

An Empirical Exploration of the Relationship between Caste, Class and Mobility in India¹

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Abstract

This paper analyses the relationship between caste, class and mobility in contemporary India. The existence of a caste system places India in a unique position where the study of class mobility is concerned. Certain castes have been historically associated with particular occupations, an association which is believed by some to be eroding due to processes associated with modernisation and resultant urbanisation. But despite the centrality of caste in Indian sociology, few studies have empirically analysed the relationship between caste and class or the influence of modernisation processes on this relationship, particularly at the national level; and no study has used a gender perspective. My paper attempts to fill this research gap by studying the association between caste and class, and the role that caste background plays with regard to class mobility chances.

Using the 2004 National Election Study data from the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, we find that while the relation between caste and class is not completely straightforward, a tentative picture of congruence between the two does appear; High Castes are seen to be concentrated in the higher social classes like the professional, large business and farming classes. Also, the association between caste and class origins is not seen to weaken over time or at least not by very much. Furthermore, lower castes like the Scheduled Castes seem to be experiencing difficulty in gaining upward class mobility though conversely High Castes are not cushioned from the forces of downward class mobility.

In sum, we find that in India modernisation has not had the expected effect as the association between caste and class has neither disappeared nor declined appreciably. However, we observe that when caste and class are studied together the influence of caste is much weaker than that of class origins where access to certain class destinations is concerned. Thus we conclude that the importance of class origins on class destinations has so far been under-emphasised in the Indian literature.

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INTRODUCTION²

The existence of the caste system makes India a novel case study for analysing intergenerational class mobility patterns. Certain castes/jatis (sub-castes) have been historically associated with particular occupations³, but this association is believed by some to be eroding due to the processes associated with modernisation and the resultant urbanisation; also the importance of ascribed characteristics like caste, on individual's opportunities to gain access to scarce resources like jobs, is also expected to decline with modernisation (see Gist, 1954; Karanth, 1996; Panini, 1996 among others). Kolenda (1986) too has raised the question of whether in place of caste there is a class system emerging in India (pp. 108). This paper aims to study the relationship between caste, class and mobility; and in particular it empirically explores the relation between caste and class in contemporary India.

Despite the centrality of caste in Indian sociology, and debates on whether class rather than caste ought to be the determining factor with regard to social disadvantage, few research studies have empirically analysed the relationship between caste and class, particularly at the national level (McMillan, 2005; Kumar et al, 2002a, b are notable exceptions). Most often the reluctance to study this relation has been due to the lack of adequate data to make such a study possible. This reluctance also stems from the wariness of sociologists (and social anthropologists) in using a national framework to study a concept as localised as *jati* (Kolenda, 1986; see also Deshpande, 1999). To an extent their arguments do hold some weight and localised ethnographic studies are invaluable to analyse this complex relationship. This should not, however, preclude national research that is able to study this caste-class relationship at a macro level. In the context of the enduring debates surrounding preferential policies, this is an important area for analysis in India (Kumar et al, 2002a)⁴.

In light of this, in this paper I attempt to answer questions arising from the literature on the relation between caste and class. Our emphasis here is on empirically analysing the relation between caste and class in India as well as any changes over time, we do not study the mechanisms that may be driving any changes or influencing any persistence in patterns we may observe. This is an important area of analysis that we hope to approach in a future study. I now briefly discuss the existing literature.

² In this paper I focus primarily on *Hindu* castes, however I also present empirical results for minority religions, such as the Muslims, as it is of interest to see how these groups fare with regard to Hindu castes. Hence, in the text I often discuss 'community' rather than caste results.

³ It is important to highlight that most of the literature on caste deals with the relation of *jatis* (sub-castes) with *occupations* (i.e. at the micro level), rather than with *caste and class* (at the more aggregate level). Hence any conclusions drawn should by necessity of the data be treated with caution. The drawbacks of this approach are discussed in more detail in this paper.

⁴ This paper does not analyse the influence or outcomes of preferential policies on different caste groups. This is because of the lack of information needed for such an analysis in the dataset, for example information on the different sectors of employment where preferential policies are in place, such as government employment.

CASTE, CLASS AND MOBILITY

The term *Caste* is derived from a Portuguese term ‘Casta’ meaning breed or race. According to Bétéille (1965) a caste is ‘a small and named group of persons characterised by endogamy, hereditary membership and a specific style of life which sometimes includes the pursuit by tradition of a particular occupation and is usually associated with a more or less distinct ritual status in a hierarchical system, based on concepts of purity and pollution.’ This definition highlights some of the characteristics of caste: its hereditary nature, the pursuit of traditional occupations, hierarchical rank, endogamy, and the practice of pollution rites⁵.

According to the Hindu scriptures four *Varnas* make up the Hindu system of caste; these are the Brahmins (primarily priests, doctors and so on); Kshatriyas (warriors); Vaishyas (businessmen) and Shudras (lowest caste, mainly artisans and manual labourers). The untouchables were those people who lay outside this caste system and in a sense formed a fifth category. They could not perform ritual activities, as they were considered ritually impure (polluted), and any interaction with a higher caste was believed to lead to the latter being ‘polluted’ by the former. This has been the formal theoretical division of caste, which also extends beyond Hinduism in India and leads to a hierarchy of ‘pollution and ritual’ status in other religions as well⁶.

In everyday life, the division of caste is not so rigid or clear-cut nor is it restricted to these five categories; each *varna* is further divided into *jatis*. Literally thousands of *jatis* can exist for each *varna*, and these *jatis* too may be ranked by ritual purity at least theoretically. In practice however, many of these *jatis* may be effectively considered to be at the same level, for the purpose of social interaction and so on, depending on the particular function they perform, the particular setting and region⁷. Srinivas discusses how the position in the ‘rank order’ of *jatis* was not rigid, and gives Parry’s (1980) example of Brahmins who in Benaras are considered ‘untouchable’ for performing funeral rites. He goes on to state that ‘the fact that the rank order of a *jati* in the local hierarchy is frequently a matter of doubt and ambiguity is,...., evidence of the dynamism of the caste system at the macro or all-India level’ (2003: 456).

⁵ For a discussion of these characteristics see Kolenda (1986). However these characteristics need not have a universal meaning for all castes, or indeed in all parts of the country (see Kapadia, 1991; also Deliege in Fuller, 1996; Sheth 1991; Basile and Harriss-White, 2000).

⁶ By necessity this paper presents a sketchy view of caste. For more on caste and other religions see Dumont ([1966] 1970), chapter 10; for a brief summary see Pingle, 2003; for more on caste and Muslims in India see Fanselow, 1996; Ahmed, 1978; and Bhatty, 1996 among others; for caste among Christians see Thalamangalam, 1996.

⁷ According to Zwart (2000) ‘varnas... are not actual groups. They form an ideological scheme, used by people ‘as a handy gross classification of others’ (Mandelbaum 1970: 13)’. For more on the differences and relations between *varna* and *jati* see Srinivas, 1962; see also Mandelbaum, 1970). The ‘operative term’ for caste as Deshpande (2002: 2002) puts it is *jati* and not *varna*. Hence, in addition to the generic term ‘caste’, *jati* is the other term that will be used in this thesis while referring to sub-castes.

CASTE AND RESERVATIONS

The division of Indian society into various jatis, together with the practice of untouchability, and the geographic isolation of some tribal communities has meant that these communities have lagged behind others in terms of educational and occupational attainment, political participation and with regard to opportunities for social mobility. In order to overcome these disadvantages the Indian Constitution in 1950 (see Dirks, 2001; Galanter, 1984; McMillan 2005 among others) specified various preferential policies involving reservation of places in government institutions of education, employment and the legislature for the most deprived of these groups: the *Scheduled Castes* (SCs, ex-untouchables) and *Scheduled Tribes* (STs, isolated tribal communities)⁸. In 1990, amid violent protest (see for more detail articles in Srinivas, 1996) these reservations were extended by a Constitutional Amendment to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), a more heterogeneous group believed to be relatively less ‘socially and educationally’ deprived compared to the SCs and the STs, but nonetheless disadvantaged when compared to the ‘forward’ or high castes⁹.

In the present paper these three major caste/community groupings (SCs, STs and OBCs) as well as the higher caste group and other religious communities like the Muslims will be analysed to explore the relation between caste and class as well as to see whether these groups are indeed disadvantaged as compared to the higher castes with regard to mobility opportunities. Caste/community group information will be used in as much detail as is possible in the empirical analysis to study patterns of mobility. It may well be argued, as seen through the foregoing discussion, that the division into these broad categories might be too arbitrary given the complexity of the caste system. However, while a detailed examination of jatis is not possible at this stage, these major categories do capture the major constitutional divisions recognised by the Indian government for its affirmative action policies (see also Gist, 1954; Deshpande, 2001: 132) and this is a good starting point for our analysis.

CASTE AND OCCUPATIONS

As mentioned previously, castes have been historically associated with particular caste occupations (e.g. Gist, 1954), and any movement of a caste from its hereditary occupation to another is a form of social mobility within the caste structure (Silverberg, 1968). Some authors have concluded that the type of occupational

⁸ Reservation policies for certain backward groups were introduced before Independence in a few states like Mysore in the 1920s (See Dirks, 2001; Das 2000; for a historical view of electoral reservation in India see McMillan (2005: especially chapter 1).

