INTRA-CASTE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND SOCIAL MOBILITY: A STUDY OF SCHEDULED CASTES IN KERALA

Thesis Submitted to the
University of Calicut for the Award of the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Economics

By

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I hereby declare that the work presented in the thesis entitled **Intra-Caste Socio-Economic Conditions and Social Mobility: A Study of Scheduled Castes in Kerala** is based on the original work done by me under the guidance of **Dr. C C Babu**, Former Controller of Examinations University of Calicut & Deputy Director of Collegiate Education Thrissur (Rtd) and Co-Guide, **Dr. Zabeena Hameed P**, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Dr. John Matthai Centre, Aranattukara, and has not been included in any other thesis submitted previously for the award of any degree. The contents of the thesis are undergone plagiarism check using **iThenticate** software at C.H.M.K. Library, University of Calicut, and the similarity index found within the permissible limit. I also declare that the thesis is free from AI generated contents.

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Abbreviations

SC	: Scheduled Caste
ST	: Scheduled Tribe
SCs	: Scheduled Castes
STs	: Scheduled Tribes
SCSP	: Scheduled Caste Sub Plan
TSP	: Tribal Sub Plan
OBCs	: Other Backward Classes
IPD	: Intergenerational Psychological Distance
IUM	: Income Upward Mobility
EUM	: Education Upward Mobility
OECD	: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
TSTSLS	: Two Sample Two Stage Least Squares
DC-TSTSLS	: Doubly Corrected TwoSample Two Stage Least Squares
IGE	: Intergenerational Income Elasticity
CHIP	: China Household Income Project
AYY	: Antyodaya Anna Yojana
BPL	: Below Poverty Line
APL	: Above Poverty Line
NGOs	: Non-governmental organization
INE	: Instituto Nacional de Estadistica (Nation Institute of Statistics)
ANOVA	: Analysis of Variance
LSGIs	: Local Self Government Institutions
SCDD	: Scheduled Caste Development Department

INTRA-CASTE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND SOCIAL MOBILITY: A STUDY OF SCHEDULED CASTES IN KERALA

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the socio-economic conditions, intra-caste disparities, and intergenerational social mobility among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, with a specific emphasis on the role of education in influencing income mobility. Despite Kerala's achievements in human development, SC communities continue to experience structural disadvantages and unequal access to resources. Using primary data collected from 377 households across selected regions of Kerala, the study adopts a comprehensive methodological framework combining descriptive statistics, inferential analysis, and multiple econometric models. The findings reveal that a majority of SC households are characterized by low socio-economic status, limited land ownership, and heavy reliance on daily wage labor and informal employment. Significant intra-caste disparities exist in housing conditions, income levels, consumption patterns, and access to education across different SC sub-groups. Inequality analysis using the Theil Index indicates that a substantial portion of income and expenditure inequality arises within SC communities rather than between them, highlighting deep internal heterogeneity. Econometric analysis identifies income, household size, employment status, and educational attainment—particularly of children—as key determinants of consumption expenditure and income earnings. While the education of household heads shows limited direct impact, the educational advancement of the younger generation significantly enhances economic outcomes, emphasizing the transformative role of education. Technical skills, digital literacy, and urban location also emerge as important factors influencing income levels. The study provides evidence of both absolute and relative social mobility among SC households. Intergenerational comparisons indicate that children attain higher levels of education and income than their parents, reflecting positive upward mobility. However, the persistence of income inequality and moderate intergenerational elasticity suggest that mobility is constrained by structural and socio-economic barriers. Furthermore, educational upward mobility and intergenerational psychological distance are found to significantly influence income mobility. The study concludes that although there are signs of progress, persistent inequalities and intra-caste disparities hinder inclusive development. It emphasizes the need for targeted policy interventions focusing on education, skill development, employment opportunities, and reduction of intra-group inequalities to promote equitable socio-economic advancement among SC communities in Kerala.

Key Words: Scheduled Caste Households, Intra-caste Disparities, Social Mobility, Education Upward Mobility, Income Upward Mobility, Intergenerational Psychological Distance

ആന്തരിക ജാതീയ സാമൂഹിക സാമ്പത്തിക സാഹചര്യങ്ങളും സാമൂഹിക ചലനാത്മകതയും : കേരളത്തിലെ പട്ടികജാതി വിഭാഗത്തെ മുൻനിർത്തിയുള്ള പഠനം

