a higher percentage of workers in the category of 'agricultural labourers' than recorded for SC population at the state level (58.5 per cent).

### **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 47.2 per cent persons among the SCs of Tamil Nadu are 'never married'. The 'currently married' constitute 46.7 per cent while 5.5 per cent are 'widowed'. Only 0.5 per cent are 'divorced and separated'.

17. Majority of girls and boys among SCs in Tamil Nadu are getting married after attaining the legal age of marriage. Marriages of SC girls below 18 years (1.9 per cent) are lower than that recorded among SC population at national level (2.8 per cent). Similarly, the incidence of marriage of boys below 21 years at 1.4 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 2.5 and 3.2 respectively, which are lower than the corresponding figures of 3.2 and 4.2 for SC population aggregated at national level.

### **Religion**

19. The SCs of the state are predominantly Hindus. Out of total 11,857,504 SC population of the state, only 840 are Buddhists and 837 are Sikhs, the remaining are all Hindus as per 2001 Census.