⁹ These disadvantaged groups of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes have also been collectively called the ‘depressed’ or ‘backward’ classes (see Chitnis, 1997). For more on the issue of caste and reservations as well as reservation and politicisation of caste see for example Radhakrishnan, 1990, 1999; Dirks, 2001. For more discussions on the consequences of reservations see Weiner et al, 1981; Weiner, 1989.

mobility is quite restricted, for example for Weber (1958) despite there being a heterogeneity of people following varied occupations within all castes '[y]et as long as the caste has not lost its character, the kind of pursuits admissible without loss of caste are always, in some way, quite strictly limited. Even today 'caste' and 'way of living' are so firmly linked that often a change of occupation is correlated with a division of caste' (pp. 31).¹⁰

Recent research argues that modernisation may bring about changes in the relation between caste and class. It has been argued that the creation of newer jobs as the economy modernises will lead not only to an increasing movement of people away from hereditary occupations to 'non-caste' occupations, but also to occupations that were originally the prerogative of the higher castes. Panini (1996: 60) summarises these changes when he states that:

'Economic liberalisation in the long run is likely to weaken the hold of caste over the economy. The free play of market forces implied in liberalisation is likely to dilute the importance of caste in economic calculations'.... 'Further as liberalisation entails free flow of information as well as resources, caste monopolies that operate in the various intricacies of the economy will become ineffective. Since enhanced competition is likely to encourage professional management of firms to ensure enhanced productivity and profit, criteria stressing efficiency and skill will prove to be more important in recruitment than the caste of the worker and his loyalty to the firm. As competition opens up and productivity increases all round, the economic growth rate is likely to get accelerated, which in turn would multiply job opportunities to such an extent that workers do not have to ply their caste background to get jobs'

This quote from Panini highlights a variant of the modernisation theory specific to India. That is, with modernisation it is expected that in addition to the decline in ascribed characteristics like father's class as is theorised in the West, in India there will also be a decline in caste as an important factor influencing recruitment to jobs. Srinivas (2003) seems to support Panini's view, but he extends the argument beyond economic liberalisation to include various changes that are occurring simultaneously, and leading to the decline in the relation between jati and traditional occupations. According to him (pp. 457):

'... the improvement of communication, the spread of education, a host of governmental policies favouring the weaker sections, political mobilisation of the people, and the many technological changes... have all had the effect of greatly weakening the link between jati and traditional

¹⁰ Davis (1949) maintains that 'absolute fixity of hereditary status is not and never has been maintained perfectly' in India (pp. 385). Also, Blunt (1931) gives examples of changes in status of a caste with a change in their occupation, I review more recent literature in the text.

occupations. Even where it lingers in its attenuated form, monetisation, and market forces have combined to free economic relations from the baggage which they have traditionally carried¹¹.

Panini and Srinivas' view of the changes that liberalisation and modernisation will bring to the caste system do not find universal support at present. For example, Basile and Harriss-White (2000: 41), in their study of village *Arni* in Tamil Nadu do not see any 'sign yet of the erosion foreseen by Panini'. They go on to state that:

'On the contrary, caste is being selectively reworked to mean different things at different positions in the economic system of the town. Among Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes, caste remains a condition of hierarchy. Physical and ritual pollution still successfully repel higher ('backward') castes from low caste occupations. They also prevent all but a handful of those associated with this contamination from access to most 'clean' occupations, from private finance and from residence and worship in upper caste localities'.

It has been noted that the benefits of liberalisation are not enjoyed equally by all castes, as is evidenced by the existence of what has been termed the '*creamy layer*', i.e. the more advanced sections of the backward castes that are able to take advantage of preferential policies, which the more deprived sections are unable to do.

The continued association of castes in particular occupations despite liberalisation has been much debated. According to Jayaram (1996: 82) the 'conjugation of caste and class is no longer a sociological axiom', and Kumar et al (2002a, b) show considerable occupational variation within castes. However, regarding the disassociation of castes from traditional occupations, Karanth (1996: 91) differentiates between the higher and lower castes. According to him the members of the lower (particularly former untouchable) castes find it tougher to move from their traditional occupations than do the higher castes. This may be for many reasons such as pressures (social, economic and political) exerted by the upper castes to continue the traditional 'patron-client' relations (ibid; see also footnote 11) due to which lower castes may remain economically dependent on the upper castes. Thus even if disassociation is taking place, it is more apparent for the higher rather than the lower castes, who might still be restricted by certain factors to perform their 'traditional defiling' jobs (this seems to support Basile and Harriss-White's (2000) conclusion)¹². Similarly Dube (1996) asserts that at the extremes of the caste system the overlap of caste and occupations persists. For example, a Brahmin still does a priest's job, and scavengers and sweepers are the lowest castes (pp. 3). This seems to indicate that it is in the middle where all the fluidity and mobility occurs.

¹¹ At this point Srinivas is talking predominantly of the breakdown of the 'traditional', often hereditary, patron-client relations between the dominant land-owning caste and the lower (agricultural labourer) castes, also called the '*jajmani*' system.

¹² This argument seems to be similar to that of Weber (1958) mentioned previously.

Panini (1996) too reviews literature spanning a wide time spectrum that looks at clustering of castes and more recent de-clustering in different occupations. These studies show how caste 'no longer inhibits individuals from taking to new occupations' (ibid: 30), or what could be considered more caste 'non-traditional' occupations. But having laid down the changes that have occurred for different castes, Panini demonstrates with numerous examples that castes do still continue to 'cluster' in particular occupations. In addition to clustering in agriculture, Panini also shows the clustering of higher castes in higher levels of government services (pp. 32);¹³ managerial and professional occupations (pp. 33, 35); in the 'industrial milieu' (pp. 34); between the organised and unorganised sector (pp. 35) as well as by skill level.

Summarising the literature in this field of caste and occupational mobility Panini concludes (ibid: 29) that 'evidence suggests accelerated occupational mobility which has broken down the caste based division of labour. Yet, such a change was not drastic enough to loosen the hold of caste over the economy. Caste continues to be a salient category in the social infrastructure of the economy'. For a discussion on the role played by women in caste and occupational continuity see Dube (1996).

The above has been a summary of the various views put forth regarding the relation between caste and class, but these have not been tested by any systematic research. In light of the literature, to analyse this relation in contemporary India, as well as any changes that might have occurred over birth-cohorts¹⁴ (our proxy for time), I pose the following two sets of questions.

QUESTIONS POSED

First, I begin by asking whether there is an association, if any, between caste and class in contemporary India. Here I will test whether there is more congruence of castes and classes at the extremes of the caste system as theorised by Dube (1996, see also Karanth, 1996).

Second, I will pose four questions related to the modernisation argument put forth by Panini (1996) and Srinivas (2003). Firstly, has the congruence between caste and class origins declined over time? Secondly, has there been a decline over time in the relative importance of caste, and an increase in the importance of class origins, on

¹³ Quoting from the Mandal Commission report on the Backward classes, Panini states that the non-OBC 'upper and middle castes form nearly 90 percent of the Class 1 services although according to the Mandal Commission they constitute not more than 20 percent of the total population of the country' (pp33).

¹⁴ The caveats of following a birth-cohort approach using a cross-sectional dataset need to be borne in mind. Due to data restrictions, particularly the lack of data on women as well as the inconsistency in the procedures followed in each of the NES surveys, we do not have access to adequate over-time data. In this regard, the results of this birth cohort analysis provide a general indication of trends in mobility. I collapse the birth years into 6 five-year groups. I do not show the results for the cohorts born before 1945 (i.e. those aged 60 and above), as the sample sizes were too small to make adequate comparisons. For a more detailed discussion on this birth-cohort approach followed see Vaid (2007).

class destinations¹⁵? Thirdly, related to the previous question, do Scheduled Castes find it harder to move up than members from other communities/castes, from the same lower class origins (Karanth, 1996; see also Kumar et al 2002a)? And finally, has the relation between caste/community and class destination weakened over time (Kumar et al, 2002b explored this question for their men-only sample of the NES 1996 data)? If these four questions are answered in the negative, we will be able to support Basile and Harris-White's (2000) conclusion from their ethnographic study that there has not been much change over time, or at least that the salience of caste has not declined appreciably.

DATA

The data for this paper comes from the May 2004 round of the National Election Study (NES) conducted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. The data, collected by a nationally representative, stratified random sample of over 27,000 respondents from the electoral rolls contains roughly the same number of men and women¹⁶. This data is especially useful for the present study as it includes detailed background information on both the respondent and their parent's occupations and caste background. It is one of the only datasets of its sort with detailed information on 90 *Jatis* (sub-castes) which can be grouped into a more detailed caste/community categorisation than is found in the Census or other national datasets. *Appendix One* of this paper discusses the details of the NES dataset, including information on the individual caste/jati names, a comparison of the data with Census and National Sample Survey figures, and more significantly details of the community/caste categorisation (both of the 10-fold and a 6-fold classification) used in this paper. The class schema used in this paper is different in many ways from the Goldthorpe schema often used in the West; for example, it includes a more detailed breakdown of rural farming classes. For more information on the class schema used here and its validation see Vaid (2007). In this paper I use both an 11 class schema and a collapsed 5 class schema, both of which are included in *Appendix One*.

CASTE AND CLASS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

In this section, I answer the first question relating to the congruence between caste and class in contemporary India. I will analyse specifically whether there is greater congruence between the two at the extremes of the caste system.

¹⁵ This question enables us to go some way in answering Kolenda's (1986) question on whether a class system is emerging in India.

¹⁶ As the electoral registration rates in India are high, and the onus of registration rests with the State, any selection bias in this data set should be minimal (though this can not preclude any mismanagement on the state officials' behalf). For a discussion and history of NES practices, the methodology of the Election Studies, and an in-depth discussion of the 2004 NES dataset see the special issue of the *Economic and Political Weekly* (18 December 2004) which has various articles on the dataset as well as alternative research areas where NES datasets have been utilised.

1. *Is there more congruence of castes and classes at the extremes of the caste system?*

In order to answer this question I analyse the adjusted residuals from the cross-tabulation of class origins and community (see Kumar et al, 2002b). A large adjusted residual (around 2) shows that the particular cell in question has more, or less if it is a negative residual, people in it than would be expected by chance alone. The results are shown separately for women and men (see Figures 1 and 2). Here I show the adjusted residuals for the six-category community variable (Appendix Two, Tables A5 and A6 includes the adjusted residuals for the more detailed ten-category community variable)¹⁷.

