

Exploring the Socio-Economic Landscape: A Geographical Perspective on Scheduled Caste Respondents in Basti District of Uttar Pradesh, India

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Abstract

The analysis of geographical factors is crucial for comprehending the relationships between humans and their environment, which influence various aspects of life. It substantially impacts the socio-economic status of individuals, communities, societies, and nations. The present study assesses the socio-economic conditions of the scheduled caste population of the Basti district, Uttar Pradesh, India, focusing on its various attributes like education, land holding size, income, etc. According to Census 2011, 16.6 percent population at the national level and 20.7 percent at the state level belong to the Scheduled Caste category, whereas in Basti district, this number is 20.8 percent. In Basti, the number of scheduled caste workers is 171,474, with 1,18,871 males and 52,603 females. The study is mainly based on primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected through the interview schedule, observation, and focus discussion. At the same time, the secondary data was collected from academic journals, research monographs, yearbooks, e-books, bulletins, government publications, dissertations, theses, annual reports of the state government of Uttar Pradesh, and census reports. The review of secondary data and observations from the field indicate a diverse socio-economic landscape in the study area, with the majority of people engaged in agriculture and allied activities and only a small percentage involved in other sectors for livelihood, which means that in the last few decades, the socio-economic status of deprived communities especially the Scheduled Castes has improved due to the change in literacy rate, better job opportunities and linkages with welfare schemes. However, more concerted efforts are still needed at the grassroots level to enhance their quality of life, access to welfare schemes, and reservation provisions.

Keywords: Scheduled caste, Socio-economic landscape, Inequality, Social exclusion

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Introduction

Since India's independence, following the implementation of the Constitution, significant economic growth and educational opportunities have emerged in the country in pursuit of social equality. Yet, even after the 75th Republic Day, social inequality and discrimination persist among the marginalized, with the Scheduled Caste community, in particular, facing many barriers, including social exclusion, low literacy levels, poverty, and regardless of government initiatives and reservation policies (Raj, 2018). They are historically deprived of resources, face social exclusion, poverty, illiteracy, limited opportunities for social mobility, and restricted access to education and healthcare, creating a cycle of deprivation (Borua, 2005; Annapuram & Inbanathan, 2017; Kumar et al., 2023). In India, the

profoundly entrenched prevalence of the caste system and its enduring impact on socio-economic mobility, especially in rural households, is the main reason behind inequality. People's caste background remains an essential determinant of socio-economic status and is associated with disparities in access to employment, education, and healthcare facilities compared to other social groups (Brothers, 2014; Thorat and Madheswaran, 2018). By addressing the problem of caste-based inequality and discrimination, continued efforts in affirmative action policies/reservations are essential to promote social integration.

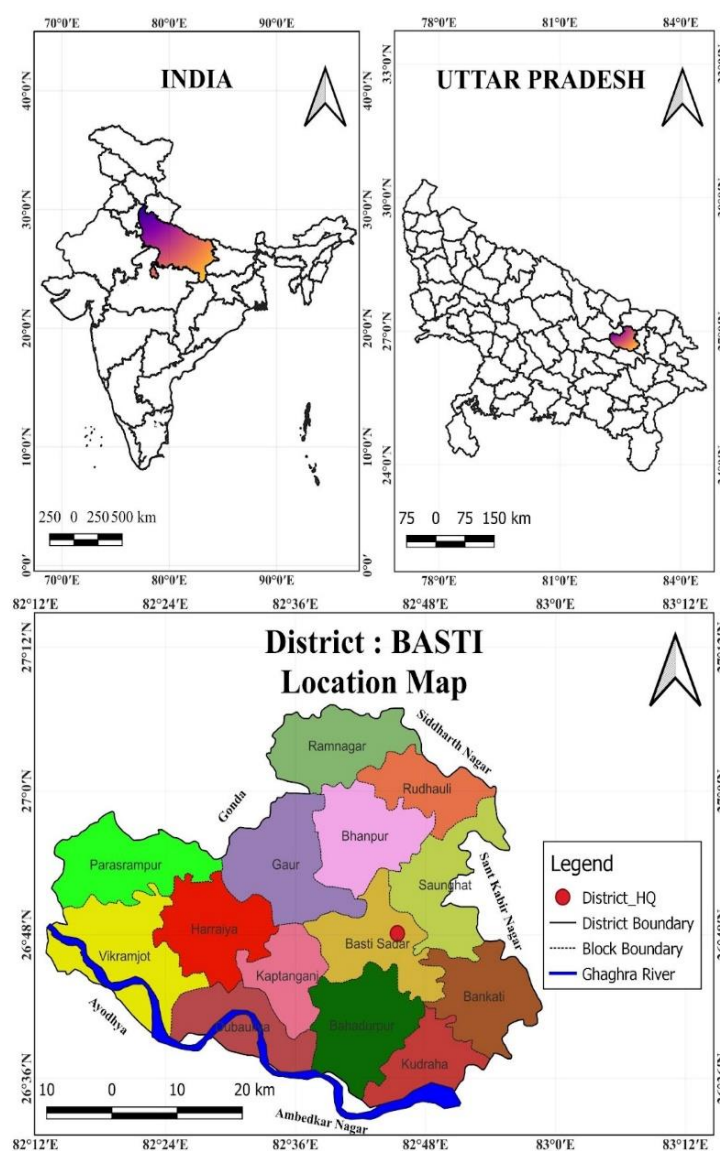
To achieve the goal of an equitable India, it is essential to eliminate the systemic discrimination that hinders equal opportunities for Scheduled Castes. Various research findings between 2011 and 2023 show that despite state and central government efforts, significant disparities persist in their socio-economic status compared to other social groups, primarily in the rural Indian landscape, perpetuating poverty and hindering their progress. (Chakraborty and Karmakar, 2011; Burman, 2014; Singh, 2014; Apparaiya, 2015; Sardar, 2020; Sharma, 2020; Dodamani and Natikar, 2023). The inequalities and discrimination that limit access to education, health, and employment to a large extent are problematic at the sub-state level due to the low access and ineffectiveness of national policies. Implementing effective district-level interventions along with solid national policies is crucial for bridging this gap.