പ്രബന്ധസംഗ്രഹം

കേരളത്തിലെ പട്ടികജാതി കുടുംബങ്ങളുടെ സാമൂഹിക-സാമ്പത്തിക സാഹചര്യ ങ്ങൾ, ജാതിക്കുള്ളിലെ അസമത്വങ്ങൾ, തലമുറകൾക്കിടയിലുള്ള സാമൂഹിക ചലനാത്മകത എന്നിവയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള അന്വേഷണമാണ് ഈ പഠനം. വരുമാനത്തിലെ ഏറ്റക്കുറച്ചിലു കളെ സ്വാധീനിക്കുന്ന കാര്യത്തിൽ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസത്തിനുള്ള പങ്കിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ഈ പഠനം പ്രത്യേകം ഊന്നൽ നൽകുന്നു. കേരളത്തിന്റെ മാനവിക വികസന നേട്ടങ്ങൾക്കിടയിലും, പട്ടികജാതി വിഭാഗങ്ങൾ ഇപ്പോഴും ഘടനാപരമായ പിന്നാക്കാവസ്ഥയും വിഭവങ്ങളുടെ ലഭ്യതയിൽ അസമത്വവും അനുഭവിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. കേരളത്തിലെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്ത പ്രദേശങ്ങ ളിൽ നിന്നുള്ള 377 കുടുംബങ്ങളിൽ നിന്ന് ശേഖരിച്ച പ്രാഥമിക വിവരങ്ങൾ ഉപയോഗിച്ച്, വിവരണാത്മക സ്ഥിതിവിവരക്കണക്കുകൾ, അനുമാന വിശകലനം, വിവിധ സാമ്പത്തിക മോഡലുകൾ എന്നിവ സംയോജിപ്പിക്കുന്ന സമഗ്രമായ ഒരു രീതിശാസ്ത്ര അടിത്തറയാണ് ഈ പഠനം സ്വീകരിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്. ഭൂരിഭാഗം പട്ടികജാതി കുടുംബങ്ങളും താഴ്ന്ന സാമൂ ഹിക-സാമ്പത്തിക നിലവാരം, പരിമിതമായ ഭൂമി ഉടമസ്ഥാവകാശം, ദിവസവേതന ത്തെയും അനൗദ്യോഗിക തൊഴിലിനെയും അമിതമായി ആശ്രയിക്കൽ എന്നിവയാൽ തളയ്ക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നുവെന്ന് പഠനത്തിലെ കണ്ടെത്തലുകൾ വെളിപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു. വ്യത്യസ്ത പട്ടികജാതി ഉപവിഭാഗങ്ങൾക്കിടയിലെ ജാതിക്കുള്ളിൽത്തന്നെ പാർപ്പിട സാഹചര്യങ്ങൾ, വരുമാനനിലവാരം, ഉപഭോഗരീതികൾ, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസത്തിനുള്ള അവസരങ്ങൾ എന്നിവ യിൽ വലിയ തോതിലുള്ള അസമത്വങ്ങൾ നിലനിൽക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. തീൽ സൂചിക (Theil Index) ഉപയോഗിച്ചുള്ള അസമത്വവിശകലനം സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്, വരുമാനത്തിലെയും ചെലവി ലെയും വലിയൊരു ശതമാനം അസമത്വങ്ങളും പട്ടികജാതി വിഭാഗങ്ങൾക്കിടയിലുള്ള വൈവിധ്യങ്ങളെത്തുടർന്നാണ് ഉണ്ടാകുന്നതെന്നാണ്. ഇത് അവരുടെ ഇടയിലെ ആഴ ത്തിലുള്ള ആഭ്യന്തര ഭിന്നതകളെ എടുത്തുകാണിക്കുന്നു. വരുമാനം, കുടുംബാംഗങ്ങളുടെ എണ്ണം, തൊഴിൽ പദവി, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ യോഗ്യത (പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് കുട്ടികളുടെ) എന്നിവ ഉപഭോഗ ചെലവിനെയും വരുമാനത്തെയും നിർണ്ണയിക്കുന്ന പ്രധാന ഘടകങ്ങളാണെന്ന് ഇക്ക ണോമെട്രിക് വിശകലനം വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു. കുടുംബനാഥന്മാരുടെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസനിലവാരം, നേരിട്ട് പരിമിതമായ തരത്തിലേ പുതിയ തലമുറയുടെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ മുന്നേറ്റത്തിലും അതിലൂ ടെയുള്ള സാമ്പത്തിക വരുമാനത്തിലും സ്വാധീനം ചെലുത്തുന്നുള്ളൂ. ഇത് വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ ത്തിന്റെ പരിവർത്തനപരമായ പങ്കിനെ ഊന്നിപ്പറയുന്നു. സാങ്കേതിക നൈപുണികൾ, ഡിജിറ്റൽ സാക്ഷരത, നഗരപ്രദേശങ്ങളിലെ താമസം എന്നിവയും വരുമാന നിലവാര ത്തെ സ്വാധീനിക്കുന്ന പ്രധാന ഘടകങ്ങളായി ഉയർന്നുവരുന്നുണ്ട്. പട്ടികജാതി കുടുംബ ങ്ങളിൽ കേവലവും ആപേക്ഷികവുമായ സാമൂഹിക ചലനാത്മകതയുണ്ടെന്നതിന് ഈ പഠനം തെളിവുകൾ നൽകുന്നു. തലമുറകൾക്കിടയിലുള്ള താരതമ്യങ്ങൾ സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്, കുട്ടികൾ അവരുടെ മാതാപിതാക്കളെ അപേക്ഷിച്ച് ഉയർന്ന തലത്തിലുള്ള വിദ്യാഭ്യാസവും വരുമാനവും നേടുന്നുണ്ടെന്നും അത് ക്രിയാത്മകമായ ഉയർച്ചയെ പ്രതിഫലിപ്പിക്കുന്നു എന്നുമാണ്. എന്നിരുന്നാലും, വരുമാന അസമത്വത്തിന്റെ നിലനിൽപ്പും മിതമായ തലമുറ കൾക്കിടയിലുള്ള ഇലാസ്തികതയും സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നത് ഈ ചലനാത്മകത ഘടനാപരവും സാമൂഹിക-സാമ്പത്തികവുമായ തടസ്സങ്ങളാൽ പരിമിതമാണെന്നാണ്. കൂടാതെ, വിദ്യാ ഭ്യാസപരമായ ഉയർച്ചയും തലമുറകൾക്കിടയിലുള്ള മാനസിക അകലവും വരുമാന ചലനാ ത്മകതയെ ഗണ്യമായി സ്വാധീനിക്കുന്നുണ്ടെന്നും കണ്ടെത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. കൂടാതെ, വിദ്യാഭ്യാ സപരമായി ഉയർച്ചയിലേക്കുള്ള ചലനാത്മകതയും തലമുറകൾക്കിടയിലെ മാനസിക അകൽച്ചയും സാമ്പത്തിക ചലനാത്മകതയെ ഗണ്യമായി സ്വാധീനിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. പുരോഗ തിയുടെ ലക്ഷണങ്ങൾ കാണുന്നുണ്ടെങ്കിലും, നിലവിലെ അസമത്വങ്ങളും ജാതിക്കുള്ളിലെ വിവേചനങ്ങളും എല്ലാവരെയും ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്ന തരത്തിലുള്ള വികസനത്തിന് തടസ്സമാ ണെന്ന് പഠനം ബോധ്യപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു. കേരളത്തിലെ പട്ടികജാതി വിഭാഗങ്ങളുടെ തുല്യമായ സാമൂഹിക-സാമ്പത്തിക പുരോഗതി പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിനായി വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം, നൈപു ണ്യ വികസനം, തൊഴിലവസരങ്ങൾ, ഈ വിഭാഗങ്ങൾക്കുള്ളിൽത്തന്നെയുള്ള അസമത്വ ങ്ങൾ കുറയ്ക്കൽ എന്നിവയിൽ ശ്രദ്ധ കേന്ദ്രീകരിക്കുന്ന ലക്ഷ്യബോധമുള്ള നയപരമായ ഇട പെടലുകളുടെ ആവശ്യകതയെ ഈ ഗവേഷണപഠനം ഊന്നിപ്പറയുന്നു.

സൂചക പദങ്ങൾ: പട്ടികജാതി കുടുംബങ്ങൾ, അന്തർ-ജാതി അസമത്വങ്ങൾ, സാമൂഹിക ചലനാത്മകത, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ മുകളിലേക്കുള്ള ചലനാത്മകത, വരുമാനപരമായ മുകളിലേക്കുള്ള ചലനാത്മകത, തലമുറകൾക്കി- ടയിലെ മാനസിക അകലം (IPD)

Chapter |1|
Introduction

1. 1 Introduction

The goal of a modern welfare state is realised when it includes everyone in its growth process, ensuring that all sections of the society benefit from its progress. The Directive Principles of State Policy of the Indian Constitution act as the guiding principles for government to frame actions to bring social justice, equity, and inclusive growth. These principles emphasize the state's obligation to uplift vulnerable sections through protective legislation and welfare policy measures in order to accomplish the aim of a welfare state. By assigning specific duties to the three layers of governments, central, state, and local bodies, the Constitution of India provides a framework to achieve these goals. Also, Article 46 of the Constitution highlights the importance of eliminating the educational and economic inequalities faced by historically disadvantaged groups, particularly Scheduled Castes. To fulfil these constitutional duties and responsibilities, India has introduced several reforms and initiatives, over the years, such as land reforms, planned economic programs and fair access to resources. Along with these measures, strengthening of the public sector is also done to improve citizen involvement. At the same time, to ensure fair practices and equal opportunities, regulations were introduced to govern private companies. Labour laws were also created to protect income security and welfare benefits for workers. The nation also framed policies to improve the provision of education, skill, healthcare and other social services to raise the overall well-being of its inhabitants.

Even after decades of support and various efforts to promote inclusive growth and protect the rights of marginalized communities like Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe, these initiatives have not brought about substantial improvements. When the Sub Plan development approach was introduced in the mid-1970s, the aim was to make development efforts more focussed and effective for these communities by ensuring separate allocation of funds. The idea was to enhance the benefits of general economic growth and help these communities reach similar levels of development. Despite these efforts taken by governments in India to bring inclusive growth, the progress achieved by marginalized sections has been limited. Realizing this fact, a new approach- ‘sub plan approach’ was introduced in mid 1970s. The aim of this plan was to make development efforts more targeted and successful by allocating specific funds for these

communities. This approach had a divine goal of raising the conditions of the vulnerable communities -SCs and STs, so that they can attain the development levels similar to the advantaged population. Even though this approach has partially failed to produce the expected results due to insufficient monitoring and possible financial mismanagement, it has brought some positive changes like more political representation, better access to healthcare and education, and increased knowledge and advocacy for the rights of neglected people. Understanding the socio-economic circumstances of vulnerable sections is crucial for determining whether or not they have achieved progress in income, education, career and mobility. In the setting of Kerala, this study aims to analyse the social and economic circumstances of various Scheduled Caste groups as well as the intra-caste variations in socio-economic conditions within SC households and the dynamics of social mobility.