As the graphs show, very large adjusted residuals are observed in almost all the cells for both men and women. However, a relatively clear pattern is observed. If we consider the extremes of the caste system, with High Castes at one end and the Scheduled Castes on the other, we do indeed see a picture of congruence of High Castes in the more secure ‘white collar’ occupations and lower castes in the insecure and temporary occupations. We make the following observations:

Firstly, for men High castes are over-represented in the High and Low Professional classes and the Routine Non-Manual (Clerical and Service) classes, as compared to the other Hindu castes and the Muslims. For women the patterns are similar, except it is the SCs rather than the High Castes that are over-represented in the Routine Non-Manual Service category.

Secondly, for women and men Large Farmers are dominated by the ‘Other’ Minorities (particularly Sikhs and Peasant High Castes as seen in more detailed versions of the tables in Appendix Two, Table A5, A6) and the High Castes. In contrast, SCs are disproportionately low in this and the Small Farm *owner* categories.

Thirdly, for both women and men SCs and STs are over-represented in the lowest agricultural class as they display high positive residuals here. In contrast High Castes are underrepresented in this category with a very high negative residual. OBCs too have a high positive residual in this category but not as high as that of the SCs and STs. The minority religions are underrepresented in the Low Agricultural class.

¹⁷ In the more detailed community tables we can see some of the patterns that are not apparent in the collapsed 6-category table. For example, Peasant High Castes and Sikhs have a very high positive residual in the Large Farming category indicating their over-representation in this class, a finding supported by the literature (see Kumar et al 2002a, b). Similarly, Muslims are over-represented (given their proportion in the population) in the Petty-Business category; and Christians in the High and Low professional classes. Finally, the difference between the High OBCs (*forward* sections of the OBCs) and the Low OBCs seems to stem primarily from ownership of land. While not land owners, Low OBCs are well represented in the Professions and in Skilled Manual work.

But as the adjusted residuals are influenced by sample size, in the text I discuss the results of the collapsed community category. This also enables us to be consistent throughout this paper, as it is the collapsed community variable that is used for answering most of our questions.

Fourthly, in the Large Business class it is the High Castes and Muslims who are over represented, whereas in the Petty Business class it is solely the Muslims who are over represented (as expected, see Kumar et al 2002b).

Finally, SCs are disproportionately located in the manual class, both Skilled and Semi-Unskilled, as compared to High Castes who are disproportionately fewer here. The same is true for the OBCs though to a much smaller extent than the SCs. But, it is the Muslims who have the highest clustering in the Skilled, though not in the Semi-Unskilled, manual work category.

These graphs seem to indicate that there is quite a degree of marked clustering at the extremes. We see the High Castes at one end overrepresented in the more stable and prestigious 'white collar' or 'clean' work categories of the professional classes, and routine non-manual classes as well as in farm-owning classes and large businesses. The SCs on the other end are not only under-represented in all these classes, they are moreover over-represented in the lower income, less stable, temporary employment, in the manual work categories and in lower agriculture as labourers. For women and men the pattern is similar. Therefore, in answer to our question we do find general support that there is clustering, even in contemporary India, at the extremes of the caste system; and an indication of a strong caste based manual-non manual barrier.