The present study is a district-level case study that examines the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes in the Basti district of Uttar Pradesh, an area with a long feudal history that shapes and has witnessed uneven progress for Scheduled Castes regarding socio-economic well-being. It also examines how factors like access to education and land holding size vary across the district, providing valuable insights into how post-independence policies aimed at social justice may have uneven outcomes on the district level. This study considers the unique challenges and progress experienced by Scheduled Castes by reviewing national and regional perspectives. Through a geographical lens, it aims to identify spatial patterns of disparity, enhance understanding in policy discussions, pave the way for more targeted interventions, and contribute to a broader understanding of social equity and inclusive growth at the grassroots level in rural India.

Study Area

Geographically, the Basti district is located in the north-eastern part of Uttar Pradesh. The extent is $26^{\circ} 23' N$ to $27^{\circ} 30' N$ latitude and $82^{\circ} 17' E$ and $83^{\circ} 20' E$ longitude. The district is bounded by Sant Kabir Nagar in the east, Gonda in the west, and Siddharth Nagar district to the north. Kuwano and Ghaghara are the major rivers in the central and southern parts of the district.

The river Ghaghara separated the district from Faizabad and Ambedkar Nagar. The total area of the Basti district is 2,688 sq km. It has a total population of 2,464,464, of which 1,255,272 are males and 1,209,192 are females. The average literacy rate in urban areas is 82.5%, while in rural areas it is 66.3% (Census, 2011). The total Schedule Caste (SC) population in Basti district

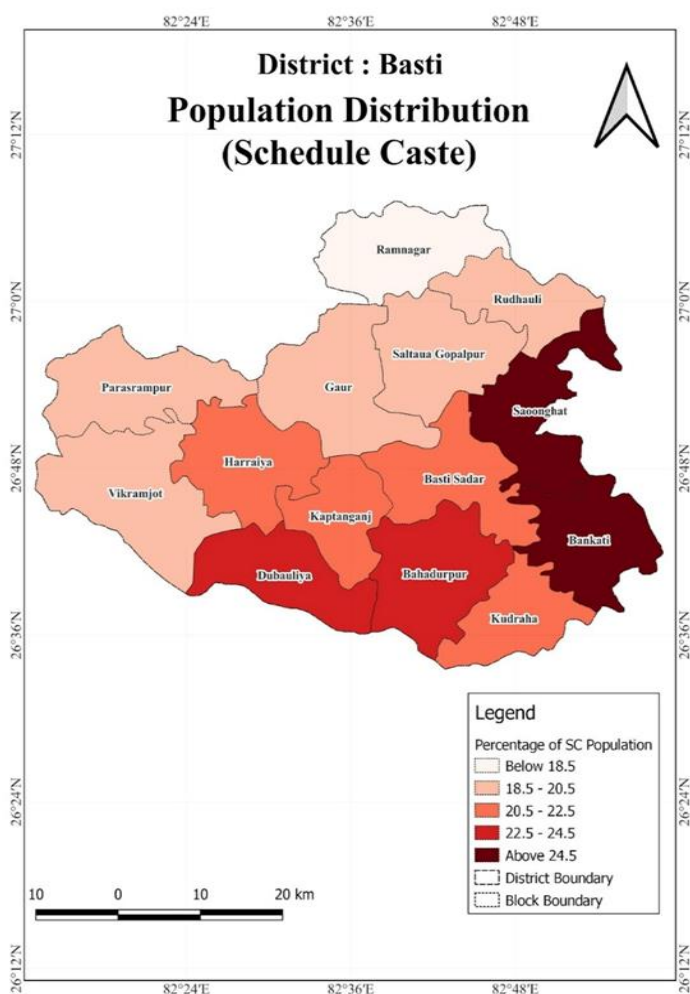


is 513969, of which 262,534 are male and 251,425 are female, accounting for 20.84% of the total population (District Statistical Report, 2019).