In Kerala, the journey towards equality has long historical roots, tracing back to the time when missionaries were active in the region. In the 1940s, it gained traction through a number of social reforms, anti-caste, nationalist, and radical groups. While these movements differed in their tactics and strategies, they all sought to reshape society with justice and attaining the goal of welfare for all. The focus on peasants' movements and land reforms was crucial in creating a society where everyone was included and protected within a modern democratic system (Government of Kerala, 2022). In Kerala the efforts for land reforms were about more than merely redistributing important resources; they were also about recognition and inclusion. The slogan "land to the tiller," which gained prominence during the Communist movement in the mid-1930s, reflected hopes and aspirations of peasants and agricultural workers. However, it took almost two decades for these groups to gain certain rights, as land-owning classes, communities, and castes formed organizations to safeguard their interests. They argued for the acknowledgment of their right to cultivate as a public interest and legitimate claim. The pursuit for equality is a complex phenomenon in Kerala as it covers social, political and economic aspects. Social reformers advocated equal rights and opportunities for all individuals, irrespective of their religion, caste, community, or gender. Kerala's progressive vision was shaped by several social reform movements and such movements helped to eliminate caste-based discrimination and promote social harmony. Kerala's history witnessed nationalist and radical movements

of the 1940s which further promoted the ideas of equality, social justice and political empowerment, by questioning the prevailing power structures. Kerala's reform movements also spread the idea of gender equality. Because of this women's organizations and activists started speaking up for women's rights and greater empowerment. Kerala's progress achieved in areas of education, health care, property rights for vulnerable sections and improved participation of women in political life has not happened in the blink of an eye. Social reforms and supporting legislations were instrumental in achieving the social progress in the state.

To enhance the strength of social reform movements in Kerala, agrarian struggles also brought about major transformations. They played critical role in opening up better economic opportunities for the poor and marginalized sections. But these struggles faced severe resistance from the privileged groups who were determined to preserve the advantages available to them. Even with these challenges, considerable progress was made in implementing land reforms and improving the lives of marginalized communities. Kerala's long history of social, political, and economic activities has influenced the state's path toward equality, that focuses on fairness, inclusion and the well-being of all. It's progressive outlook and strong commitment to social justice continue to inspire other regions that are trying to build a more fair and inclusive society.

Land reforms and redistribution have played an important role in weakening caste-based oppression and helping the society move forward. However, the exclusion of SCs from agricultural land ownership, with only homestead land being distributed to them, has placed them at a disadvantaged position and led to their further exclusion from the development process (Kurien, 1995). Earlier studies show that inequality in land and asset ownership has influenced how far the Scheduled Castes are able to move ahead in their life (Government of Kerala, 2022). The strong focus on land in Kerala's social movements since the 1990s, particularly concerning SCs and STs, manifests their political exclusion and marginalization. Studies suggest that the types and combinations of assets are crucial in reducing shocks for those without assets or with few assets, since assets are not only resources but also tools for transforming resources to improve and diversify the livelihood options.

The implementation of decentralized planning in Kerala since the mid-1990s marked an important change in the strategy to the development of SCs and STs (Raghuram, 2000). This strategy focused on strengthening departments and local bodies by allocating proportionate amounts of planning funds for specific programs. These programs were meant to develop with active involvement of stakeholders, so that the needs and priorities of the SCs and STs were properly understood and met. Resource sharing helped government departments to implement projects across the state more effectively, while local bodies could identify and address key gaps in their development efforts (Government of Kerala, 2022). Decentralized planning altered the typical top-down planning method used in previous development models. It gave more powers to local institutions and enhanced involvement of people in decision-making. Decentralized approach recognized the importance of local knowledge and real-life conditions in shaping and implementing development initiatives and also improved the effectiveness of development programmes. This planning model also gave SCs and STs a sense of empowerment that motivated them to actively participate in determining their own destiny. This approach made the authorities to realise that the needs and challenges of these communities differ from one place to another. Additionally, it made it possible to take a more adaptable approach to development. The strategy made sure that resources went where they were most needed, optimizing the overall impact of development efforts, by allowing local bodies the freedom to recognize and address particular gaps in their development efforts.

Even with numerous schemes, programmes and initiatives aimed at helping marginalized groups reach the same level of growth as others, these groups in Kerala often remain sidelined due to various issues. These include a lack of clearness and awareness, occasional resource misuse, and, fundamentally, a failure in the focus with regard to achieve the 'common good' in decentralization approaches and democratically elected bodies (Balan, P. P., George, S., & Kunhikannan, T. P., 2016). In areas like landholding, education, and employment, no significant improvements have been experienced by these groups. Available data shows that while most of them work as agricultural laborers and artisans, they rarely advance to become landowners, tenant farmers, or independent artisans.

Identifying the existence of wide illiteracy among elderly people particularly among women, SCs and STs, Kerala launched Literacy programmes. However, these efforts mainly stayed limited to basic literacy and general knowledge, without doing enough to support higher education and skill development. The development indicators in the case of Scheduled Castes (SCs) show persistence of poverty and limited empowerment, because of the prolonged marginalization of this community. The primary issue with the initiatives to alleviate social exclusion and economic inequality is the limited scope of such programmes. Unquestionably, they have brought some advantages, still a more comprehensive and successful approach that addresses the underlying causes of inequality is needed. In addition to this, greater accountability and openness are also required to ensure that resources are spent appropriately and reach the intended beneficiaries. Government should frame policies to improve the economic prospects and skill development in addition to basic education. Through upright actions, Kerala can enhance everyone's standard of living and make its development initiatives more equitable and inclusive.

Even though Kerala government's strong focus on decentralized planning, welfare expansion, and promotion of inclusive development have helped the state achieve meaningful progress, initiatives such as Kudumbashree, the Nava Kerala Mission, and other welfare programmes have not been sufficient to tackle the systemic socio-economic inequalities that exist across caste, gender, and geographical areas. There is still a pressing need to go beyond welfare measures and adopt more transformative and long-term strategies that can address these structural challenges more effectively. Kerala's 14th Five-Year Plan (2022–2027) envisages to achieve the objectives including advancing digital progress, fostering social justice, supporting sustainable livelihoods, and enhancing human development, these objectives are only significant if they are implemented successfully and help the most vulnerable. Stronger accountability, fair use of resources, and active participation from communities are required to eradicate the existing inequalities. Structural reforms including improved education, equitable access to land, increased employment prospects, and expanded access to productive assets in order to guarantee more inclusive growth, are what the present moment demands of Kerala. Future plans of the government should be more than just promises and slogans, and should include practical and workable strategies so

as to put the interests and rights of underprivileged people at the centre of Kerala's development.

The main obstacle on the path towards equality is the lack of factual data. The Scheduled Caste (SC) Development Department needs to conduct additional research and establish a data bank to endorse fact-based decisions. In the absence of robust local level databases, it becomes a great challenge to plan development initiatives that improve the conditions of SC communities. To address the development gap between the SCs and general communities, the importance of Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) Act were emphasised in the 13th Plan's SC Development Report and the 14th Plan's SC Working Group. The SCSP and TSP acts were instrumental in ensuring that development projects are successful and that resources are actually distributed to disadvantaged groups. But in the absence of appropriate enforcement and close observation, the gap in development continue to persist. Under the aegis of 14th Plan of Kerala, a comprehensive and well-coordinated strategy to advance justice and equality is expected. Along with enhanced data collection and monitoring, reinforcement of the SCSP and TSP Acts, and increasing the role of local bodies in planning and execution are required to effectively addresses the unique needs of marginalized communities.