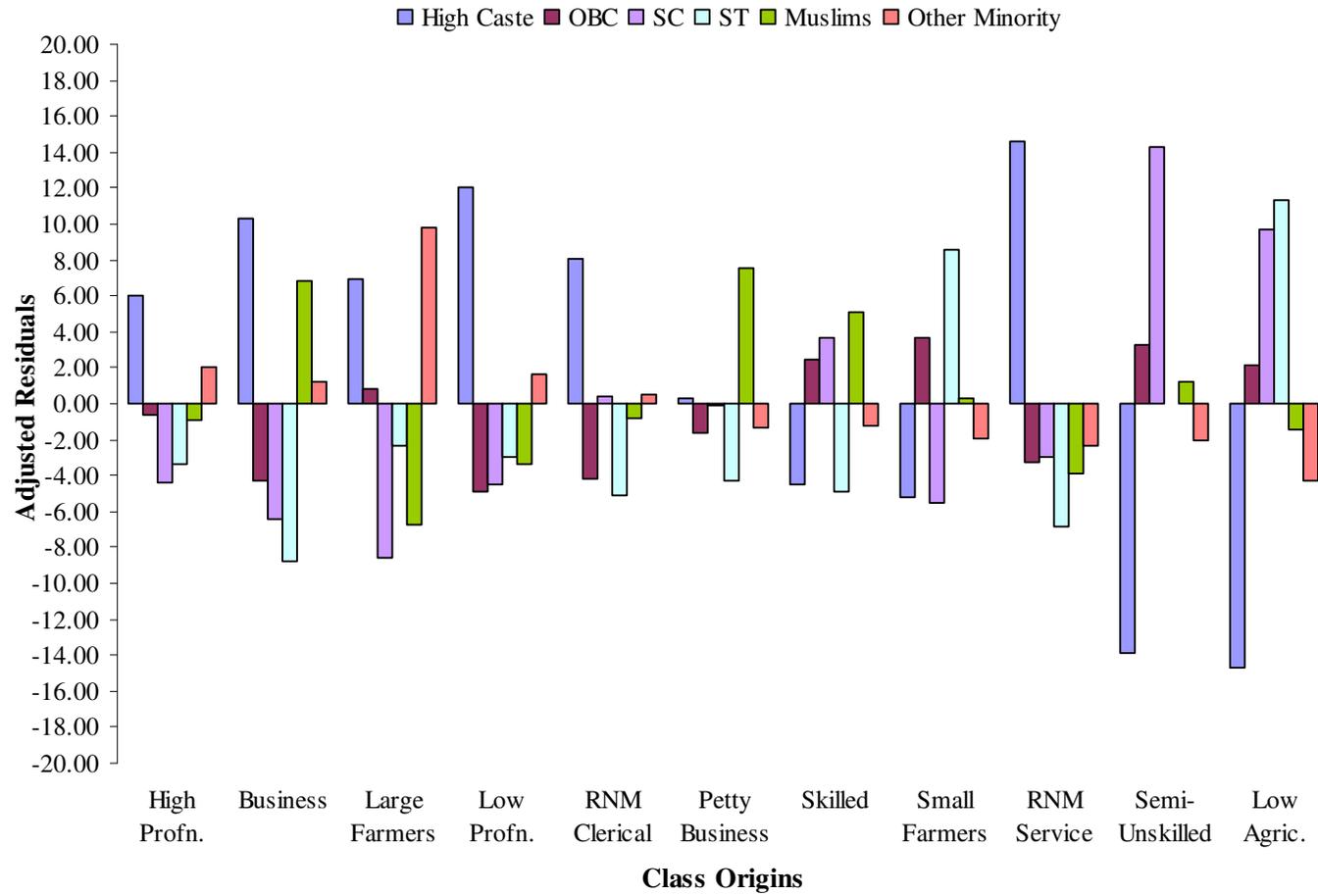


Figure 1: Adjusted residuals of Caste and Class Origins, Men

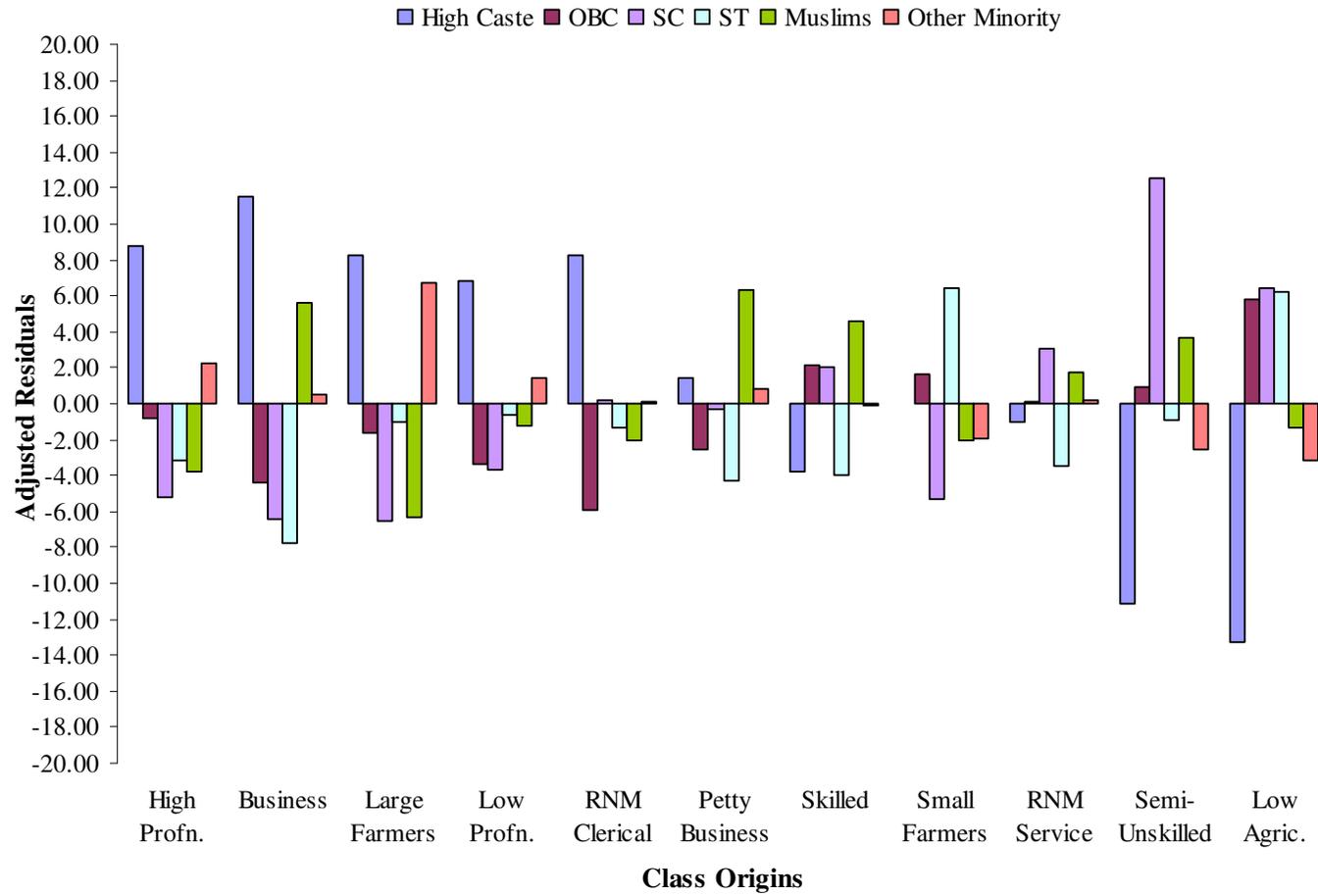


Figure 2: Adjusted residuals of Caste and Class Origins, Women

MODERNISATION

I now move on to the second set of questions addressed in this paper. In order to observe whether modernisation has indeed altered the relation between caste and class, I begin by asking whether any congruence between caste and class *origins* has weakened over time. As modernisation is expected to have an initial influence on gaining access to professional occupations, where ‘direct’ inheritance might play less of a role, I ask whether there has been a change in the relative importance of caste and class origins on access to professional class destinations. I follow this by asking whether SCs in particular, when compared to other castes from similar low class origins, are less able to take advantage of upward class mobility opportunities, i.e. with regard to this question I am particularly interesting in observing an interaction effect. In the final question I ask whether the relation of caste/community and class *destinations* has weakened over time.

In the first question I will be using father’s class rather than respondent’s own class to study the relation with caste. This is because here I aim to look at the two ‘ascribed’ origin characteristics of caste and class, and also studying class of origin might help us in avoiding problems caused by contamination due to life-cycle effects, or career mobility. In the second and third questions I will look at the three characteristics of respondent’s class, father’s class and caste together; and in the final question I will study caste and its relation with an individual’s final class destination.

1. *Has the congruence between caste and class origins declined over time?*

To answer this question we extend the previous analysis on the congruence of caste and class in contemporary India, but instead look at the over time perspective. Here I use the method of log linear analysis¹⁸. In order to study whether the association between class origins and community has changed over time, I use the model of Constant Social Fluidity (CnSF) for both women and men (also called the constant association model by Kumar et al, 2002b). The formulation of the CnSF is:

$$\log_m = \lambda + \lambda_i^O + \lambda_j^C + \lambda_k^Y + \lambda_{ik}^{OY} + \lambda_{jk}^{CY} + \lambda_{ij}^{OC}$$

Where O=Origin class; C=Community; Y=Birth-cohort.

The results for the study are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

If the CnSF model provides a good fit to the data (i.e. a G^2 with a p-value of over 0.05), we cannot reject the null hypothesis that there has been no change over time, and we must conclude that the association between class origins and community has not changed over birth cohorts, i.e. it has instead remained constant. Hence our question is answered in the negative.

¹⁸ For the log linear analysis in this paper, the 6 category ‘community’ variable was used due to small sample sizes as was a collapsed 5 class schema. See Appendix One for details.

Table 1: Log-linear Analysis for Men (Class Origins, Community and Cohort)¹⁹

N=7000	G^2	d.f	p	Δ	rG^2	bic
O, C, Y	892.3	165	0.000	13.5	--	-568.0
OY, CY	809.5	120	0.000	12.9	9.3	-252.5
CnSF (OC)	170.4	100	0.000	5.3	80.9	-714.6
Unidiff	94.4	75	0.064	3.8	89.4	-569.6

Note: O=Origins; C=Community; Y=Cohort

Table 2: Log-linear Analysis for Women (Class Origins, Community and Cohort)

N=5901	G^2	d.f	p	Δ	rG^2	bic
O, C, Y	760.4	165	0.000	13.8	--	-671.8
OY, CY	712.0	120	0.000	13.2	6.4	-329.6
CnSF (OC)	112.4	100	0.186	4.7	85.2	-755.5
Unidiff	64.4	75	0.813	3.4	91.5	-586.8

Note: O=Origins; C=Community; Y=Cohort

In Table 1 we observe that the CnSF does not fit the male data well by the conventional G^2 criterion and it also misclassifies 5.3% of the cases. However, according to the *bic* criterion it is the ‘preferred’ model. For women this model provides a relatively good fit according to the conventional G^2 criterion.²⁰ Tentatively, we do find some support for the hypothesis that there has been over-time stability in the association between caste and class origins in the case of women, but we are less confident of this conclusion in the case of men. In the second step, I fit a Unidiff model to see whether the pattern of association between class origins and community strengthens or weakens over birth-cohorts. For more on Unidiff models see Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992; and Xie, 1992.

The Unidiff model provides a better fit than the CnSF according to the G^2 for both women and men. The Unidiff parameters are shown in Figure 3 (the parameters for the earliest birth-cohort are set to 1, anything greater than one shows increasing strength and anything less than 1 shows weakening association). In the figure one can see that the parameters for men are not following any consistent pattern. There is instead ‘trendless fluctuation’ in terms of the relation between class origins and community. But quite surprisingly the picture for women is different; it seems to show that the relationship between class origins and community is declining consistently. This is a puzzling result as it is not clear why patterns should be different

¹⁹ Δ = index of dissimilarity, i.e. the ‘percentage of cases misclassified’ (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992: 89); the lower the index the better the fit to the data provided by the model. The rG^2 shows ‘how much of the total association between class of origin and class of destination’ a model is able to account for (ibid.: 88); the higher the rG^2 the better the fit to the data. *Bic* is calculated using the formula: $Bic = G^2 - d.f. \times \log(N_{ij})$. The lower the *bic* the better the fit. See also Breen (2004, Chapter Two) for more on the statistics used.

²⁰ I studied the residuals of the CnSF model to see where the model does not fit adequately. But, no clear pattern seems to emerge.

for men and women since we are looking at their class origins and we are not restricted only to the economically active women. As there is no theoretical reason to expect that the results for women and men would be different, this weakening that we observe could be for many reasons, for example due to noise in the data, random fluctuation or small sample sizes²¹.

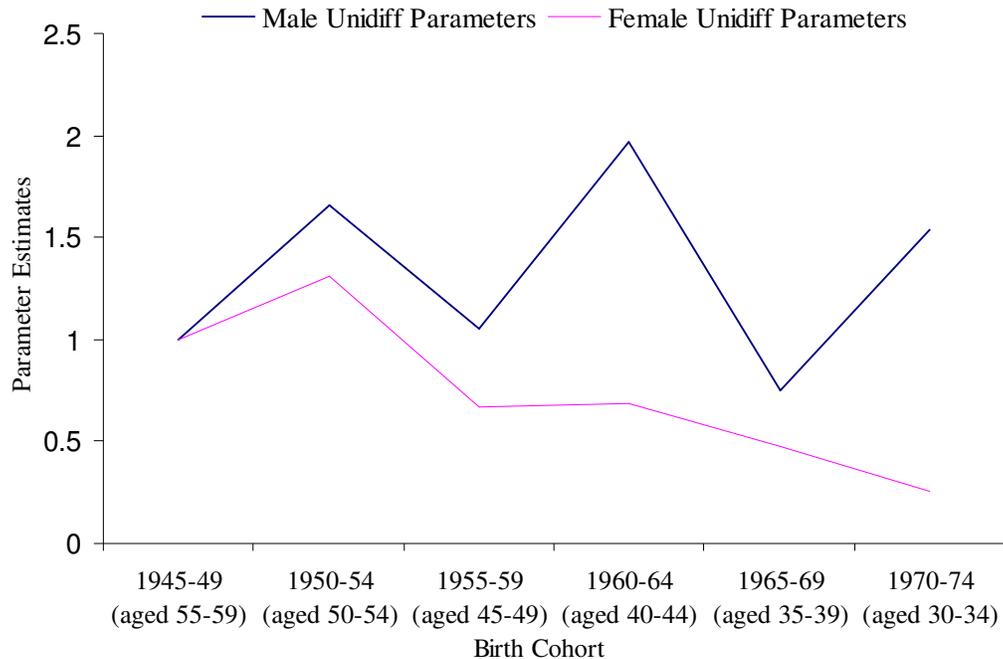


Figure 3: Unidiff Parameter Estimates for Women and Men across Birth Cohorts

On observing our results we are unable to say conclusively that the association between origin class and caste has declined over time, though for women we are observing a slight change. I now move on to the second question related to modernisation where I test whether the influence of caste has declined, whereas that of class origins has increased, with regard to access to professional class destinations.

2. *Has there been a decline over time in the relative importance of caste, and an increase in the importance of class origins, on class destinations?*

In a modernising society such as India researchers like Panini (1996) believe that the influence of caste on class destination would decline over time, and simultaneously it has been argued that the influence of class origins on class

²¹ A study of the graph (Figure 3) ignoring the last birth-cohort that has not reached 'occupational maturity' (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992: 71) seems to show some signs of a gradual weakening of the relation between caste and class over the birth-cohorts. If we conducted a formal test of trends we might find that the trends are not significantly different for men and women and we might therefore conclude that there is a gradual weakening of the association overall. We do not conduct this test here.

destinations will increase over time (Kolenda, 1986 also raises this issue). If we do indeed find that the influence of caste has declined and that of class origins has increased, we may conclude that India is indeed becoming a more ‘modern’ society. In this question I will specifically look at access to professional class destinations, as modernisation is expected to have an influence initially on occupations where ‘direct’ inheritance plays less of a role²². I analyse whether caste becomes a less important influence on destination, i.e. in access to professional classes across birth cohorts.

