
Socio-Spatial Inequality in Basic Amenities: SC/ST and Non-SC/ST Households**Dr. Alka******Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Om Sterling Global University, Hisar****Abstract:**

Housing Amenities refers to the facilities in the households. The right to housing amenities is recognized by many national constitutions and the lack of adequate housing amenities can have adverse consequences for an individual or a family. In this study, an attempt has been made to analyze the equality in the availability of amenities among social groups in Indian districts taking various indicators into consideration. After independence, Indian States have taken a variety of Constitutional and administrative measures for the socio-economic development of the scheduled caste/tribe population in the country. Nevertheless, there are wide variations in the socio-economic well-being of the SC/ST and Non-SC/ST population in the country. Since independence, there have been several reservations in different government and non-government sectors for the SC/ST. The aim of these reservations is to pull out the backward sections of society and parallel them with the mainstream of society. The present study is based on the secondary data derived from Tables on Houses, Households Amenities and Assets, Census of India, 2011. Sopher's disparity index has been used for finding out the disparity among social groups. There is a need to take immediate action towards bringing in inclusive policy measures, taking care of marginalized and weaker sections of society to raise the overall availability of amenities and well-being of the people. Further, the quantum of all facilities in most of the districts needs to be improved. Suggestions to remove the inequalities are also brought into the ambit of discussion.

Keywords: Amenities, Social Groups, Households, Disparity

Introduction:

The **Scheduled Castes (SCs)** and **Scheduled Tribes (STs)** are considered to be designated groups of people and among the most disadvantaged and deprived socio-economic groups in India. For much of the period of British rule in the Indian subcontinent, they were known as the Depressed Classes. For finding out the disparity, SCs and STs were considered a single social group because they both are considered to be deprived categories. All the caste not included in SCs and STs were considered as Non-SC/ST. The Scheduled Castes comprise about 16.63% and Scheduled Tribes about 8.6%, respectively, of India's population (according to the 2011 census). The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 lists 1,108 castes across 28 states in its First Schedule, and the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 lists 744 tribes across 22 states in its First Schedule. In the case of perfect equality, the value of disparity is zero. Greater the value of the disparity index, the higher the extent of disparity between SCs/STs and Non-SCs/STs and vice versa.

Scheduled caste refers to those caste falling in the scheduled category. Caste acquired a new meaning in India after Independence. With the introduction of reservation policy in 1950, a large number of caste groups were assigned the status of scheduled castes, done on the basis of a scheduling policy which has been evolving since 1950.

The word 'tribe' in the Indian context refers to a state of tribalism, which is ethnic (ethnically defined) as well as political (revealing their definitional status as scheduled tribes). Based on scheduling policy, which has been evolving since 1950, a certain number of ethnically differentiated communities have been brought under the purview of a particular schedule of the Indian Constitution. The tribal population in India constituted 8.63 percent of the total in 2011. Punjab, Haryana, NCT of Delhi, Chandigarh, and Pondicherry was not containing scheduled tribe population while the concentration of scheduled tribe population was in the central part, north-east, Jammu & Kashmir, and some part of Himachal Pradesh.

Objective:

- To analyze the status of basic amenities among SC/ST and Non-SC/ST households.

Data Base and Methodology:

The present study is based on secondary data derived from Tables on Housing, Household amenities and Assets, Census of India, 2011. Four indicators are taken to determine the Quality of housing Amenities. The aforementioned indicators are:

- Households with source of water within the house
- Households with electricity for lightning
- Households using LPG/PNG/Electricity for cooking
- Households with closed drainage connectivity for waste water outlet

Raw data has been converted into percentages. Sopher's disparity index has been used for finding out the disparity among social groups. Mapping has been done using Arc GIS for visualizing the disparity.

Results and Discussion:

- **Disparity between SC/ST and Non-SC/ST households having source of water within the Premises**

A tap as a source of water denotes a certain level of water quality and mobility. On a nationwide scale, 43.5 per cent of households cite taps as their primary source of drinking water (both inside and outside the house). In urban regions, 70.6 per cent of families have access to tap water; in rural areas, this percentage drops to 50.6 per cent. However, just 26.82 per cent of all families have a tap inside their home, which is a tiny increase from 20.8 per cent in 2001.