The path of Kerala’s development has always been filled with stones and thorns. This is particularly realised when the state’s development efforts have been impeded in the wake of recent natural disasters like the 2018 floods and the ongoing effects of the epidemic. These calamities have highlighted the weaknesses of underprivileged groups, especially SCs and STs. Though, Kerala stood united in solidarity throughout these crises, the post-disaster phase presents an opportunity to rebuild the state in a more inclusive manner. The path ahead is not quite smooth, but calls for persistent efforts to uphold and defend the rights of SC and ST populations, thereby assisting to close the development gap with more privileged groups. The heart of these reconstruction initiatives is the creation of a more equitable and resilient society.

Alongside rebuilding infrastructure, Kerala should establish and execute policies and programs that safeguard and advance the rights of SC and ST people, ensuring their full participation in the development process, in addition to restoring infrastructure through reconstruction. As Kerala rebuilds, SC and ST people should be able to reap the advantages of economic development.

1.2 Context of the Study

Despite the policies introduced by both Central and State Governments, the Scheduled Caste (SC) community in Kerala still face vulnerability and isolation. To genuinely uplift their socio-economic conditions, Kerala needs a more far reaching and well-planned reforms that address the challenges they continue to face. However, formulating effective policies needs field-based evidence on the current status of the SC community, the existing gaps compared to the rest of the people, and the socio-economic conditions of various subgroups within the SC community. Understanding their socio-economic circumstances, spending patterns, income, and the inequalities they face will help the policymakers to recognize the real challenges the SC community encounters and also help the policy makers to create measures that really make a difference. In this context, social mobility or how people advance in their education and jobs is an important factor to be considered. Their future is mostly determined by elements like career prospects, skill development, and educational access. Furthermore, a thorough investigation of the effects of social variables and upward education on social mobility within the SC community is necessary. Though its benefits within the SC may differ depending on other social issues including caste-based discrimination, access to resources, cultural considerations, etc., education is frequently seen as a crucial driver of social mobility.

Mincer (1974), Holcombe and Lacombe (2004), Darku and Yeboah (2018), and Egert et al. (2020) have all made significant contributions to the numerous studies that have examined international policies intended to improve economic circumstances like income. Regarding developing countries like India, enhancing individual education emerges as an important source of income and wages (Tilak, 1980, Refeque & Azad, 2022; Agrawal, 2011; Duraisamy, 2002). However, researchers consensus on the

relationship between educational qualifications and income/wages remains elusive. Some researchers show a substantial effect of education on intergenerational income transmission, contending that it expands employment outcome and opportunities, thereby elevating the income of offspring (Gong et al., 2012; Yuan, 2017). On the other hand, the researchers like Yuan and Chen (2013) and Narayan et al. (2018), suggest that education may not always have a strong impact on children's income. The impact of social and economic conditions on the educational performance and economic outcomes of people differ with differences in these conditions. This highlights the complexity of the relation between economic outcomes and education under different socio-economic environment. Consequently, the question of whether elevating education results in increased income/wage, particularly among the economically disadvantaged, remains a matter of ongoing inquiry. This study investigates this subject in the context of Kerala, a state in South India. By examining whether educational advancement of children results in higher incomes than those of their parents, this study aims to shed light on the crucial question of whether improvements in children's education can raise their income or wages and, consequently, their well-being, particularly within the SC population in Kerala.

The study on social mobility has largely focussed on movement of income across generations, emphasising on two dimensions: relative income mobility, also known as intergenerational mobility, and absolute income mobility, commonly termed as upward mobility. Scholars such as Solon (1992) and Fan (2016) while investigating relative income mobility examined the intergenerational linkages and assessed how parents' education or income influence their children's education or income (Chetty et al., 2017). In contrast, absolute income mobility, synonymous with upward mobility (Chetty et al., 2014), examines children’s income or education has increased more than that of their parents. Studies concerning education and its impact on relative income mobility (Guo & Min, 2008; Fan, 2016;Lefgren et al., 2012) indicate that offspring of highly educated parents not only attain elevated educational levels but also exhibit stronger cognitive and social skills (Narayan et al., 2018), resulting in higher earnings. According to further data from Wang et al. (2022), education has a greater impact on intergenerational economic mobility in China than does a father's salary and his child's level of education (Z Tang, 2022). Although some studies indicate that education has a

limited impact on income mobility in developed countries like the USA and the UK, there is still a lack of research on the relationship between educational upward mobility and income upward mobility, especially in developing countries like India (Narayan et al., 2018).

This issue is particularly significant in India, one of the most densely populated and socially diverse country in the world. Deep disparities in access to assets, wealth, and education still plague the country. Even though India's educational system aims to give everyone equal chances regardless of gender, caste, religion, region, or socio-economic background, there are still large differences in educational attainment between different social groups. Access to school is particularly difficult for marginalized groups like the SCs and STs, and the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) still lag behind their forward-class peers. It is often acknowledged that education is a crucial instrument for lowering poverty and enhancing earning opportunities. In order to improve the younger generation, the federal government and state governments have made significant investments in programs like free and compulsory education. Despite these efforts, an important question remains: can these programs actually encourage upward income mobility and make a significant contribution to India's overall socio-economic development?

1.3 Research Problem

In the context of Kerala, widely regarded as a model of socially developed region in India, there exist persistent disparities in educational attainment, income, and asset ownership among marginalized social groups consisting of SCs, STs, and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) compared to general category of population. Despite Kerala's overall development, vulnerable sections like SC and STs still face relative isolation in terms of education, socio-economic status, and social mobility, compared to the rest of the population. Even within the SCs significant level of social and economic vulnerabilities, inequalities, and challenges in social mobility can be found. These inequalities need to be addressed to reduce the gap between social groups in socio-economic grades. The existing literature, however, have not addressed the disparity in socio-economic conditions and inequality within SCs in Kerala, making this an

unexplored area of research. By examining socio-economic disparity and social mobility among SCs in Kerala, this study seeks to close this research gap. In addition to clarifying differences in socio-economic circumstances and disparities among the SCs, this study aims to offer fresh perspectives on interventions and strategies for socio-economic development and reduced inequality in Kerala.

As this research delve into the socio-economic conditions and inequality, as well as the dynamics of social mobility, within the most vulnerable section of the SC community in the Indian state of Kerala, the primary contributions of this research can be categorized into two key dimensions. First, the study seeks to examine the socio-economic conditions within different groups of SC community in Kerala and highlight the existing inequalities in these spheres within this community. The study enquires the differences in income, spending patterns, and the factors behind these differences. Second, the study meticulously looks at how schooling affects upward income mobility. It scrutinizes how education can assist people, particularly children, in moving into higher income categories by examining the relationship between educational attainment and economic advancement. Using empirical data, this study demonstrates how education directly enhances the likelihood of individuals entering higher income brackets. The goal of the study is to unravel the direct relationship between education and upward income mobility. Specifically, it investigates whether children with higher levels of education can earn income greater than their parents. The study is not just about comparing the differences in income, rather it intends to explore how individuals, particularly children, outperform their parents in various aspects like education and careers. Social mobility, or the capacity to climb up the social ladder is determined by a variety of factors. As the primary force behind social mobility, education enables people to move up the social ladder. Recognizing that social mobility is complex, the study also looks at other aspects, like how Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) affects upward mobility. The differences in values, experiences, emotions, ways of thinking and attitudes between different generations, especially between parents and children influence social mobility. Intergenerational Psychological Distance significantly contributes to the dynamics of social mobility within households or communities.