I use binary logistic regression to answer this question as access to professional class destinations is dichotomous. This is the method also followed by Kumar et al (2002a: 2987), but unlike them I analyse these regressions over birth-cohorts. Here I use the collapsed five-class schema (see Appendix One) to avoid small sample sizes. In the logistic regression similar to Kumar et al (ibid.) I include class origins and the more detailed variables on communities/castes as independent variables; with access to the professional classes as the dependent variable (I do not use any controls in these regressions). I also use deviation contrasts to arrive at the parameter estimates which can be ‘interpreted as fitted log odds ratios’ (ibid.). In this regression ‘deviation contrasts compare each group other than the excluded group to the un-weighted average of all groups’ (Nichols, 1997). Put another way, all parameters above 0 show that for the origin class being analysed there are better chances than average of gaining access to the professional class and avoiding any other class; and anything below 0 shows lower than average chances of getting to the professional class (Kumar et al, 2002a: 2987). The two Tables 3 and 4 below (for men and women) show us the results of this study across the birth-cohorts.

In the tables I focus primarily on the trend or change in the parameter estimates. Some of the main highlights of the tables are as follows:

1. For both women and men the parameter estimates for class origin display ‘trendless fluctuation’. For instance, the Professional Class origin parameter-estimates for men over the birth-cohorts are 1.8, 1.7, 1.5, 1.9, 1.6, and 1.8 – ending up where they started. Similarly for men from Low Agricultural origins the parameter has remained negative and significant in all but one birth-cohort and is the highest for the youngest birth-cohort (for women this parameter seems to have declined quite gradually over birth-cohorts).
2. In terms of caste the parameter-estimates for High Caste men remain positive and significant in all but the youngest birth-cohort. This might be an indication of a recent decline in the significance of caste on class destinations. But as this birth-cohort has not reached ‘occupational maturity’ (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992: 71), we can not make this conclusion with confidence (for women the parameter fluctuates from one birth-cohort to another).

²² Basile and Harriss-White (2000: 178) have argued that caste networks are still important for ‘recruitment’ purposes in the informal sectors of the economy. Here we maintain that though this might be the case for the informal sectors, we would expect there to be a declining influence of caste on the expanding professional sectors where ‘merit’ may have a greater role to play.

3. Another parameter that stands out is for the Low OBC men in the youngest two birth-cohorts where it is negative and significant. Again, it may be too soon to conclude that a Low OBC background has a negative effect on access to professional class destinations. But this could indicate that Low OBC men are different from the *forward* or advanced sections of this caste group.
4. For women we see an increasing positive trend in the parameter estimates for the Other Minority community.

We do not see any clear trend in the decline of the influence of caste on class destination in the logistic regression. However, we do note that class origins rather than caste background have a stronger parameter and seem to influence access to professional classes to a greater extent (Kumar et al come to a similar conclusion, 2002a: 2987).²³ A major result of this analysis is that contrary to expectation father's class rather than caste has, over all birth-cohorts, been the stronger determining factor for access to professional class destinations; thus highlighting that India seems to display a picture of quite a 'modern' society even before modernisation is believed to have truly set in.

One caveat regarding our results needs to be mentioned: these results are specific to a particular way of categorising caste and class. Thus, the comparison of the parameter estimates made here is specific to the particular measure and aggregation of caste and class used. If we used more detailed classifications, such as information on individual jatis like Brahmins for example, we might get a slightly stronger result for that particular jati, though perhaps not for the others. However, having noted this, given the broad categorisations used here, we can conclude that class is indeed an important influence on gaining access to professional destinations.

²³ These logistic regressions while highlighting the distinctiveness of high castes when compared to the lower castes also indicate that the lower castes are quite similar to each other (this can be observed through the parameters for caste).

Table 3: Logistic Regression Parameters for access to Professional Class by Birth Cohort, Men

	born 1945-1949	born 1950-54	born 1955-59	born 1960-64	born 1965-69	born 1970-74
Father's Class						
Professional	1.8* (0.3)	1.7* (0.2)	1.5* (0.2)	1.9* (0.2)	1.6* (0.2)	1.8* (0.1)
Business	-0.2 (0.3)	-0.5 (0.3)	-0.1 (0.2)	-0.5* (0.3)	-0.3 (0.2)	-0.1 (0.2)
Farm	-0.6* (0.2)	-0.4* (0.2)	-0.3 (0.2)	-0.4* (0.2)	-0.2 (0.1)	-0.4* (0.1)
Manual	-0.4 (0.3)	-0.5* (0.2)	-0.5* (0.2)	0.1 (0.2)	-0.3 (0.2)	-0.2 (0.2)
Low Agric.	-0.6* (0.2)	-0.3 (0.2)	-0.6* (0.2)	-1.0* (0.2)	-0.8* (0.2)	-1.1* (0.2)
Caste						
High Caste	0.5* (0.3)	0.6* (0.2)	0.6* (0.2)	0.4* (0.2)	0.5* (0.2)	0.1 (0.2)
Peasant High Caste	-0.4 (0.5)	0.4 (0.4)	-0.2 (0.4)	0.1 (0.3)	0.1 (0.3)	0.3 (0.3)
OBC High	-0.5 (0.3)	-0.5 (0.3)	-0.3 (0.3)	-0.3 (0.2)	-0.2 (0.2)	-0.0 (0.2)
OBC Low	-0.1 (0.3)	0.1 (0.2)	0.4 (0.3)	-0.0 (0.2)	-0.5* (0.2)	-0.4* (0.2)
SC	0.0 (0.3)	-0.1 (0.3)	0.2 (0.3)	-0.6* (0.3)	-0.2 (0.2)	-0.4 (0.2)
ST	-0.1 (0.3)	-0.6 (0.3)	-0.4 (0.3)	0.2 (0.2)	-0.1 (0.2)	0.4* (0.2)
Muslim	-0.2 (0.3)	-0.1 (0.3)	-0.4 (0.3)	0.1 (0.2)	-0.0 (0.2)	-0.3 (0.2)
Other Minority	0.7* (0.3)	0.2 (0.4)	0.0 (0.4)	0.1 (0.3)	0.4 (0.3)	0.42 (0.3)
Constant	-1.3* (0.1)	-1.6* (0.1)	-1.7* (0.1)	-1.7* (0.1)	-1.8* (0.1)	-1.7* (0.1)
N	563	852	944	1291	1467	1565
Chi Sq.	66.6 (11 df)	91.4 (11 df)	74.8 (11 df)	163.1 (11 df)	159.3 (11 df)	178.5 (11 df)

Notes: Standard Errors in parenthesis; (*) Parameter estimates are more than twice their standard error, and hence significant at the 5% level.

Table 4: Logistic Regression Parameters for access to Professional Class by Birth Cohort, Women

	born 1945-1949	born 1950-54	born 1955-59	born 1960-64	born 1965-69	born 1970-74
Father's Class						
Professional	1.7* (0.5)	1.6* (0.4)	2.1* (0.3)	2.4* (0.3)	2.3* (0.3)	1.6* (0.2)
Business	1.3* (0.5)	0.8 (0.5)	0.6 (0.4)	0.6 (0.4)	0.9* (0.3)	-0.1 (0.4)
Farm	-1.0* (0.4)	-0.6 (0.4)	-1.6* (0.4)	-1.7* (0.4)	-1.4* (0.3)	-0.8* (0.3)
Manual	-0.1 (0.5)	0.4 (0.4)	0.1 (0.4)	-0.1 (0.3)	-0.9* (0.4)	0.0 (0.3)
Low Agric.	-2.0* (0.6)	-2.2* (0.6)	-1.2* (0.4)	-1.3* (0.3)	-0.9* (0.3)	-0.8* (0.3)
Caste						
High Caste	0.0 (0.5)	0.8* (0.4)	0.6 (0.4)	0.4 (0.3)	0.1 (0.3)	0.6* (0.3)
Peasant High Caste	0.9 (0.7)	0.9 (0.6)	0.3 (0.5)	-0.2 (0.5)	0.3 (0.4)	-0.7 (0.7)
OBC High	-0.5 (1.0)	-1.0 (0.7)	-0.3 (0.7)	0.1 (0.4)	-0.8 (0.5)	-1.6* (0.7)
OBC Low	0.3 (0.5)	0.3 (0.4)	0.2 (0.4)	-1.3* (0.5)	-0.1 (0.4)	-0.1 (0.4)
SC	-0.8 (0.7)	0.1 (0.5)	-0.6 (0.5)	-0.7 (0.4)	-1.3* (0.5)	0.1 (0.3)
ST	0.2 (0.7)	-0.5 (0.7)	-0.6 (0.6)	0.4 (0.4)	0.4 (0.3)	0.6 (0.3)
Muslim	-0.9 (1.0)	-1.0 (1.0)	-0.6 (0.7)	0.0 (0.5)	-0.2 (0.5)	-0.9 (0.6)
Other Minority	0.8 (0.6)	0.4 (0.6)	1.0 (0.6)	1.2* (0.5)	1.6* (0.4)	2.0* (0.4)
Constant	-2.0* (0.3)	-2.0* (0.3)	-2.1* (0.1)	-1.7* (0.2)	-1.8* (0.2)	-2.0* (0.2)
N	267	348	435	520	659	689
Chi Sq.	39.3 (11 df)	54.8 (11 df)	80.5 (11 df)	125.2 (11 df)	143.3 (11 df)	113.6 (11 df)

Notes: Standard Errors in parenthesis; (*) Parameter estimates are more than twice their standard error, and hence significant at the 5% level.

3. Do Scheduled Castes find it harder to move up than members of other castes, from the same lower class origins?

To answer this question I look specifically at whether SCs when compared to other caste groups from similar low origin classes are indeed unable to take advantage of opportunities of upward class mobility; and conversely, whether High Castes are protected from being downwardly mobile (Karanth, 1996; Kumar et al 2002a, b). Here we intend to extend the results from the earlier logistic regression to focus on relevant interaction effects.