While 25.13 per cent of non-SC/ST families nationwide have a tap in the home, this number drops to 13.05 per cent for SC/ST households on a national basis. Even though there are twice as many non-SC/ST households as SC/ST households, both demographic groups have limited access to taps within their homes.

The discrepancy between the two demographic groups' access to tap water within the home is

greatest in Madhya Pradesh (0.61 points), followed by Chhattisgarh, among all the states (0.58 points). The disparity score is lowest in Haryana (0.052 points), followed by Kerala (0.061 points), Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Goa in order, indicating that both demographic groups are better treated there. The tribal population in Gujarat is economically and socially underdeveloped, which widens the gap between the two groups. In Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim, more than three-fourths of urban residents have access to tap water inside their homes despite the steep terrain.

Less than 3 per cent of families in Bihar, across both demographic categories, have a tap inside the home. The lack of basic facilities across the board in this state is a contributing factor to the low disparity. The same may be said for a number of other north-eastern states, including Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, and Kerala in the south. The same is true for Jharkhand, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and other economically underdeveloped states.

In terms of the Union Territories, Dadra & Nagar Haveli has the biggest differential in the provision of tap water within the home (0.54 points), followed by Lakshadweep (0.48 points), while Andaman & Nicobar Island has the lowest difference (-0.0003 points), followed by Daman & Diu (0.052 points). The Scheduled Tribes of Lakshadweep are economically and socially disadvantaged, which contributes to the lack of Scheduled Caste residents there and the discrepancy between the two demographic groupings. Due to the island's limited supply of fresh water, a well continues to be the primary source of water in Lakshadweep. Because Daman & Diu is a developed union territory and Andaman & Nicobar Islands do not have any Scheduled Caste residents, there is less of a discrepancy between the two demographic groupings there. Nearly 60% of both demographic groups on Andaman and Nicobar Island have access to tap water inside their homes. Only 8 per cent of the people living in this Union Territory are members of scheduled tribes (Map.1.)

The availability of tap water inside the home varies greatly by district. The difference between the two groups is greatest in Banswara, Rajasthan (1.48 points), followed by Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh (1.41 points), and smallest in Satara, Maharashtra (-0.45 points). In the

Banswara district, the Bhil, Mina, and Garasia tribes make about 80 per cent of the population. The SC/ST families have greater access to taps than the Non-SC/ST households in a few districts of Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat, and north-eastern India. In the states of Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh, disparity is more pronounced. Equity is not evident at a high standard of life, but rather at a poor one because both groups are denied access to this essential function.

- **Disparity between SC/ST and Non-SC/ST households using Electricity for Lightning**

The difference between the two demographic groups utilising electricity for lightning at the national level is 0.15 points. Compared to SC/ST families, which use electricity for lightning just 56.51 per cent of the time, 71.30 per cent of Non-SC/ST households do so. Even fewer SC/ST households in rural areas have access to electricity.

Odisha (0.41 points) and Punjab are the two states with the greatest discrepancy in the two groups' use of energy for lighting (0.39 per cent). Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Tripura, West Bengal, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, and Chhattisgarh are among the states with the highest inequality. Arunachal Pradesh (0.032 points) has the smallest difference between the two demographic groupings, followed by Mizoram (0.062), Himachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, and Goa. It can be credited to the state governments' admirable efforts to electrify every household. The overall usage of energy is high in each of these states. However, the difference is negligible in Bihar and Assam since both demographic groups have limited access to power.

In all union territories, a similar tendency may be observed. Dadra & Nagar Haveli has the largest difference (1.11 points), followed by Daman & Diu (0.59 points). Andaman & Nicobar Island (0.011 points) and Puducherry have the lowest discrepancy (0.40 points). Here, both parties utilise a lot of power for lightning, which reduces the gap.