Research Methodology

The study employs a comprehensive methodology, utilizing both primary (i.e., well-structured questionnaires, field surveys, and observations). Secondary data sources are government publications, dissertations, theses, annual reports from the State Government of Uttar Pradesh, and census reports from the Government of India. This quantitative study focused on understanding the socio-economic landscape and the Socio-economic disparities such as poverty, landholding size, occupational structure, education, violence, social exclusion, and discrimination experienced by Scheduled Castes of Basti district of Uttar Pradesh in diverse aspects of life to identify various factors influencing these disparities and explore the awareness and effectiveness of existing government schemes. For this purpose, various socio-economic indicators, such as land holding, occupational structure, income, education, reservation, and welfare scheme, were used in this study. The researcher did the socio-economic survey to comprehensively represent the Scheduled Caste (SC) population within the district from each block. The selection criteria for respondents in the study are geographical diversity, the proportion of the SC population, and population size. For selecting respondents out of the total Schedule Caste dominant villages, a secondary database was obtained from the Census of India for Basti district Potential Villages, which were shortlisted through the above set criteria and indicators of eligibility. Systematic random sampling was used to ensure the validity of the research's results/findings. Of the 615 households based on the above three pre-set criteria, 219 households were selected for this research to ensure the validity of research findings, wherein every 3rd household interacted in detail in the selected villages. This meticulous approach resulted in the inclusion of 219 samples from fourteen villages (Mandharpur, Bharoohiya joot, Tikariya, Kathautiya, Parsa, Khusariya, Koilara, Chak Banjari jot, Soraha, Barahara Urf Mathia, Naghri, Ramwapur Babu, Makdee, Chapra) effectively encompassing 14 developmental blocks within the district.

The quantitative survey focused on interrogating the selected households to assess their socio-economic status during the year 2022-2023, employing a structured multiple-choice questionnaire covering various aspects like income levels, educational attainment, access to government schemes, etc. These MCQs were developed based on a review of relevant literature and pre-tested for clarity and comprehensiveness with closed-ended questions. The questionnaire targeted respondents of different age compositions in this study area to find the diversity of answers required for the research about the household's socio-economic conditions.. Data analysis in this study involves descriptive statistics. During the research process, ethical considerations include informed consent from participants and ensuring their privacy and confidentiality. All data were analyzed and stored securely. For data validation, several interviews were carried out with several groups of men and women during the village meetings to gain more profound information and a comprehensive perspective on the chosen research problem. The survey results reveal the key social and economic determinants which are relevant and which have



significant relationships between socio-economic conditions of scheduled caste (e.g., income level, occupation, education, and land holdings).

Data analysis and discussion

Distribution of Scheduled Castes population

In Uttar Pradesh, the scheduled castes community holds significant importance in the social structure. It is frequently observed that areas dominated by scheduled castes often face socio-economic backwardness (Moose,2018). However, since independence, the national and state governments have tried to uplift social and economic status through various governmental initiatives (Chakraborty & Karmakar,2011). Consequently, their participation is now visible in social, economic, and political spheres. But, still, disparity persists in several dimensions like as education, health, hygiene, economic resources, employment, and housing (Dodamani & Natikar,2023)

Table 1
Distribution of Scheduled Caste Population in Basti District (2011 Census)

S.No.	Block	Total Population	Total Scheduled caste Population	Percentage of SC population
1	Bahadurpur	171601	41994	24.47
2	Bankati	179866	49529	27.53
3	Basti Sadar	232448	49840	21.44
4	Dubauliya	112629	25412	22.56
5	Gaur	203827	40923	20.07
6	Harraiya	162576	34643	21.30
7	Kaptan Ganj	113654	25043	22.03
8	Kudraha	139815	31397	22.45
9	Parasrampur	189702	35490	18.71
10	Ram Nagar	170402	28258	16.58
11	Rudhauri	152523	28414	18.63
12	Saltaua Gopalpur	189172	35194	18.60
13	Saoonghat	163507	40272	24.63
14	Vikram Jot	144120	27025	18.75
Total Rural		235842	493434	21.21
Total Urban		138097	20055	14.52
Total District		2463939	513489	20.84

Source: Computed from District Statistical Report (Zila Sankhiyakiya Patrika), Basti District-2019

The above Table 1 provides an overview of the Scheduled Caste population across different blocks within the district, including their total population and the percentage of Scheduled Caste population in each block. The total scheduled caste population stands at 513,489, constituting 20.84% of the total population; 21.21% reside in rural areas, while 14.52% are concentrated in urban areas (census,2011). The table also shows a significant variation in the percentage of scheduled castes across different blocks in the Basti district. For instance, Parasrampur has an 18.71% scheduled caste population, while Bankati has the highest at 27.53%. Ram Nagar has the lowest, with 16.58%. Basti Sadar has a 21.44% scheduled caste population. Understanding this uneven distribution of SC communities across the district is essential for planning and implementing targeted social and economic development programs to uplift the SC communities and address potential social and economic inequalities in study areas.

Age Composition

Age is a decisive variable influencing socio-economic attitudes, behaviour, and innovation indicators. Discerning the age composition of the Scheduled Caste (SC) population in Basti district is essential for this research. Specifically,

it examines how age groups within the SC community experience and contribute to various socio-economic aspects (e.g., income, landholding, education, and awareness about government schemes). Respondents were categorised into three age groups (Table 2). These categories are pertinent to considering the SC population's socio-economic experiences at different life stages. For example, the younger age group might be regarded as pursuing education or entering the workforce. In comparison, the adult age/older group might reflect established careers and experiences with government schemes. Looking over age composition, it is important to get diversified subtle perceptions of the SC community's socio-economic landscape in Basti.