1.4 Research Questions

The core research issues in this study concerning the socio-economic conditions, intra-caste disparities, and social mobility among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala are examined by formulating the following research questions. Firstly, what are the socio-demographic and economic conditions of SC households in Kerala, and how do these socio- economic situations vary within the SC community, particularly focusing on home conditions, ancestral home staying practices, employment status, family composition, land ownership, consumption expenditure, income, and school choice for children? Secondly, what are the determinants of consumption expenditure among SC households in Kerala? Thirdly, what are the determinants of income earnings among SC households in Kerala, focusing on factors such as education, employment, age, skills, and location? Fourthly, how can inequality in income, expenditure, and educational attainment among SC households in Kerala be empirically examined? Fifthly, what is the nature of social mobility among SC households in Kerala, particularly focusing on income, education, and occupation transitions, including estimated relative and absolute income mobility? Lastly, how intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) and educational upward mobility (EUM) is impacted on income upward mobility (IUM) among Kerala's SC households? By addressing these problems, the study intends to provide useful data that can direct policies and initiatives to enhance the quality of life for SC households in Kerala. To better understand the progress achieved by SC households in Kerala, this study seeks to illuminate the dynamics of social mobility.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to comprehensively examine the socio-economic conditions, educational attainment, and income dynamics of Scheduled Caste households in Kerala, with a focus on identifying disparities and factors impacting their development.

More specifically,

1. To assess the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Caste households in Kerala and to explore the intra-caste disparities within these dimensions.

2. To analyse the determinants of expenditure and income along with examining inequalities in income and expenditure among Scheduled Caste households in Kerala.
3. To study social mobility among Scheduled Caste households, focusing on income, education, and occupation transitions, including absolute and relative income mobility.
4. To analyse the impact of educational upward mobility (EUM) and intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) on income upward mobility (IUM) among Scheduled Caste households in Kerala.

1.6 Hypotheses of the Study

To fulfil the stated objectives, the following hypotheses have been empirically tested.

1. **Hypothesis 1**
    - H0: There are no significant intra-caste socio-economic disparities among SC households in Kerala, regarding home conditions, ancestral home staying practices, employment status, family composition, land ownership, income, consumption expenditure, and school choice for children.
    - H1: There are significant intra-caste socio-economic disparities among SC households in Kerala, regarding the mentioned factors.
2. **Hypothesis 2**
    - H0: Income, education, employment, and other factors do not significantly influence consumption expenditure among SC households in Kerala.
    - H1: Income, education, employment, and other factors significantly influence consumption expenditure among SC households in Kerala.
3. **Hypothesis 3**
    - H0: Education, employment, age, skills, and location do not significantly influence income earnings among SC households in Kerala.
    - H1: Education, employment, age, skills, and location significantly influence income earnings among SC households in Kerala.

4. **Hypothesis 4**
    - H0: There is no inequality in income, expenditure, and educational attainment among SC households in Kerala.
    - H1: There is inequality in income, expenditure, and educational attainment among SC households in Kerala.
5. **Hypothesis 5**
    - H0: There is no significant social mobility among SC households in Kerala, regarding income, education, and occupation transitions, including relative and absolute income mobility.
    - H1: There is significant social mobility among SC households in Kerala, regarding income, education, and occupation transitions, including relative and absolute income mobility.
6. **Hypothesis 6**
    - H0: Educational upward mobility (EUM) and intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) do not significantly impact income upward mobility (IUM) among SC households in Kerala.
    - H1: Among Kerala SC households, educational upward mobility (EUM) and intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) significantly impact on income upward mobility (IUM).

1.7 Theoretical Underpinnings of the Study

The paradigm of theoretical support for the analysis of intra-caste variations in educational attainment and social mobility among SC households in Kerala, combines contemporary theories on intergenerational mobility and inequality with conventional notions of social hierarchy. This study lies at the intersection of sociology of stratification, human capital approaches, and caste-based theories of exclusion. It offers a multifaceted viewpoint to understand the capabilities and difficulties faced by SC households.

According to the functionalist viewpoint, stratification is considered as an effective method of allocating positions according to people's qualifications, education, and abilities (Parsons, 1951). By stating the importance of education, this viewpoint holds that education is the main way to climb up the social ladder. Whereas,

structuralist approaches, such as Weber's idea of life chances and Marx's theory of class, demonstrate the importance of social position, power structures, and resource ownership in access to opportunities (Marx, 1976; Weber, 1978). In the Indian context, Weber's concept of status groupings is especially pertinent, where caste frequently influences a person's life prospects more than class or education. This dual approach better explains, notwithstanding Kerala's improvements in literacy and educational status, the obstacles encountered by SC households in the path of turning educational attainment into economic and occupational mobility.

Blau and Duncan developed the status attainment model in 1967 showing how parents' occupation and level of education impacted on their children's mobility outcomes. Further improvements made by authors like Bourdieu (1986), developing the theory of cultural and social capital they contend that access to networks, cultural abilities, and social norms are just as important for intergenerational transmission as material riches. Within human capital theory, Becker and Tomes (1979, 1986) demonstrated that parental involvement in their kids' schooling is expected to enhance their chances of attaining upward mobility in terms of earnings. Human capital is not inborn but it is developed and accumulated over time through education, training, and experience. Investments in human capital are expected to yield economic returns in the form of increased productivity, higher income, and better job opportunities. Yet, for marginalized groups such as SCs and others, discrimination and exclusion often reduce the returns to such investments (Deshpande, 2011; Thorat & Newman, 2012).

Mobility can be understood in both relative and absolute terms. Relative mobility, often measured through intergenerational elasticity, shows the extent to which parental socio-economic status constrains children’s opportunities (Solon, 1992). High elasticity, as observed in caste-bound societies, shows low intergenerational fluidity. Absolute mobility, in contrast, examines whether children attain higher incomes or education levels than parents (Chetty et al. 2014). This distinction is crucial in Kerala, where SC households have experienced educational improvements but still face limited absolute gains in occupational and income status due to structural barriers.

Modernization theorists argue that expansion of education reduces economic inequality by shifting society from ascriptive" (where social status is largely determined by family background) to more "achievement-oriented" (where social status is determined by individual achievement, primarily through education) (Treiman, 1970). Education is regarded as a great leveller that helps ensure equal opportunities among different sections of the society. Yet, they argue that advantaged groups consistently preserve their relative advantages even amidst educational expansion. Nair (2010) and Jeffrey et al. (2017) suggest that, discrimination and systemic injustices still prevent SC households from transforming education into a means of improving career and economic progress, even though literacy and schooling rates have increased to a great extent.

The novel aspect of this study is the examination of the impact of Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on upward mobility. Since IPD captures the differences in aspirations, values, and occupational expectations between parents and children, the study analyses the effects of these factors on the movement of individuals on the social ladder. Theoretically, it echoes with role-expectation theories and the sociology of aspirations (Hitlin & Elder, 2007), which argue that greater psychological distance may open new roads for upward mobility by enabling children to move away from the traditional caste-bound roles. In the SC context, however, the extent to which IPD fosters mobility is moderated by social stigma and community norms.

Ambedkar (1936/2014) who conceptualized caste as a system of graded inequality anchored the discussion in theories of caste and exclusion, stated that caste restricts social mobility of marginalized communities. Recent studies on exclusion also suggest that absence of land, capital, and quality education reproduces disadvantages across generations (Thorat, 2009; Deshpande, 2011). In spite of Kerala's progress attained through land reforms, literacy campaigns, and decentralized planning (Oommen, 2014), studies show that socio-economic conditions of SCs have not improved much, and they still remain disadvantaged with regard to asset ownership, skill acquisition, and access to remunerative employment (Kurien, 1995; Balan et al., 2016).