The difference in power use between the two demographic categories varies depending on the district. In Palakkad, Kerala (-1.14 points), there is hardly any difference in the consumption of electricity between the two demographic groups. In Palakkad, the SC/ST community is really in

a better situation than other groups of people. Kheda in Gujarat (1.21 pts) has the largest discrepancy. There is a significant gap between the two social categories in Jammu and Banswara as well. Only 19.23 per cent of the Bhil, Mina, and Garasia tribes, who make up 80 per cent of the population in the Banswara area, utilise electricity for illumination. On the other hand, the Non-SC/ST population in this area is primarily made up of urban immigrants, and about 89.57 per cent of houses utilise electricity for illumination. In tribal majority districts located throughout the north- eastern region, as well as in Kinnaur and Lahul Spiti in Himachal Pradesh, SC/ST families have greater access to electricity than Non-SC/ST households. (Map. 2.)

- **Disparity between SC/ST and Non-SC/ST households using LPG/PNG/Electricity for Cooking**

The difference between the two social groupings at the national level is 1.32 points (19.65 per cent). Since 2001, when it was 14.50 per cent points, this difference has grown. More than twice as many non-SC/ST families (33.092 per cent) use LPG, PNG, or electricity for cooking as compared to SC/ST households (14.27 per cent).

The difference between the two demographic groupings is most pronounced in Goa (1.62 points), then Meghalaya (1.51 points), and narrowest in Mizoram (-1.33 points), then Assam (0.78 points). The overall consumption of LPG, PNG, and electricity is high in both Goa and Mizoram. There is more equality on this count in Mizoram because it is a tribal majority state, however in Goa SC/ST families have fallen behind Non-SC/ST category households in the usage of LPG/PNG/Electricity. The significant gap in other states like Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Assam is mostly attributable to both demographic groups' generally low use of LPG, PNG, and electricity for cooking.

Despite the high general use of LPG/PNG, the discrepancy between the two demographic groups is greater than the national average in all of the union territory. In terms of Union Territories, Dadra & Nagar Haveli has the most differential (0.72 points), followed by Pondicherry (0.42 points), while Lakshadweep has the smallest gap (0.32 points), followed by Daman & Diu (0.27 points).

Lakshadweep continues to be an outlier because to the low usage of LPG, PNG, and electricity across both demographic groups. Coconut husk and other biofuels continue to be a more affordable local option for cooking in this island union territory because LPG must be brought from the mainland.

The discrepancy between the two demographic groups is greatest at the district level in Alirajpur, Madhya Pradesh (3.06 points), while it is lowest in Dibrugarh, Assam (0.02 points). The Bhilala, Patlya, and Bhil tribes make up around 89 per cent of the population of the Alirajpur district, a former princely state in the Malwa area. LPG is only used by 2.40 per cent of this population, compared to 64.85 per cent of non-SC/ST category families, who are mostly located in metropolitan areas. In contrast, the Dibrugarh districts about one-fourth of both demographic groups' houses utilise LPG, PNG, or electricity for cooking, which lessens their gap on this front. The greatest area of tea gardens in the world is in Dibrugarh. The Oil and Natural Gas Commission and Oil and India Limited both own several oil and natural gas rigs in the area. The district's two main industries are tea and oil.

Districts in the southern Gujarat plains and hill area, the neighbouring districts of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli have the biggest discrepancy between the two demographic groups for this indicator. The Bhils and Kokna tribes make up the majority of the tribal population in these areas. The large discrepancy is mostly a result of substandard living circumstances. The Godavari-Krishna plain, the Maharashtra-Gujarat coastal belt, the urban areas, and the Punjab-Haryana plain are the other districts with considerable discrepancy. LPG usage is high generally in this area, but not among SC/ST families.

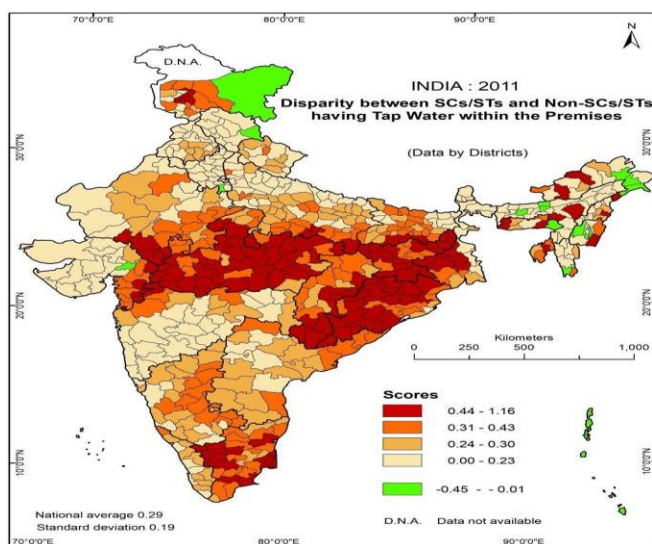
In 21 districts of India, families belonging to the SC/ST category use LPG, PNG, and electricity more frequently than those belonging to the non-SC/ST category (Map 5.9). 16 of these districts, including Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh, Gandhinagar in Gujarat, Mewat in Haryana, Diu, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, are found in the north-east. The primary cause of the negative imbalance in these sectors is the government's special benefits granted to SC/ST households. Since the discrepancy is significant in the cases of Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, etc., it is evident from map.3. that these states. Gujarat, Rajasthan, and the