Table 2
Distribution of the respondents according to age composition N=219

S. No.	Age Categories	Basti	
		Number	Percentage
1	Upto 25 (Young age)	43	19.63
2	26-50 (Adult age)	137	62.56
3	51 and above (old age)	39	17.81
Total		219	100

Based on the primary survey- 2022-2023

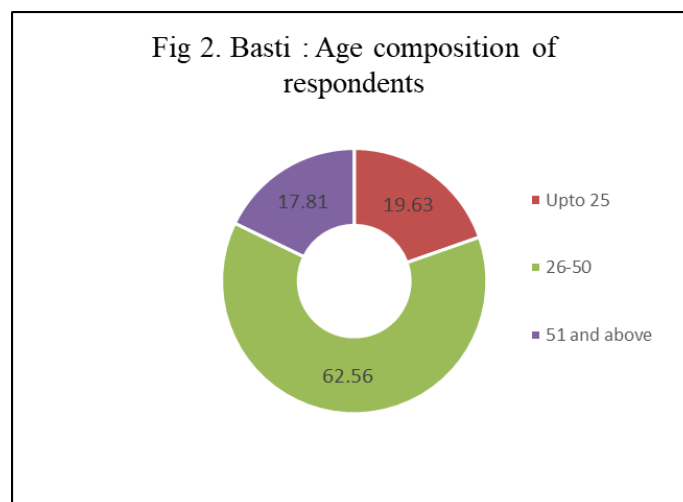


Table 2 represents the distribution of scheduled caste respondents by age composition in the Basti district, with 219 respondents. The most significant proportion of respondents in the above table, 62.56 %, falls within the 26-50 year adult age group. The remaining respondents were divided into two groups below and above the adult age group, i.e., the younger age group (up to 25 years old) at 19.63%, followed by the older age group 51 years and above at 17.81%). This age composition might be due to factors like availability, accessibility, and willingness to participate by working adults and parents seeking government services or benefits. Younger or older adults might have faced challenges participating due to schooling, lack of time, health issues, and low technical know-how.

Landholding Size

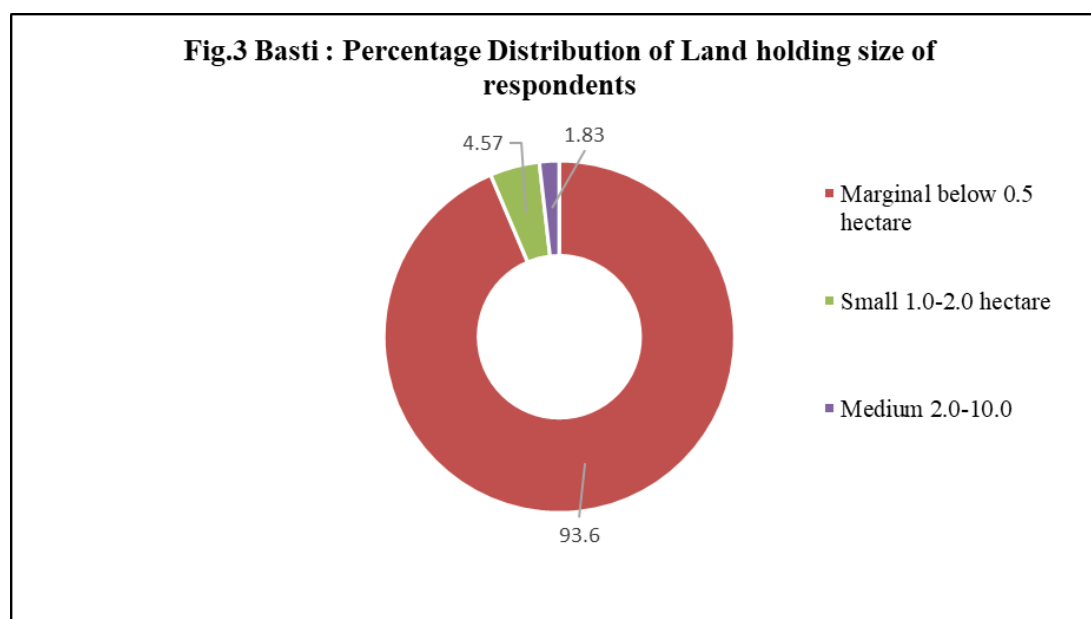
Landholding Size is a crucial factor influencing socio-economic status and overall dependence on agriculture, particularly in rural areas of the Basti district. It is also recognized as a pre-determining factor of socio-economic development, and land plays an essential role in determining the power relations and economic status among social groups in the village, depending on the distribution. Most of the population in rural areas depends on agriculture as their source of income, and land is seen as an essential asset for income and employment. Scheduled castes, as a socially disadvantaged group, have lower access to resources and unequal land ownership distribution (Khan et al.,2020). Unequal land distribution creates social and economic inequalities (Barbier & Hochard,2018). This study categorizes land holdings into three classes based on size, i.e., marginal below 0.5 hectares, small (1.0-2.0 hectares), and medium between (2.0-10.0 hectares). It helps to understand how land is distributed among Scheduled Castes

(SCs) in these categories, which is vital for grasping the specific challenges SCs face in land ownership and imparting prospective policy interventions.