As a result, this theoretical framework incorporates frameworks for caste-based exclusion, status attainment models, and human capital theory. The effectiveness of education in the Scheduled Caste environment is mediated by cultural capital, structural impediments, and intergenerational dynamics, despite the widespread belief that education plays a significant role in upward mobility. This study by analysing relative and absolute mobility, and incorporating the role of IPD, seeks to contribute to the theoretical and empirical literature on social mobility among SC households in Kerala.

1.8 Data Source and Methodology

This study is based on data collected from randomly selected places across the northern, southern, and central regions of Kerala, which includes the districts with the highest SC populations. Data were collected by administering a well-structured questionnaire among the sample respondents. The study employed various statistical and econometric methods to examine and interpret the results. Qualitative analytical technique is also used in this study. The detailed discussion on the data and methodology have discussed in chapter 3.

1.9 Structure of the Research Repot

The Structure of the research is discussed under following headings:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter one includes context of the study, research problem, hypotheses and theoretical background of the study. The chapter also outlines research questions and objectives, setting the stage for the rest of the study.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

The second chapter provides a review of literature on the socio-economic circumstances, inequalities, and social mobility of SC households. It discusses key concepts and theoretical studies, and empirical studies related to the topic, highlighting the research gap that this study aims to address. The reviews also discuss research methodologies and approaches used in previous studies.

Chapter 3: Data and Methodology

This chapter explores the data sources and methodology used in the study. It outlines the sampling strategy, data collection methods, and variables used in the analysis. The chapter also discusses the analytical techniques, such as regression analysis or other statistical models, used to analyse the data and answer the research questions.

Chapter 4: Socio-Economic Development of SCs in Kerala: Challenges and Progress

This chapter discusses the trends and patterns of distribution of the SC population, the challenges and empowerment of SCs, and the policies and planning for the development of SCs.

Chapter 5: Economic Analysis of Socio-economic Conditions, Inequality and Social Mobility

Based on the data and methodology described in Chapter 3, this chapter presents the empirical results of the study in detail. It explores intra-caste socio-economic conditions, inequalities, and social mobility within the SC community in Kerala.

Chapter 6: Summary, Findings, and Recommendations

This last chapter summarizes key findings of the study. It explores how these findings can be inferred for theory, policy, and practice. The chapter also includes recommendations for further research and policy interventions that help addressing the socio-economic challenges faced by SC households in Kerala.

Chapter |2|
Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

The research work titled “Intra-Caste Socio-Economic Conditions and Social Mobility: A Study of Scheduled Castes in Kerala” attempts to examine socio-economic conditions and inequality, as well as the dynamics of social mobility, within the most vulnerable section in Kerala, namely, Scheduled Caste (SC) community. This study’s main focus is the examination of the socio-economic conditions within different groups of the SC community, exploring potential inequalities. This is done using variables like income earning, expenditure on various items, and also analysed the factors determining these differences. The study also seeks to meticulously examine the distinct impacts of education on income upward mobility. Before framing the hypothesis and goals of the investigation, the researcher widely examined the available existing literature relating to area of the study. Literature review of the existing studies related to socio-economic conditions, inequality, and relation between education, occupation and social mobility at the national and international level is discussed in this chapter. It also includes literatures that study the effect of parents' socio-economic circumstances on social mobility at the international and national levels. The literature on the Indian and Kerala context is also incorporated in this chapter. The review of literature provides a comprehensive understanding of the latest knowledge on social mobility, focusing on income and education. Theories, methodologies and findings from previous studies at national and international contexts are also shown, which contribute to our better understanding of social mobility among marginalized communities like the SCs. By pointing out gaps in the literature and establishing the framework for the research topics and hypotheses that will be examined in the ensuing chapters, this review sets the stage for the current investigation.

2.2 Socio-Economic and Educational Conditions and Inequality among Scheduled Castes in India and Kerala

Ahmed and Nauriyal (2024) explores how educational and career backgrounds of one generation impacts on educational attainment and opportunities of employment available to their children in Indian context. Using information from the Periodic Labour Force Survey and several National Sample Survey Rounds, they analysed the

co-resident father-son connections. One important aspect of their study is that it throws light on the impact of dads' occupational and educational backgrounds on their sons' employment opportunities and chances of finishing higher education. The study's findings show that sons are more likely to find jobs similar to their dad's. The study made use of models like logit equations and discrete choice models to establish these relationships. The study reveals the existence of significant disparities in access to those jobs among socio-religious communities. One important fact demonstrated in the study is that the children's educational attainment was significantly influenced by the educational backgrounds of their fathers. This underlines the presence of a hierarchy based on socio-religious affiliations, vocational backgrounds, and educational backgrounds.

Acharya and Sahoo (2019) while analysing the reasons for dropout among the SCs population in India, studied the changing literacy trends and the determinants of higher education, and offered a thorough grasp of the difficulties encountered by this marginalized group. The study used bivariate and multivariate analysis to look at these problems using data from the Census and NSS (National Sample Survey). Despite being far lower than the national average, the results show a favourable trend in the literacy rate among SCs. The study highlights gender disparity in literacy rates and notes a lower gender gap among SCs in India compared to the overall gender gap. The low level of higher education among SCs was shown to be caused by a number of variables, including exam failure, high dropout rates, and financial difficulties in the families of SC students. Despite the constitutional efforts to eliminate these disparities, differences in educational attainments still persist among SC communities. There should be targeted interventions and special provisions to prevent school and college dropouts and promote higher education among underprivileged groups like the SCs. This emphasizes the importance of enhancing educational facilities and infrastructure for the socio-economic advancement of Scheduled Caste community.

Konana Prabhudev (2015) shares personal experiences and observations regarding the reservation of SCs and STs in professional schools in India. He notes that many of his Indian friends express frustration towards SC/ST students who benefits from reservations without personally knowing any one of them. Prabhudev even argues

that SC/ST students often excel professionally due to the opportunities provided by reservations, which are considered essential for representation and social integration. In spite of acknowledging the system's flaws and conflicts, according to him, reservations should start at early stages of education in both private and governmental streams. He emphatically stated the necessity of reservations for creating a more inclusive and ideal society in the country.

Singh et al. (2015) studied the economic discrimination persisting among the SCs and STs in India. Their study found the existence of significant economic divide within these marginalized communities. The authors highlighting the complexity of socio-economic stratification within these groups, addressed the issue how certain sections within SCs and STs experience greater deprivation and poverty compared to others. In addition to broader initiatives aimed at uplifting these communities as a whole, while analysing data and trends, they suggested that specific policies are to be initiated to solve the internal economic disparities within SCs and STs. These findings help both policymakers and practitioners to work towards more targeted and effective interventions which help to alleviate poverty faced by vulnerable sections of population along with raising the socio-economic status of India's underprivileged populations.

Social mobility in relation to economic expansion and increasing inequality in India has been examined by Krishna (2014). The author narrated the challenges faced by disadvantaged groups in accessing higher education, particularly in the field of engineering. By analysing access to different tiers of engineering colleges, the study showed the need to enhance the quality of education and the availability of career information, especially in rural and remote areas. The study highlights the importance of institutions in closing information gaps for gifted young people from underprivileged communities. It also highlights the importance of support networks, such as investments in higher-quality schools for underprivileged children, guidance from motivated teachers, and help from family members, in improving their educational attainment and career advancement. This study also points out that the SC/ST students, particularly residing in rural areas, face additional challenges in the form of weak proficiency and skills in English language.