districts of Madhya Pradesh that touch either Gujarat or Rajasthan's borders show a significant variance from their western equivalents.

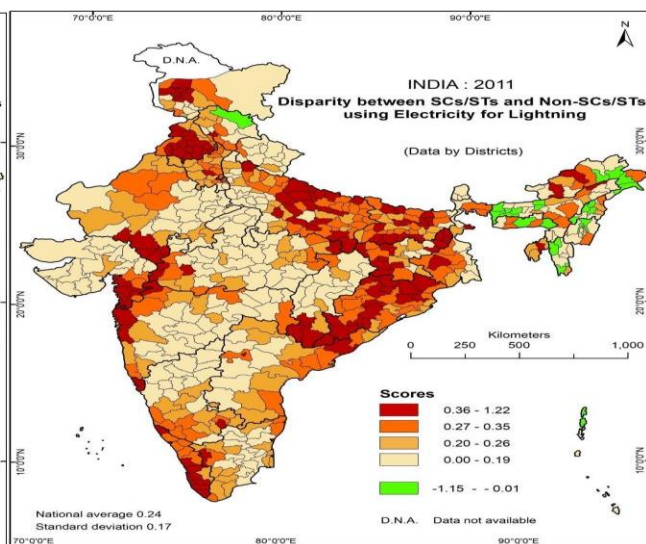
- **Disparity between SC/ST and Non-SC/ST Households having Closed Drainage Connectivity for Wastewater Outlet**

The Non-SC/ST social group is in a better position than the deplorable social group at the national level where there is a 0.37-point difference between the social groups. This condition varies among the states, with Jharkhand having the highest score (0.67) followed by Odisha (0.58), and Manipur having the lowest (0.07), followed by Himachal Pradesh (0.15 points). The discrepancy amongst the Union Territories is greatest in Dadra & Nagar Haveli (0.87 points), then Puducherry (0.38 points), and lowest in Andaman & Nicobar Island (-0.09 points), then NCT of Delhi (0.12 points). Because there are no Scheduled Caste residents on Andaman and Nicobar Island, there is less of a divide between the two socioeconomic classes. Surat (1.82 points) in Gujarat has the biggest discrepancy among the districts, and North & Middle Andaman (-5.28 points) in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands has the lowest.

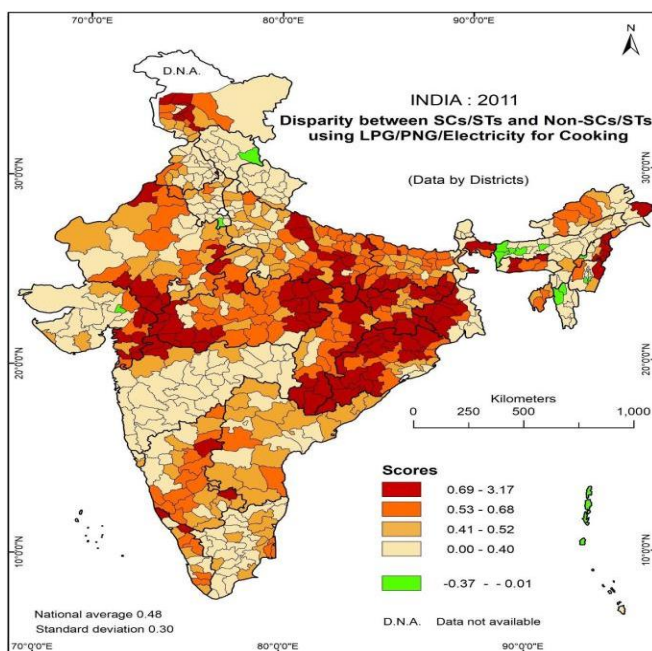
Map 4 makes it very evident that there are areas where SCs/STs outperform Non-SCs/STs. Except for southern India, where the discrepancy is most pronounced in the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, these pockets are dispersed throughout the whole country of India. Not a single district in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, or Andhra Pradesh has a discrepancy that is smaller than 0.01 to 0.60. In India's eastern and north-eastern regions, disparity appears to be less pronounced. Here, only a small percentage of residences in both social classes have blocked drainage connections for waste water outlets, which lessens the discrepancy.