Table 3
Distribution of the respondents according to total land holding N=219

S. No.	Categories of landholding (in ha)		Basti	
			Number	Percentage
1	Marginal	Below 0.5	205	93.61
2	Small	1.0-2.0	10	4.57
3	Medium	2.0-10	4	1.82
Total			219	100

Source: Based on the primary survey- 2022-2023



An overview of the distribution of respondents by total land holdings is shown in Table 3. Land ownership patterns are heavily skewed towards marginal holdings, showing that 93.61 % of the respondents are marginal below 0.5 hectares of landholding. It pointed out that a high percentage of the respondents in the sampled population are landless or near landless. The main reasons behind the skewed land ownership patterns are related to historical factors such as discrimination and social hierarchy other than these socio-economic factors, including economic disadvantage and livelihood options. Contrary to this limited ownership in different categories, the remaining respondents are divided into three categories such as 4.57% own small landholding of 1.0-2.0 hectares, 1.82% own more than 2.0 hectares, and less than 10.0 hectares of medium landholding. These figures highlight the dominance of marginal holdings compared to minimum landownership in all three categories. This land distribution pattern provides insight into potential socio-economic disadvantages for the sampled Scheduled Castes. Limited land ownership can restrict income generation opportunities and contribute to poverty, vulnerability, and low socio-economic status.

Occupational Structure

In socio-economic analysis, occupation is used as a critical parameter to analyze the profile of the respondents. In the present research, for the convenience of the study, the occupation in the Basti district has been categorized into four groups: Cultivator, agricultural laborer, industrial workers, and others.

Table 4
Distribution of the respondents according to occupational structure N=219

S. No.	Categories of Occupation	Basti	
		Number	Percentage
1	Cultivator	80	36.53
2	Agriculture Laborer	99	45.21
3	Industrial worker	14	6.39
4	Others (e.g. service, business, etc.)	26	11.87
Total		219	100

Source: Based on the primary survey- 2022-2023

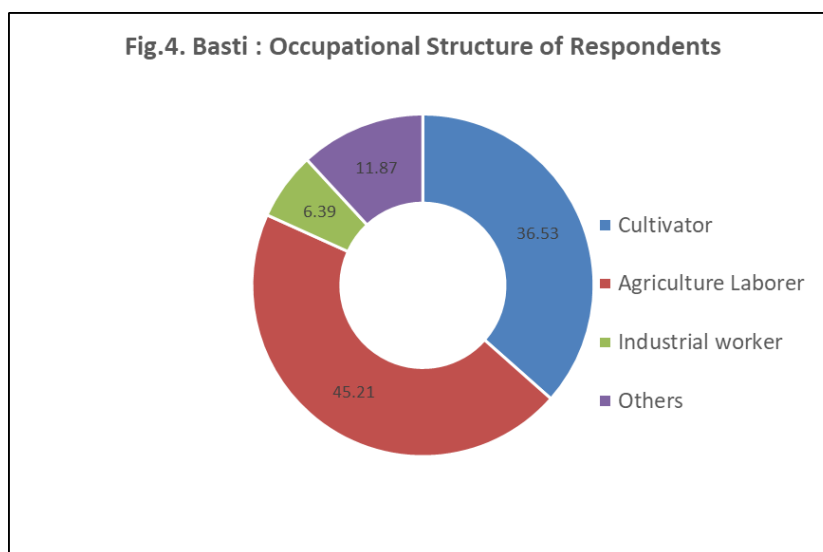


Table 4 presents the summary statistics of the distribution of the respondents according to the occupational pattern. The data suggest that over 80% (45.21% + 36.53%) of respondents rely on agriculture-based livelihoods as agricultural labourers or cultivators. It highlights that the dominance of farming occupations (cultivators and labourers) suggests a high representation of respondents from rural areas, where farming is a primary livelihood that plays a significant role in the local economy. While 11.87% fall under the 'others' category, implying a diverse range of occupations (business, service, etc.). This classification system aligns with the dominant occupations observed in the Basti district. At the same time, they acknowledge potential overlap between categories (e.g., some industrial workers might also be classified as agricultural labourers) and facilitate Scheduled Caste (SC) population analysis. During data collection, we will carefully define each category and provide clear instructions to respondents to minimize misclassification. Analyzing occupational distribution among Scheduled Castes (SCs) will provide valuable insights into their socio-economic status and potential limitations in accessing certain occupations and possible areas for intervention within the study population.

Income structure

Income is measured as total earnings from salaries, wages, and return on investments (agriculture and non-agricultural). It is a crucial indicator for assessing socio-economic status. This research analyses income distribution among Scheduled Castes (SCs) in the Basti district by classifying it into three categories (monthly INR): below ₹5000, ₹5000 to 10000, and above ₹10000. It's important to acknowledge that these brackets are based on Basti's socio-economic caste census report and might need adjustment to reflect the cost of living in the Basti district. Additionally, these categories did not fully capture income from informal sector jobs or underemployment.. Studies suggest that SC have income inequality with poverty (Mazumder & Adhikary, 2010) and lower wealth than upper caste (Zacharias & Vakulabharanam, 2011)

Table 5
Distribution of respondents according to monthly family income N=219

S.No	Monthly Family Income	No. of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
1	<5000	158	72.14
2	5000-10000	48	21.92
3	>10000	13	5.94
4	Total	219	100