Scaria (2014) in the context of education in Kerala, made a detailed examination of the mechanisms through which social inequalities are either perpetuated or challenged. The study emphasized the significance of social and economic capital in explaining inter-caste inequalities in student enrolment and concentrated on the increasing forms of inequities, notably in access to higher education. The importance of having access to resources including training, tools, social networks, and information about educational opportunities was also examined in this study. The study focused on the challenges of educational access within marginalized populations by revealing significant intra-group disparities among Scheduled Castes. This study also critically examines the effects of neoliberal policies, vocationalization of education, privatization, and the removal of state subsidies on Kerala's efforts to achieve educational equality.

Choudhary Nand Kishor (2013), in the study, examined the habits and attitudes of General Community and SCs students related to their academic achievement and challenge the notion of significant educational attainment differences between these two groups. Contrary to common assumptions, the study reveals the non-existence of major differences in the educational attainments of SC and General Caste students. Instead, factors like study habits and learning attitudes are more important in academic success than caste-based differences. Their study highlights the importance of individual factors in shaping academic achievement, irrespective of caste backgrounds and thereby giving a new perspective on the educational outcomes of these groups.

Sethi and Somanathan's (2010) academic work on the patterns of social equality in India concentrating especially on the Scheduled Caste's and the Scheduled Tribe's contrasting outcomes, offers a thorough examination of how historical events and public policies have affected group disparities. The study highlights the historical context of using caste divisions to address social inequality in India. They point out that even though before independence both SCs and STs were equally disadvantaged, but SCs have made greater gains in terms of educational levels, jobs, and political representation compared to STs. They identified this puzzling disparity after examining data concerning expansions in public education and affirmative action programs by Government since 1950. They propose a model that considers individuals' geographical

and social identities, showing that mobility occurs through access to public goods. Their argument was that the relative geographical isolation of tribes and the cohabitation of castes with politically active groups are influential factors in contrasting fortunes of these communities.

Nambissan (2009) examined the difficulties that Dalit (SC) youngsters have in getting education. The study finds that SC students fail to attain success in education due to instabilities in schooling, failure of students to form relations with teachers and peers, poor infrastructure, inadequate teachers, and caste-based discrimination, including instances of untouchability. The study examined the attendance of SC students in schools and showed that urban and rural attendance for SC children was 64.6 percent 73.5 percent respectively.

Scaria (2009) examined socio-economic factors that contribute to inequalities in education levels and access to formal education in Wadakkancheri village in Kerala, India. The author conducted an extensive fieldwork in this village and surveyed households and gathered information about the socio-economic status and educational attainment of the local population. The study highlights the significant inequalities in educational attainments among different sections of the population. Notably, SCs continue to experience lower levels of educational attainment leaving them at the bottom of educational ladder. This study identified one notable issue regarding drop out of SC students and indicated that the dropout rate is relatively high especially at the tenth standard (secondary school level). The study suggests that even though students enrol in schools initially, a significant number do not complete their education, reducing their potential to catch career opportunities. The study finds caste as the important factor determining access to education, with lower-caste households experience greater barriers to education than higher-caste households. The study also identifies other factors, such as, poverty, gender, and cultural attitudes towards education across different castes and socio-economic groups in the village, contributing to disparities in educational attainment and level. The findings suggest that, even though, Kerala has a strong educational base, the underlying disparities and challenges need to be addressed, so that, a more equitable and effective educational environment can be created in the region.

According to Mona and Sangeeta (2008), in the movement of SCs to realize equal opportunities, equity and fair treatment, access to education plays a significant role. Education is a critical resource in addressing marginalization. To compete successfully in the job-market the influence of caste and social and political networks can be identified and lack of such social capital often make those SCs and STs who complete high school education, unable to secure jobs. Among the minority groups education is surely missing that ultimately results in the exclusion of these communities from successful participation in education.

Acharya Tulasi and Behera Deepak Kumar (2005) in their study narrate the important factors that influence the educational achievements of students of SCs and General Community in the Cuttack Municipality Corporation, in Orissa. They utilized a sample size of 500 students, consisting 250 each from both SC and General Community with similar educational grades and gender break-up and employed interview, observation, and case study methods to collect data from the sample. The study reveals the existence of significant disparities in educational attainment between these two groups, and discusses several factors that attribute to the lower educational attainments of SC students. The low socio-economic level of parents', inadequate educational facilities, and a lack of inspiration from both outside and local sources were some of the factors behind the poor educational performance of SC students. In determining SC students' educational success, educational options and social circumstances play an important role. They also emphasized the need for targeted interventions to address these disparities to promote equality in educational attainment.

The educational status of SC individuals has been examined by G. G. Wankhede (2001) and outlined the difficulties they had in obtaining high-quality education. Wankhede's research emphasizes that significant inequalities continue to perpetuate in educational attainment among SC communities, indicating the need for targeted interventions to improve access to education which help in reduction of the educational inequalities of SC communities in Maharashtra.

Dunn (1993) analysed comprehensively the status of SC and ST women in India and showed the compounded disadvantages faced by women in these communities and

minority group status with India's patriarchal culture. Using Indian Census data with a combination of ethnographic insights and statistical analysis, Dunn drows a clear picture of the difficulties encountered by women in SC and ST, emphasizing the differences between genders in access to work and education. Furthermore, the study underlines the critical need for targeted interventions to address these disparities with due focus on development of the society in social and economic spheres since socio-economic development can help alleviate the gender gap among SC and ST women.

Examining the connection between SC/ST pupils' academic achievement and their background, Kirpal et al. (1985) reveals that the quality of the educational background of family and locations in urban area contribute favourably in the SC/ST students' performance. The authors, after making a brief analysis of the SC student performance, highlight the problem faced by SC students in IIT. Regarding the level of educational performance among these students they concluded that the performance of these students was far satisfactory.

P.S.R. (1979) in his study provides a comprehensive analysis of the complex interplay between caste and class forces in Kerala. He examined key aspects such as the distribution of landholdings, education, and employment opportunities among major social groups to find the relation between class and castes. The caste-class identity is an inherent feature, which is deep rooted in formulating socio-economic relations and societal structures in Kerala. The study also highlighted the limited impact made by social movements, political forces, and administrative reforms in altering the caste-class association, by underlining the persistence of traditional social hierarchies in Kerala's socio-economic landscape.

Another study by Sivanandan (1976) examined the unequal distribution of social and economic opportunities among different social groups in Kerala, particularly focusing on the Harijans (SCs and STs). He sheds light on the impact of protective discrimination policies on enhancing Harijan's socio-economic circumstances. Effectiveness of state policies in reducing disparities between Harijans and the rest of the population has been evaluated by the author. By analysing data dealing with earners from various communities in Kerala, Sivanandan demonstrates that communities with

historical social and economic privileges tend to develop faster. The major socio-economic challenges faced by Harijans, according to him, includes lower occupational rankings, limited employment opportunities, land ownership issues, lower income levels, and educational attainment disparities.

The social and economic differences between caste groups in South India have been explored by Gist (1954). The basis of his study was the data collected from household samples in Mysore and Bangalore in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The author examined the social and economic differences between different caste groups in the region by analysing the data. The study focussed on three key dimensions: economic status, education, and political power. The article reveals the historical and cultural context of the caste system in India and discusses how it has shaped social and economic relationships over time. The upper castes (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas) often possessed better levels of economic status, education, and political influence than the lower castes (Shudras and Dalits), according to the author's research on caste discrepancies in Mysore and Bangalore. The article discusses the main factors that contribute to caste inequalities, such as historical legacies, cultural attitudes, and economic and political structures. The author argues that these factors create a situation where the lower castes are often marginalized and face significant challenges in terms of achieving social and economic mobility.