I study this by analysing men and women's Common Social Fluidity (CmSF) and Unidiff models to test whether the relation between class origins and class destinations across the various communities is common or whether it varies (this analysis can also be done by observing logistic regression parameters, but the interpretation is clearer using loglinear analysis). That is, here we are interested specifically in looking at an interaction effect. The CmSF model is similar to the CnSF model analysed earlier, except here we are interested in studying whether the relation between class origins and destinations is common across communities. Through the Unidiff model I will study whether the strength of association between origins and destinations is weaker for any particular caste group(s). If we are indeed able to show that some communities have a stronger association between class origins and destinations, then we can conclude that they have less chances of mobility²⁴.

According to the conventional criteria both the CmSF models for women and men have a G^2 with a p-value less than 0.05, and hence these models do not fit the data adequately. But on observing the other statistical calculations like the *bic*, rG^2 and Δ , the CmSF is the 'preferred' model. This seems to indicate that there are similar relative rates of mobility for all castes, i.e. the association between class origins and class destinations does not vary much by community.

Even though the CmSF provides a fairly good fit it still misclassifies 4.3 and 3.9 percent of the cases for men and women respectively. In order to observe where the model does not fit well, I studied the adjusted residuals of these CmSF models (Tables in Appendix Three).

On analysing the adjusted residuals we would expect, if the higher castes were indeed protected from downward mobility, to find more negative residuals above the diagonal in the High Caste table. This would indicate less downward class mobility for this caste than expected. On observing our data, this is not the case. Also, in terms of intergenerational stability (cells along the diagonal) fewer high castes are stable in Professional and Manual and Low Agricultural classes than would be expected on the basis of the model. High Castes from Professional, Farming and Low Agricultural classes seem to be moving into manual classes more than would be expected.

²⁴ The notation for the model of common social fluidity is displayed below:

$$\log_m = \lambda + \lambda_i^O + \lambda_j^D + \lambda_k^C + \lambda_{ik}^{OC} + \lambda_{jk}^{DC} + \lambda_{ij}^{OD}$$

Where O=origins; D=destinations and C=community.

Table 5: Loglinear Analysis for Men (Class Origin, Destination and Community)

N=11357	G^2	d.f	p	Δ	rG^2	bic
O, D, C	14555.6	136	0.000	47.8	--	13285.4
OC, DC	12440.9	96	0.000	45.4	14.5	11544.3
CmSF (OD)	263.5	80	0.000	4.3	98.2	-483.7
Unidiff	231.8	75	0.000	3.9	98.4	-468.5

Note: O=Origins; D=Destinations; C=Community

Table 6: Loglinear Analysis for Women (Class Origin, Destination and Community)

N=4812	G^2	d.f	p	Δ	rG^2	Bic
O, D, C	6585.2	136	0.000	50.5	--	5430.5
OC, DC	5635.6	96	0.000	48.2	14.4	4820.6
CmSF (OD)	125.3	80	0.001	3.9	98.1	-553.9
Unidiff	115.8	75	0.002	3.5	98.2	-520.1

Note: O=Origins; D=Destinations; C=Community

Furthermore, if it were true that the SCs were indeed less likely to be upwardly mobile we would expect to find more negative residuals below the diagonal in the SC table. Even though we do find this to be the case, none of the residuals are significant. These tables quite generally do not display much of a pattern of the residuals for any of the caste/class origins combinations for both women and men.

In order to observe the strength of the association between origins and destinations for different communities, I studied the Unidiff parameters. The Unidiff models provide a good fit for both women and men. The Unidiff parameters (in Figure 4) show that the strength of the association between origins and destinations is stronger for all community groups except for High Caste men²⁵. For women on the other hand, SC and ST women display a stronger association between their origins and destinations than women from higher castes. These results go some way in helping us understand how the relationship between class origins and class destinations varies by community; especially as the SC and STs (for both women and men; and OBCs for men) display stronger associations between origins and destinations; and the higher castes have a weaker link between class origins and destinations²⁶.

The main result of this analysis is that upper castes are definitely *not* protected from downward mobility, but there are hints that SC men and women may have difficulty in gaining upward mobility as we observe a stronger origin-destination association for these groups, which indicates that they have a harder time leaving their class origins behind (also the positive residuals are an additional indicator of this, as seen in our tables in Appendix Three, in the lower-class stable categories).

²⁵ The parameter for High Caste men and women is set to 1, anything greater than 1 indicates increasing strength, whereas anything less than 1 shows a weakening of the association.

²⁶ This adds some support to Gist's (1954) conclusion in his study on the relation between castes and classes in two south Indian towns, that 'Brahmins showed the greatest tendency of any caste groupings to deviate occupationally' (pp. 128).

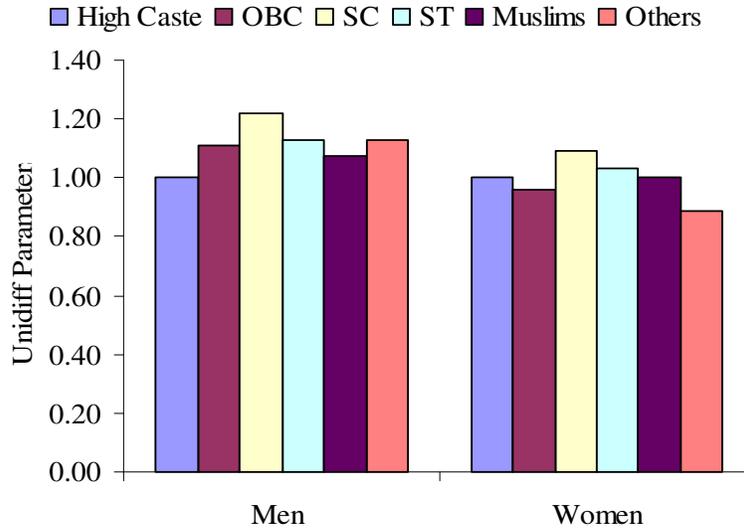


Figure 4: Unidiff Parameters for Origin Class, Destination Class and Community

4. Has the relation between caste/community and class destinations weakened over time?

In this final question concerning modernisation I test whether the relation between community and class *destination* has changed over time. This analysis extends the previous discussion under *question two* to include all possible class destinations rather than just the professional one. Here we will analyse whether people from certain communities are associated with particular class destinations; and bring out any changes that may have occurred over time. That is, here I ask in particular, if the link between community and class destination is weakening as we expect under modernisation (Kumar et al, 2002a).

I use log-linear analysis similar to that used to answer *question one* in this section, but instead of class origins I observe the relation of community with class destinations (see also Kumar et al 2002a; and 2002b: 4096 for their NES 1996, male-only results); Tables 7 and 8 show the results of fitting these log linear models for men and women. According to conventional criteria the model fits the data remarkably well, especially for men (as the p-value of the G^2 is over 0.05). As the CnSF provides a good fit, we conclude that the relation between community and class destinations has not changed appreciably over the birth-cohorts. Thus, even though the class distribution in the country has changed following modernisation, the ‘underlying association’ between community and class destination has not changed much (Kumar et al 2002)²⁷.

²⁷ As the model misclassifies 4 and 6 percent of the cases (for men and women), I studied the adjusted residuals of these models to see if there was any pattern in the deviance. But no certain pattern emerged.

Table 7: Loglinear Analysis for Men (Class Destination, Community and Cohort)

N=7495	G^2	d.f	p	Δ	rG^2	bic
D, C, Y	910.2	165	0.000	14.1	--	-561.9
DY, CY	835.3	120	0.000	13.8	8.2	-235.3
CmSF (DC)	95.0	100	0.623	4.2	89.6	-797.2
Unidiff	54.3	75	0.966	3.1	94.0	-614.8

Note: D=Destinations; C=Community; Y=Cohort

Table 8: Loglinear Analysis for Women (Class Destination, Community and Cohort)

N=3385	G^2	d.f	p	Δ	rG^2	Bic
D, C, Y	540.9	165	0.000	14.9	--	-800.0
DY, CY	502.1	120	0.000	14.5	7.2	-473.1
CmSF (DC)	144.0	100	0.003	6.4	73.4	-668.7
Unidiff	86.3	75	0.174	4.7	84.0	-523.2

Note: D=Destinations; C=Community; Y=Cohort

Furthermore, fitting a Unidiff model to study the strength of the association between community and destination class, and whether that has changed over birth-cohorts gives us mixed results. This Unidiff model fits the data well for both women and men, but on mapping the parameters (graph not included here) no pattern seems to emerge for women, as the parameters display wide fluctuation, which could be due to small sample sizes in some birth-cohorts. However, for men the association between community and destination class seems to have ended up where it started, though a drop is observed for three of the middle birth cohorts. This seems to support the results of the logistic regression done previously, where we did not see much of change over birth cohorts in the influence of community/caste on access to professional class destinations.

Thus with regard to our question we cannot conclude that the association between caste and class destinations has weakened over the birth-cohorts.

CONCLUSIONS

The 'traditional' association between caste and certain occupations has often been discussed theoretically. In recent times there has been an increase in the literature predicting a breaking down of this congruence (e.g. Panini, 1996). In addition, sociologists like Kolenda (1986) have questioned whether the 'traditional' caste system is now giving way to a more class based society. In this paper an attempt has been made to study the relation between caste and class systematically and in particular to highlight any changes that may have occurred over time.

Firstly, while the relation between caste and class is not completely straightforward, a tentative picture of congruence between the two does indeed appear. High Castes are seen to be concentrated in the higher social classes like the

professional classes, and large business and farming classes. But, significantly, we observe that they are also concentrated in the two routine non-manual classes. This seems to indicate that High Castes dominate in the more ‘clean’ white collar classes, and a strong manual-nonmanual barrier seems to exist where the High Castes seem to be avoiding ‘unclean’ manual work.

Secondly, the association between caste and class origins is not seen to weaken over time or at least not by very much overall. We observe a consistency in the patterns with the overrepresentation of the higher castes in what can be considered the higher classes, and of the lower castes in the lower classes. This does not seem to lend strong support to the modernisation thesis where we expected to see a weakening of the link between caste and class²⁸.