Source: Based on the primary survey- 2022-2023

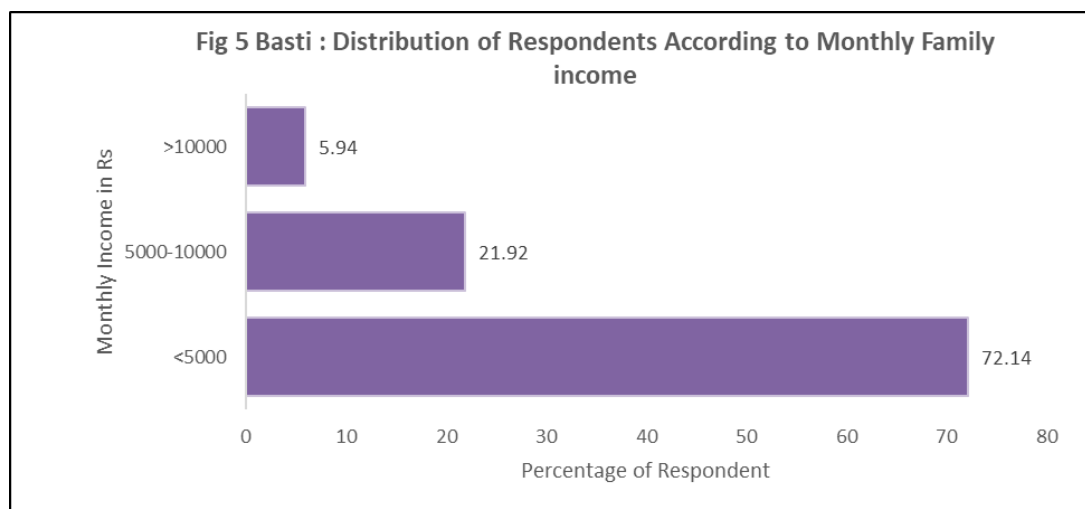


Table 5 provides a clear picture of respondents' annual family income distribution. It reveals a predominantly low-income picture among the respondents. Most respondents (72.14%) earn below ₹ 5,000 per month as a household. The remaining respondents, 21.92 %, earn between ₹ 5000 and 10,000 monthly, and only 5.94% of respondents' households make more than ₹10,000 per month income. Analyzing income distribution within these brackets concerning SCs will provide valuable insights into their socio-economic well-being and inform the government of potential interventions for economic empowerment.

Education

Education is an instrument of social transformation and improving an individual's socio-economic status, especially for marginalized communities like scheduled caste. In rural India, religion and caste play dominant roles in the education of scheduled caste (Borooah and Iyer,2005). Following the adoption of the Indian Constitution and the implementation of affirmative action, i.e., reservations in educational institutions, education has become a key to the upward mobility of the Scheduled Caste (Singh,2014).

Table 6
Distribution of the respondent based on their education N=219

S.No	Particular	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	No formal Education	43	19.63
2	Primary School	99	45.21
3	Junior high school	27	12.33
4	High school	20	9.13
5	Intermediate & other	17	7.76
6	Graduation	8	3.65
7	Post Graduation	5	2.28
Total		219	100

Source: Based on primary survey- 2022-2023

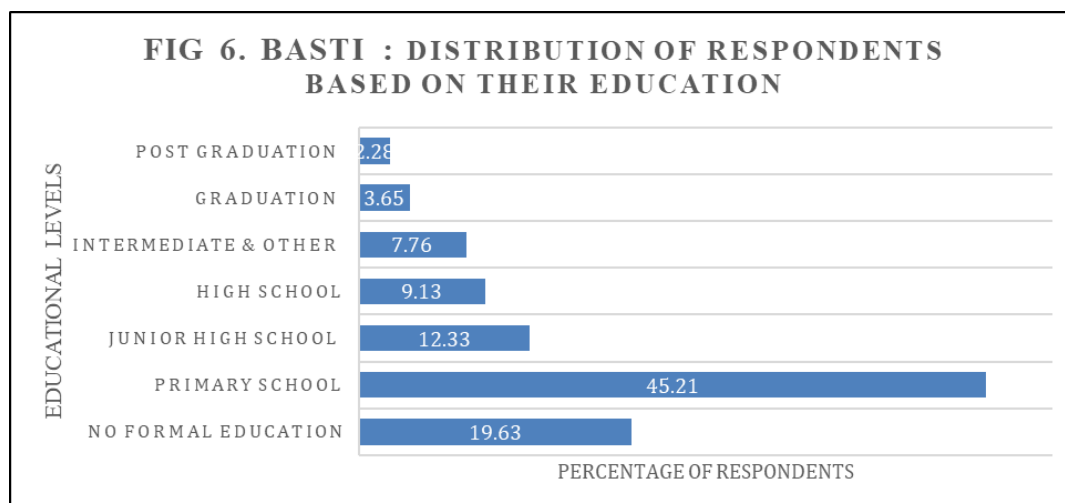


Table 6 summarizes the results. 19.63% of the respondents who participated in the study lacked a formal education. Since 45.21% of respondents said they had finished elementary school, it is clear that primary education is widespread in the sampled households. Fewer respondents progress further in educational attainment, with 21.46 % completing junior high school, 12.33%, and 9.13% in high school. Respondents who have completed post-secondary education but not a degree, such as technical training or vocational education, fall under this category. A small minority (5.93 %) of respondents have higher education and opportunities for jobs and education.

The most popular education degree is primary school, whereas fewer people in this group have completed graduation and post-graduation from college or university. However, despite increased access to education, challenges remain. Literacy rates among SCs (60.2%) in Basti district and total literacy (67.2%), low as compared to the national average (73.0 %), reveal significant disparities. Furthermore, issues like quality education and high dropout rates among SC students need to be addressed; even with access, they are lagging behind the upper caste. Understanding these challenges will provide a more comprehensive picture of the educational landscape for SCs in Basti. It is essential to formulate targeted educational initiatives and program interventions that ensure SCs improve their skills and opportunities according to modern perspectives to access the full benefits of education.