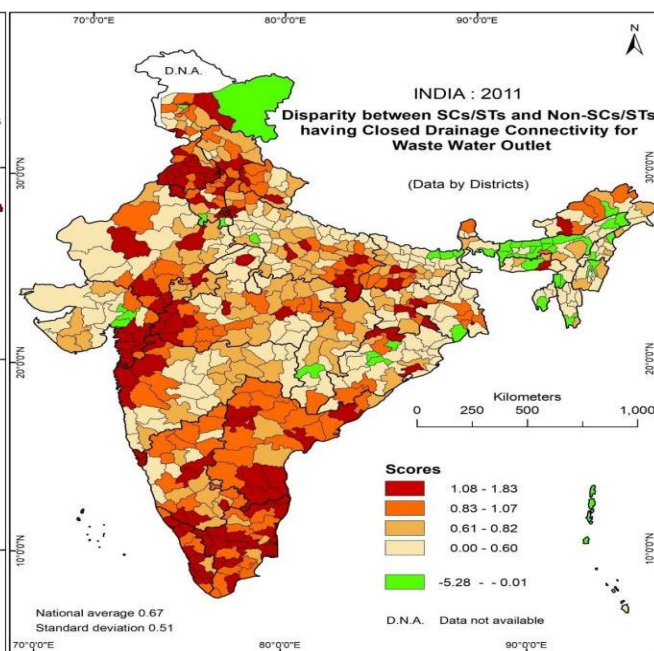
Map. 1.



Map. 2.



Map. 3.



Map. 4

Conclusion:

It is crucial to remember that Tripura as a whole is now dealing with significant inequality. The data indicates an unexpected fact: the districts with the biggest inequalities are mostly found along the state boundaries in the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. The most disadvantaged groups in these areas are the SC/ST families, particularly the tribal people from the fifth scheduled region. They mostly lead a nomadic existence in temporary, makeshift houses. In a number of districts, including those in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Manipur, SC/ST category households do better than Non-SC/ST category families. The disparity is also less noticeable in eastern states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and north-eastern states.

In economically devastated locations where there is little to compare it with since the whole population is underprivileged, the difference between the two demographic groups is relatively minimal. However, some of the least developed regions of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra show substantial differences. In three of India's four districts, the difference between the two demographic groups having separate kitchens in the home is also generally modest. On this issue, it is noteworthy that there is a high level of equality in the tribal territories in the north-east (sixth schedule areas).

Other than these, the states where SCs/STs have the most difficulties accessing bathrooms include Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and Rajasthan. Open water bathing dependence is quite common in these areas. There are significant differences between the two groups since they make up the poorest and most destitute communities in certain districts, where the SC/ST population is mostly disregarded.

There is a common trend that may be seen throughout all union territories. The biggest disparity is in Dadra & Nagar Haveli (1.11 points), followed by Daman & Diu (0.59 points). The two places with the least variation are Andaman & Nicobar Island (0.011 points) and Puducherry (0.40 points). Here, the distance is less since both sides use a lot of electricity for lightning. In neither Kerala nor Tamil Nadu nor Andhra Pradesh is there a district where the disparity is less than 0.01

to 0.60. Disparity seems to be less noticeable in India's eastern and north-eastern areas. Here, the difference is lessened by the fact that only a tiny portion of homes in both socioeconomic groups have blocked drainage connections for waste water outputs.

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