Thirdly, when community and class origins are studied together, particularly with regard to access to a particular class, in this case the professional class, the effect of class origins is seen to be much stronger than the effect of community or caste as was found by Kumar et al (2002a, b). This pattern seems to hold consistently over the birth-cohorts. However, the impact of caste does not disappear over time. We also conclude that other than being from a High Caste background which seems to display a significant positive impact on access to the professions, the other lower castes seem not to be very distinct from each other in this regard. In answer to Kolenda’s question of whether a class system is emerging in India (1986: 108) we can conclude that rather than a system ‘emerging’, class has instead been around for a long time in India. These findings might have important implications for reservation policies particularly in light of the current government’s plans, aiming to increase reservation in state-funded professional colleges from the current level of 22.5% by a further 27% for the OBCs (bringing the total reservation up to the stipulated maximum of 50 percent).

Though I am unable to study the impact of reservations on SCs and STs directly, due to the lack of information in the data on government Class I and II jobs (where places are specifically reserved for the SCs and STs), I have studied more generally how these groups perform as compared with the higher castes and the OBCs. My results seem to provide some tentative support for the argument that the new reservation policies being proposed by the government should be aimed at the real backward *class* of people rather than at the backward castes, i.e. a class rather than a caste based criterion should be used to determine the amount and character of reservation. This idea seems to find support from other sociologists like Beteille (2006)²⁹. Furthermore, the legacy of reservation does not seem to have benefited the

²⁸ In Vaid (2007) I discuss in detail a possible reason for why the picture of congruence between caste and class is not entirely straightforward. This may have something to do with the more micro-level association between jatis and occupations, rather than between castes and classes at the macro-level.

²⁹ We also find that High or more *forward* OBCs have a different pattern of clustering in classes than the low OBCs – thus adding weight to the argument that the *forward* sections of the backward classes are quite distinct from the more *backward sections* of these classes.

SCs and STs as much as was expected, as despite these policies (e.g. education policies) these groups seem to consistently lag behind the higher castes, in terms of access to the professional classes (see also McMillan, 2005).

Fourthly, we conclude that SCs do indeed seem to be experiencing difficulty in gaining upward class mobility though conversely the High Castes are not cushioned from the forces of downward class mobility. This seems to support Karanth's contention that high castes have not been entirely successful in retaining their status (1996: 96). This result also supports our previous conclusion on the access of the SCs and STs to the professional classes as seen by the 'main effect' of coming from an SC background.

Finally, we observe that the relation between class destinations and community is relatively stable over time. We thus observe an 'enduring and pervasive' effect of caste. This study seems to support Kumar et al's conclusions about the story in India being one of 'continuity rather than change' (2002b: 4095).

In sum, caste or community still has a relatively strong relationship with class. However, when both caste and class are studied together the influence of caste, as measured by our broad categorisation, is much weaker than that of class origins though it has not disappeared, and we see a pervasive effect of caste³⁰. Perhaps the most important conclusion is that class origins, rather than caste, have long been the major factor in influencing one's class destinations. Where Kolenda and others might be mistaken is in supposing that the effects of class origins are a new phenomenon.

In India, modernisation has not had the expected effect as the influence of caste has neither disappeared nor declined appreciably. However, we do observe that the importance of class origins has so far been under-emphasised in the literature. In India the *family*, especially for members from the service or high manual classes, is an important source of resources to ensure that its members maintain their 'edge' in gaining access to scarce resources like jobs. But significantly, the 'resources' that the family now employs extend beyond caste and include more specifically aspects of class such as wealth. Thus, in arenas where caste can not be used to get access to these resources, these privileged families are able to use their class instead (see also Basile and Harriss-White, 2000). This importance of the 'family' in India has been highlighted by Béteille (1993), and is also observed by Vaid (2007b) with regard to patterns of marital mobility.

We can conclude that the weaker caste effect seems to suggest that India has in some ways been more 'modern' than we expected. This apparent paradox seems to highlight that even in a rather traditional looking society, class origins are more important than caste. India does not hence fit the stereotype of the caste society. Or rather, it may be that we seem to have exaggerated the role of caste in a traditional

³⁰ A micro-analysis that studies individual jatis and occupations rather than castes and classes might give us more insight on the relationship between the two and their influence on occupational destinations.

society. Deshpande (1999: 23) while underlining the dominant influence of social anthropology rather than sociology on academic discourse in India concludes that,

‘...most studies of modernisation in India located themselves in the world of tradition and looked out upon modernity from that vantage point... Indian social anthropology failed to cultivate intensively those methods (such as survey or quantitative techniques) and research areas (like industry, the media or the class structure) of sociology proper... This in turn affected the manner in which the discipline dealt with the question of modernisation, particularly since this question privileges generalisation from a macro-perspective, something which anthropology is neither theoretically inclined towards nor methodologically equipped for.’

Our research using a macro-perspective and quantitative research methods suggests that using a sociological framework does indeed underscore that ‘tradition’ is only one part of the Indian story, and future work needs to also focus on the ‘modern’ aspects of Indian society to have a clearer account of social change in contemporary India.

APPENDIX ONE

CLASS SCHEMA

High Professionals: higher professionals, administrators and officials; elected officials (Central/State level); managers

Low Professionals: lower professionals, administrators and officials; elected officials (District level); technicians, supervisors

Routine Non-Manual Clerical: High grade routine non-manual employees, other administrators, Class IV (peons etc), sales executives, sales persons, shop assistants, traditional clerks, Class III (clerical)³¹

Routine Non-Manual Service: Low grade routine non-manual employees, waiters, washer men, barbers, ayahs, other service etc.

Business: Big business (with 7+employees), medium business (3-7 employees), small business (1-2 employees or family workers)

Petty Business: Petty shopkeepers, rentiers

Large Farmers: Farm owners with more than 5 acres of land

Small Farmers: Farm owners with 0-5 acres of land; Tenant farmers (with 5+ acres)

Skilled Manual workers

Semi- and Unskilled Manual workers (not in agriculture)

Low Agriculturalists – Agricultural Labourers and Non-cultivators; Small Tenants (with 0-5 acres of land)

The above schema was collapsed for some of the analysis as follows:

Professional Class: High and Low Professionals, Routine Non-Manual Clerical class

Business class: Business and Petty Business

Farming class: Large and Small Farmers

Manual class: Routine Non-Manual Service, Skilled, Semi-unskilled classes

Low Agriculturalists

NES DATASET AND INFORMATION ON COMMUNITY/CASTE

According to the 2001 Indian Census, Hindus make up just over 80 percent of the population followed by Muslims who are 13 percent of the population. The other large minority groups are the Christians (2 percent) and Sikhs (just under 2 percent). The table below shows how the sampling in the NES data set being used in this paper compares to the Census figures. As can be seen Hindus have been under-represented in this data set, and the Christians over-represented. The other sample distributions are relatively close to the Census figures. The discrepancy in sampling is due to the procedure followed by the NES which uses a State-wise sampling frame. In order to correct for the over-representation of certain communities, I controlled for State in some of my regressions, in order to see whether the results were influenced by the over-representation (I preferred this method to weighting the data set). The control for State did not lead to any marked difference in the results of my regressions.

³¹ In this context Class III and IV here are the Indian government classifications for public sector employees.

Table A1: Religious Groups as a Proportion of the Total Population

	NES 2004	Census 2001
Hindu	72.0	80.5
Muslim	12.0	13.4
Christian	8.7	2.3
Sikh	3.3	1.9
Other Religions	4.3	1.8
Total	27,189	1,028,737,436

Note: Census figures from www.censusindia.net

The breakdown of figures by caste is shown in the table below which compares the Census figures to the NES sample for Caste groups. No survey other than the NES in my knowledge collects information on the Higher Castes. With regard to the OBCs the figures are from the National Sample Survey and National Family and Health Survey (NSS 1999-2000 and NFHS 2000) as the Census does not collect information on the OBCs. These figures exclude the Muslim OBCs, who according to these studies account for around 4 percent of the OBC category. The NES data seems to have closely captured the sampling of the Census (except for the STs who are over represented in the data). Here as well, the over-representation of the STs was checked by controlling for State.

Table A2: Caste Groups in the Census and the NES

	NES 2004	<i>Census 2001</i>
High castes	35.0	Not collected
Other Backward Classes	33.4	[29.8 - 32.1]*
Scheduled Castes	15.9	16.2
Scheduled Tribes	15.7	8.2

Note: * NFHS and the NSS figures respectively
Census figures are from www.censusindia.net.

The 2004 NES has information on 90 castes and tribes, including information on castes found among other religious groups like the Sikhs and Muslims. As this is the largest of the NES datasets currently available and includes more detailed information than previous datasets, in some sections of this paper where it is possible to use a more detailed categorisation on Community/caste, I do so. The information on community or caste was gathered from the following question in the survey:

Question B6. What is your Caste/Jati-biradari/ Tribe name? And your sub caste?

Responses to this question were coded into the master list of the 90 names (available from the NES)³². For this paper I have recoded the information on Jatis and sub-castes from this question to give 10 detailed and 6 collapsed categories for community and caste (henceforth called *community*).

The respondents who did not answer the question on their community affiliation were removed from the analysis. All the Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and other smaller religious minorities that had information on their SC or OBC status, are

³² In the next survey question (question B6a) respondents were also asked for the name of their *caste group* (i.e. they had to pick from a list of the four major categories of 'Other, OBC, SC and ST'). This information was only used to check on the figures obtained after recoding the first question (question B6) as it did not provide enough detail to be used in our more comprehensive analysis.

excluded from the SC, ST list, but included instead within their religious category. This enables us to treat caste as essentially Hindu, and compare these Hindu Castes with the other Community groups for the purpose of our analysis.