Awareness about rights and schemes

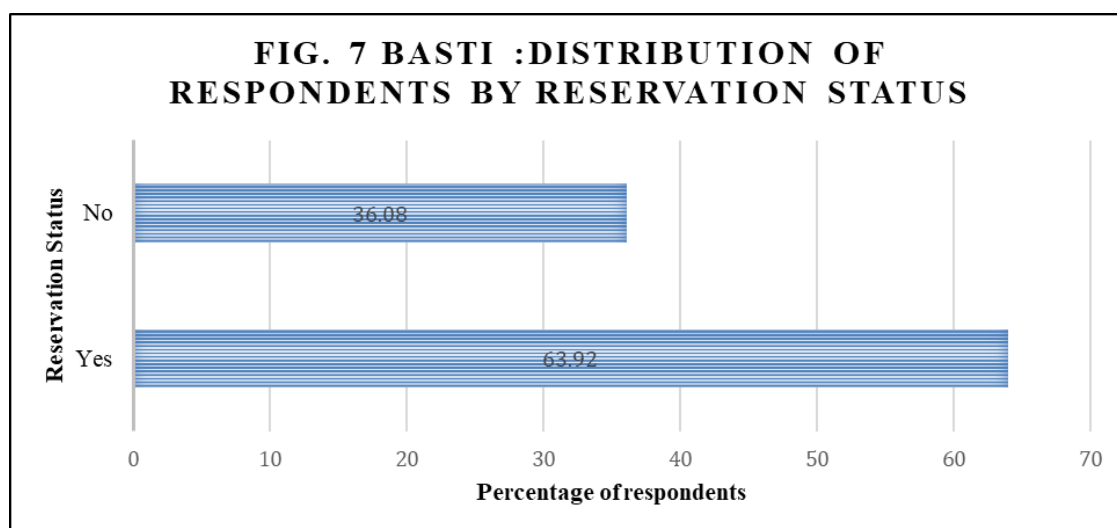
Reservation

Scheduled castes were economically and socially backward historically for a long time due to caste-based discrimination, and they didn't have the right to education and employment. For proportional representation, socio-economic and political mobility, and to ensure social and economic justice for those from lower socio-economic levels, the reservation policy was adopted through the Indian Constitution after independence (Mandal, 2009). Reservation is one of the more effective methods that has helped improve employment-related attributes by around five percentage points (Borooah et al., 2007). Contrary to this, Jaffrelot, 2006 argues that reservation policies have significant political impacts rather than limited socio-economic changes

Table 7
Reservation helps to improve the socio-economic status of respondents N=219.

S.No	Particular	Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	140	63.92
2	No	79	36.08
Total		219	100

Source: Based on the primary survey- 2022-2023



The information in Table 7 illustrates how crucial reservations are while discussing SCs. Most respondents agreed that it does when it comes to whether the reservation system helps enhance the socio-economic circumstances of scheduled caste members. Only 36.08 % of people disagree that the reservation system enhances socio-economic level, while 63.92 % have expressed that the reservation system has enhanced their socio-economic status. They also informed that despite reservations, the socio-economic status of the SCs has not improved at a satisfactory level. The leading causes behind it are poverty, economic hardship, less awareness, and lack of education to take the benefits. Other studies have also confirmed that the main factors that hinder the advantage of reservation and socio-economic development among the SC communities are low awareness, low enrolment rate, high dropout, failure, and continuous addition of more castes by the government in the reserved categories (P.M, R., & Smitha, 2020). Policy could and should focus on improving the educational standards of SC persons. It must be more than reserving management, engineering, and medical school seats.

Welfare Schemes

Access to government welfare schemes is essential for improving the lives of every section of society, particularly Scheduled Castes (SCs) in India. The various initiatives through special programs and economic growth schemes for scheduled caste welfare were implemented for Economic Empowerment (National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC): Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan (SCSP) Scheme of Assistance to Scheduled Castes Development Corporations (SCDCs), and Social Empowerment(The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995) and other schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Charawas Yojana (BJRCY). Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana did not achieve its full potential in aiding rural and urban areas and did not affect poverty (Department of Social Justice & Empowerment). While these programs offer valuable support, SC communities often face difficulty accessing them due to the dominance of upper castes in loan processes, corruption, or limited awareness about the schemes. Upper castes benefit more, leaving the intended beneficiaries - the poor - behind (Kijima,2006). To help more beneficiaries, transparency and accountability in scheme implementation should be the priority awareness of information and access to schemes to reach the most marginalized communities.

Table 8
Awareness about the Welfare Schemes and Programmes for Scheduled Castes N=219

S.No	Particular	Respondents	Percentage
1	Aware	148	67.58
2	Not Aware	71	32.42
Total		219	100

Source: Based on the primary survey- 2022-2023

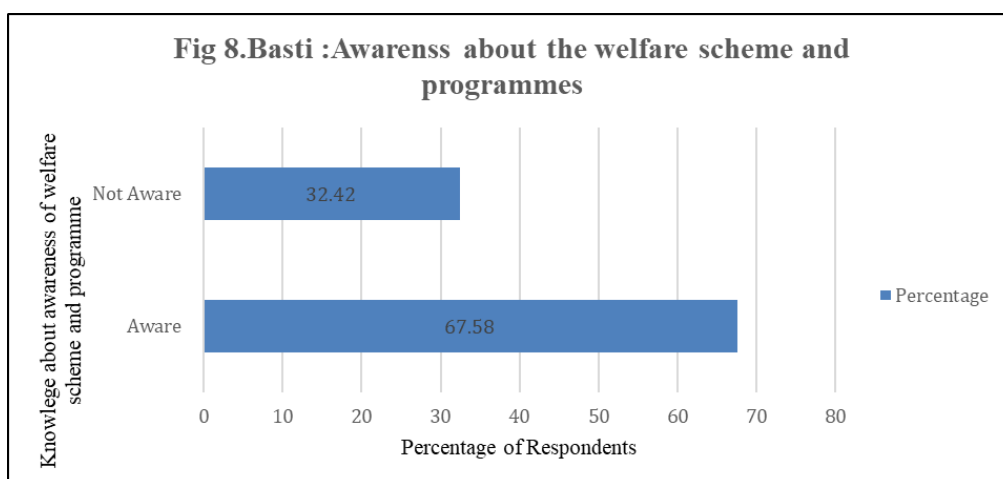


Table 8 reveals that 67.58 % of respondents in the sample are aware of the various welfare schemes (PM Awas Yojna, Scholarship, Ujjala Yojna, etc) and programs the government has started for the welfare of the Scheduled caste. But, a significant portion, 32.42%, estimated that almost one-third of respondents are unaware. This limited awareness has a negative impact, preventing the benefits of these welfare initiatives. The main reason for this unawareness is related to Poverty, Physical and Social Segregation, lack of Information and Awareness, less publicity in local languages, and low technical know-how, leaving many SCs without access to benefits from welfare programs (Radhika, 2018). It demonstrates the critical information gap among Scheduled Castes regarding the government initiatives designed for their upliftment. The study also found that awareness was higher among respondents with higher education, more media exposure, and residing in urban areas. It suggests that the majority of Dalit castes in rural areas, in comparison to urban areas of Basti district, remain uninformed of various government-sponsored welfare programs and initiatives designed to emancipate and uplift them. Several strategies can be implemented to bridge this gap between rural and urban areas and SC communities. Increasing publicity by local media and community, easy access to local outreach programs using accessible language or community radio and TV announcements or local street plays, the collaboration of NGOs and government, Proper planning, monitoring, and implementation are fruitful ways to raise awareness and accessibility of government initiatives that work towards an equitable society that empower SC communities socially, politically, and economically.

Conclusion

The socio-economic status of the Scheduled Castes in the study area has been a topic of great concern and interest. In the Indian society scenario, caste plays a significant role in shaping the socio-economic status of individuals, impacting their access to resources, opportunities, and social networks. In different blocks of Basti district, the percentage of the SC population varies from 16.58 percent (lowest) to 27.53 percent (Highest). The research findings indicate that 62.56 % of respondents are from the adult age group (26-50), 19.63 % up to 25 (young age), and 17.81% from the 51 and above age group.

Apart from this, inequality is also reflected in land distribution and income. One of the most significant findings in the paper was data on land holding among the respondents, which shed light on the fact that 93.60% of land holdings are under marginal below 0.5-hectare average land holding size, impacting income and highlighting existing inequality. Diversity in occupation explains the diverse economic scenario of the area. Most respondents, comprised of 81.74 %, are engaged in agriculture activities.

Furthermore, the lack of diversification in occupations, with 45.21% solely dependent on agriculture laborers, restricts income potential. Encouraging skill development programs focused on non-agricultural professions can address this. 72.14 % of the respondents earn less than 5000 per month, and their working income impacts their well-being.

There are few graduates, only 1.5 %, and most of the SC in the study area are in primary school, including 45.24%. It may be due to the lack of awareness, limited access, and financial constraints that restrict economic diversification

and quality higher education necessary for upward mobility and higher-paid jobs. 63.92% of the respondents of the study area have admitted that socio-economic status has improved due to the implementation of reservation policies. In the study, 32.42 percent of respondents of all age groups don't know how to apply for and take benefits of the welfare schemes and programmes.

According to the literature and primary data from the respondents of the study area, the socio-economic status of Scheduled Castes in this area has improved due to the implementation of the Constitution and the benefits of reservations, education, and welfare schemes. However, the situation is unsatisfactory due to low awareness, high poverty rate, low investment in quality education, unemployment, and the traditional way of living dependent on agriculture and labourer activities for income. The current study represents adequate information about various provisions of welfare schemes, education, and reservations that can significantly improve the socio-economic condition of Scheduled Castes in the future. Despite these efforts, it faces exclusion in different forms, such as social justice, education, employment, political rights, etc. Discrimination continues to be a significant hurdle in the path of development and mobility of this community. Implementation of government schemes can be patchy, with benefits not reaching all SCs. This inconsistency on the block level hinders the progress of the Sc compared to other sections of society. The above challenges can be solved through targeted information campaigns in local languages, which are recommended. The study reveals a diverse population with a history of socio-economic change due to reservations. With improved information dissemination, campaigns in local languages, promoting skill development, and ensuring equitable implementation of reservation policies across all blocks of the Basti district, the socio-economic condition of Scheduled Castes can be significantly improved in the future. This work's findings have significance in understanding the socio-economic status of the scheduled caste of Basti district on chosen socio-economic indicators and need further study on a larger scale to plan a better strategy for the development of socio-economic status of the scheduled caste community in the study area.

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