Table A3: Detailed 10 Community Categorisation, NES 2004

	Column Percent
Non-Peasant High Caste	19.7
Peasant High Caste	7.2
OBC High	14.8
OBC Low	14.5
Scheduled Caste	13.7
Scheduled Tribe	13.2
Muslims	10.7
Sikh	2.4
Christian	2.6
Other minority	1.2
Total	26357

The detailed community categorisation with 10 categories is shown in the table above. This categorisation makes it possible to separate the High castes from the Peasant (higher) castes and to split the OBCs into two groups: the more ‘forward’ or higher caste OBCs, often described as the ‘creamy layer’; and the more ‘backward’ or lower caste OBCs. By necessity this categorisation might not be entirely accurate as, for example, some jatis are listed as Scheduled Caste in some states but not in others. The OBC, SC and ST names in the dataset were compared to the Scheduled Caste, Tribe and OBC lists available from the different caste Commissions to attempt to ensure that the names were correctly listed³³. This detailed category of community also separates the minority religious groups.

As some of the groups in the data had very small sample sizes, for some analyses this information was recoded to give 6 community categories that enable us to capture most of the major divisions in society, especially with regard to the legally and constitutionally enshrined caste groups. This categorisation is similar in some ways to Kumar et al’s (2002a, b) categories. The six major groups are the High castes (made up of the High castes as well as High caste peasant proprietors); the OBCs, the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, Muslims and Other Minority groups (made up primarily of Christians (42% of the other minority sample) and Sikhs (39% of the other minority sample)). The recoded ‘Community’ variable is shown below:

Table A4: Collapsed 6 Category Community Group, NES 2004

	Column Percent
1 High Caste	26.9
2 Other Backward Classes	29.3
3 Scheduled Caste	13.7
4 Scheduled Tribe	13.2
5 Muslim	10.7
6 Other minority	6.3
Total	26357

³³ For more details see the following: The National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC); The Ministry of Tribal affairs <http://tribal.nic.in/index1.html>; and The National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) <http://ncbc.nic.in/backward-classes/index.htm>. As OBCs are listed by state, an effort was made to ensure that these national names were in the State lists.

APPENDIX TWO: Adjusted Residuals

Table A5: Class Origins and Detailed Community Adjusted Residuals, Men (Significant residuals are in bold)

		Community groups									
		High Caste	Peasant High Caste	OBC High	OBC Low	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe	Muslims	Sikh	Christian	Other minority
Class	High Profn.	6.5	0.1	-3.1	2.4	-4.4	-3.3	-0.9	0.1	1.8	1.8
Father	Business	13.6	-3.8	-5.9	0.4	-6.4	-8.7	6.8	0.4	0.0	2.5
	Large Farmers	-2.4	16.4	6.5	-5.5	-8.6	-2.4	-6.7	15.1	1.1	-2.7
	Low Profn.	14.0	-1.3	-5.1	-1.2	-4.5	-2.9	-3.3	-0.8	1.8	2.7
	RNM Clerical	10.1	-2.0	-2.9	-2.6	0.4	-5.1	-0.9	0.0	1.0	-0.3
	Petty Business	1.2	-1.4	-2.7	0.5	-0.1	-4.3	7.6	-1.4	-0.6	0.0
	Skilled	-3.1	-2.9	-6.7	9.9	3.7	-4.9	5.1	-2.1	-1.4	2.8
	Small Farmers	-7.2	2.5	9.8	-5.1	-5.5	8.6	0.3	-3.2	0.2	0.3
	RNM Service	19.1	-5.0	-6.7	2.6	-3.0	-6.8	-3.9	-2.1	-1.2	-0.2
	Semi-Unskilled	-11.3	-6.4	-0.9	5.1	14.2	0.0	1.2	-2.6	0.1	-0.8
	Low Agric.	-14.8	-2.2	2.7	0.0	9.7	11.3	-1.4	-3.6	-1.4	-2.4

Table A6: Class Origins and Detailed Community Adjusted Residuals, Women (Significant residuals are in bold)

		Community groups									
		High Caste	Peasant High Caste	OBC High	OBC Low	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe	Muslims	Sikh	Christian	Other minority
Class	High Profn.	10.0	-0.3	-2.1	1.0	-5.3	-3.1	-3.7	1.5	2.2	-0.6
Father	Business	14.6	-2.4	-5.8	0.1	-6.5	-7.8	5.7	2.2	-1.9	0.8
	Large Farmers	-0.1	14.0	5.0	-7.1	-6.5	-1.0	-6.3	10.2	-0.3	0.2
	Low Profn.	9.3	-2.5	-3.8	-0.5	-3.7	-0.6	-1.2	-0.7	1.9	1.8
	RNM Clerical	9.7	-0.6	-4.4	-3.2	0.2	-1.4	-2.0	0.1	-0.8	1.6
	Petty Business	1.6	0.0	-2.8	-0.5	-0.3	-4.3	6.3	-0.7	1.5	0.7
	Skilled	-2.2	-3.1	-5.2	7.9	2.0	-4.0	4.6	-1.3	1.3	-0.4
	Small Farmers	-2.0	2.9	8.0	-5.8	-5.3	6.4	-2.1	-3.9	0.4	1.0
	RNM Service	-0.2	-1.4	-4.0	4.1	3.0	-3.5	1.7	-1.3	1.4	0.3
	Semi-Unskilled	-9.1	-5.2	-2.8	4.0	12.5	-0.9	3.6	-2.6	-0.5	-1.2
	Low Agric.	-12.1	-4.2	3.6	3.9	6.4	6.3	-1.3	-1.9	-1.7	-2.2

APPENDIX THREE: Tables for Question Three

Table A7: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model High Caste (Men)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	-3.0	-0.9	-0.4	4.1	2.4
Business	0.5	-1.0	0.4	1.6	-1.3
Farm	0.0	-4.5	1.7	4.0	-1.0
Manual	1.9	5.8	-2.5	-10.2	6.7
Low Agric.	1.2	1.0	-0.2	4.7	-5.4

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A8: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model OBC (Men)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	0.1	-0.7	2.3	-1.6	0.5
Business	-1.7	1.0	1.2	-1.2	2.1
Farm	0.6	3.1	-1.7	0.0	-2.3
Manual	0.0	-4.0	1.4	3.2	-1.5
Low Agric.	0.6	0.3	-1.3	-1.8	1.7

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A9: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model SC (Men)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	1.6	1.8	-1.9	-1.4	-0.7
Business	0.8	0.3	-1.4	-0.1	-0.8
Farm	0.1	-0.8	2.3	-2.2	0.8
Manual	-1.1	-0.7	-1.9	3.9	-2.6
Low Agric.	-1.0	-0.3	0.6	-1.5	2.2

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A10: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model ST (Men)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	2.0	0.0	-0.1	-1.2	-1.6
Business	-0.5	1.6	-0.2	-0.7	-1.5
Farm	0.7	-0.5	-2.3	1.9	0.0
Manual	-0.3	-0.8	2.7	1.0	-2.0
Low Agric.	-2.1	-0.1	1.5	-1.8	2.5

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A11: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model Muslims (Men)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	1.4	0.5	1.0	-2.0	-1.2
Business	0.8	-1.3	0.2	0.2	1.2
Farm	0.1	1.9	-1.4	-3.0	3.6
Manual	-2.7	-0.6	1.3	3.1	-2.0
Low Agric.	0.3	-0.5	0.2	0.9	-0.9

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A12: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model Other Minority (Men)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	0.0	0.6	-1.7	1.9	-1.5
Business	0.3	0.3	-1.3	0.0	-0.4
Farm	-2.0	1.6	1.7	-1.3	0.8
Manual	1.5	-1.7	0.5	-0.7	0.4
Low Agric.	0.6	-1.3	-0.5	0.7	0.2

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A13: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model High Caste (Women)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	-1.3	1.0	1.1	-0.4	0.2
Business	0.0	-0.2	-1.7	1.9	-0.6
Farm	0.3	-1.9	0.9	-0.5	0.4
Manual	1.2	1.6	-0.3	-1.3	-0.6
Low Agric.	0.3	-0.5	-1.1	1.0	0.2

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A14: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model OBC (Women)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	0.3	-1.8	0.3	0.5	0.4
Business	2.4	-2.3	0.7	-0.8	0.7
Farm	-1.6	2.7	-0.4	-0.1	0.3
Manual	-1.3	-0.7	2.1	-0.9	1.6
Low Agric.	0.7	2.3	-1.6	1.2	-1.8

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A15: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model SC (Women)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	0.9	0.7	-1.4	-0.1	-0.4
Business	-1.8	1.4	-1.1	0.8	0.0
Farm	-1.9	-1.6	3.1	-0.4	-0.7
Manual	-0.2	-1.2	-1.7	1.1	0.5
Low Agric.	2.4	0.3	-1.2	-1.3	0.3

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A16: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model ST (Women)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	0.5	1.0	-1.4	0.6	-0.6
Business	0.2	0.6	-0.9	0.3	-1.0
Farm	3.0	0.7	-1.1	-1.3	-0.8
Manual	-1.0	0.3	0.4	1.3	-1.1
Low Agric.	-2.7	-2.1	2.5	-0.7	1.9

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A17: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model Muslims (Women)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	1.0	0.1	0.1	-2.0	1.0
Business	-0.6	0.8	1.3	-1.6	1.0
Farm	-0.2	-0.9	-1.4	1.4	0.9
Manual	-1.0	-0.9	-0.3	2.1	-1.3
Low Agric.	0.7	0.3	1.2	-0.8	-0.6

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

Table A18: Adjusted Residuals of CmSF model Other Minority (Women)

Class Father	Class Destination				
	Profn.	Business	Farm	Manual	Low Agric.
Professional	-0.6	-1.0	0.8	1.9	-1.1
Business	-1.1	0.9	2.5	-1.0	-0.7
Farm	0.0	0.3	-2.0	1.8	0.5
Manual	2.8	1.4	-1.2	-2.8	0.0
Low Agric.	-1.0	-1.5	1.6	0.5	0.5

Note: Significant residuals are in bold

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