2.3 Caste, Inequality, and Exclusion

This section includes literatures relating to aspects of caste, inequality and exclusion.

In their research, Anders et al. (2023) examine how socio-economic disparities affect young people's ability to acquire financial skills in the UK. The study analysed how parental interactions shape children's financial skills, the disparities in schooling and financial capacities between children from socioeconomically advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds.

The work by Hällsten and Kolk (2022) discussed the intergenerational persistence of inequality in education, occupation, and wealth across seven generations

in northern Sweden. Based on the administrative data linked to parish records covering over 200 years, they traced the ancestors of individuals living in Sweden back to the mid-18th century. They analyzed correlations up to fifth cousins and dynastic correlations over seven generations and found that past generations significantly influence future advancement of many generations in later period. The study identified that the roots of today's inequality can be traced in the distant past, even though there is high mobility across generations.

Liu and Ding (2020) conducted a comparative study on intergenerational educational persistence among OECD countries. The nuanced interplay between inequality, poverty, and educational outcomes has been highlighted in this study. The authors identified the persistence of intergenerational educational mobility as a universal phenomenon, but acknowledges that its strength varies widely across nations. They found that higher the income inequality, the stronger the persistence of intergenerational educational challenges, highlighting how crucial policy changes are to lowering inequalities and advancing equal access to education.

Acs et al. (2016) discussed the inverse and reinforcing relation of mobility and poverty, indicating how the efforts to reduce poverty enhance mobility of individuals along the social ladder. Additionally, they emphasized how mobility and poverty have changed throughout time and among various demographics. This essay acknowledges that poverty and mobility are experienced differently by various racial and ethnic groups. To comprehend the opportunities and difficulties that different communities face, these distinctions are to be properly understood. Along with this disparity, data limitations also make it difficult for them to provide particular indications for some populations. The main focus of this study is the disparities in poverty and mobility that exist between Black and white people. They were successful in identifying the possible policy implications and providing a more thorough investigation of the variables causing these discrepancies. The authors also further enhanced their analysis by examining the interaction of race with other elements like gender, education, and geography. This enabled them to make a more detailed understanding of mobility from poverty.

Yoko Kijima's (2006) study examined the persistent inequalities in the standard of living of SCs, STs, and non-SC/ST households in India. Governments had taken various policies to address these disparities, but still significant gap remains in the socio-economic status of these households. Kijima's study investigated whether these disparities result from SC/ST households having less physical and human resources or from these assets yielding poorer returns. The paper revealed that thirty to fifty percent of the differences in welfare can be attributed to varying returns from the human and physical asset. Specifically, the SC earned lower returns on schooling, which contributes to their lower economic status. For the ST, the disparities are partially due to geographical differences and lower returns on labour, even after giving due consideration to geographical conditions.

Blanden and Machin (2004) investigated in detail how educational inequality has been impacted by the growth of higher education in the UK. Using longitudinal data spanning several decades they identified changes in higher education participation and attainment among individuals from different income backgrounds. The findings of the study revealed a worrying trend: even though higher education has grown, children from wealthier families have gained more benefits, making the gap between rich and poor students even wider. The study highlighted that targeted policy interventions are needed to address the inequalities existing in educational opportunities and attainment in higher levels of education.

The study by Asadullah and Yalonetzky (2012) also focuses on the extent of inequality in educational opportunities in India. For measuring inequality of educational opportunity in Indian states, the study employed four indices. The study found significant disparities among various states in terms of alleviating educational inequality during the post-liberalization period. Surprisingly, Kerala emerged as the state with the least unequal distribution of educational opportunities. However, the study found no clear correlation between educational spending and opportunity disparity.

Froerer's (2011) study examines how education, inequality, and social mobility are connected. It shows that education can help people improve their social position,

but unequal access to education can create new inequalities. The study, focussing on the Oraon Christian community and the Hindu community in Mohanpur village, Chhattisgarh, elucidates how education, religion, and are closely linked. The authors find that the Oraon Christian community was able to benefit more from education, mainly because of the support provided by the Church, which helped them build educational capital. Whereas, many in the Hindu community faced challenges like financial constraints, lack of guaranteed employment, and absence of a similar institutional support which limited their participation in education.

The study by Marks et al. (2006) analyses how factors such as material, social and cultural resources shape student achievement. Drawing on data from both OECD and non-OECD countries for the year 2000, the study uses Item Response Theory (IRT) modelling to standardize scores, making it possible to compare results across countries. The findings highlight that cultural resources have a strong influence on how socio-economic background effects student achievement. In these countries these factors have a stronger impact than material resources. The study highlights how important cultural elements are in resolving socio-economic disparities in education.

The degree of social marginalization that SC children experience in elementary school has been studied by Robert Jenkins. Jenkins (2006) emphasized the structural reasons for this exclusion and noted that a significant obstacle to attaining social inclusion is the persistently high rates of poverty among Scheduled Caste children. To address this issue a holistic approach that tackles both the structural and basic causes of exclusion is required, according to him. Jenkins' work narrates the urgent need for comprehensive interventions, going beyond addressing immediate barriers to education, to develop a more equal and inclusive educational system for all Indian children.

Breen and Jonsson (2005) conducted a comprehensive review of studies since 1990 that focused on the inequality of opportunity by examining European nations in contrast with the United States. The review confined to studies that explored the social origin of individuals. The study indicates that occupational status or education of parents influence social origin of people. The study discovered a number of things by

looking at the actual data on the degree of opportunity disparity, changes over time, and variations between nations. Additionally, the Mare model of educational transitions has been used to study the relationship between origins and education. These results provided a number of significant insights. It was discovered that there were national-specific patterns in the relationship between social origins and education, with origin effects being more pronounced in the early phases of educational transitions. This study also shows that education plays a big part in figuring out how a person's social background affects their outcomes. The paper also emphasizes that women exhibit higher levels of social mobility than men, and that social hierarchies, heredity, and sectional disparities all have a significant impact on the pattern of social mobility.

2.4 Intergenerational Income Mobility and Social Mobility

Haeck and Laliberté (2024) offered an in-depth investigation of the relationship between careers and people's upward mobility, using Census microdata connected to tax records. They studied the degree to which jobs influence wealth mobility between generations and found notable occupational segregation depending on parental income. The authors discover that there is some occupational inheritance since offspring of wealthy parents are more likely to choose lucrative and appealing careers. One key aspect discussed is the pattern of intergenerational occupational inheritance, which varies significantly across occupations. The authors note that low-income occupations exhibit more persistence across generations on average. However, despite this persistence, occupational inheritance plays a limited role in income mobility.

Song (2024) examines the relationship between social trust and perceived intergenerational social mobility. This study highlights the shortcomings in the body of current literature related to factors that are unobserved, especially social norms and values, which influence the reliability of mobility estimates. The idea that individual’s trust in others and in society brings greater chances of moving up in the society has been emphasised using a multilevel regression strategy. It also examines the effect of variation of trust between regime types, income groups, geography, and institutions, highlighting the importance of social norms and values in shaping perceived mobility. Furthermore, it indicates that perceived mobility is being influenced by institutional

quality and social interactions. The study highlights that individuals who have experienced greater fluidity show less preference for redistribution. By highlighting the importance of social trust, this study adds to the body of knowledge regarding mobility across generations, highlighting the fundamental necessity of taking actions to promote trust through community institutions and civic involvement.

Stojkoski (2024) presents the concept of mixing, which is derived from statistical physics, as a novel approach to quantifying economic mobility at the individual level. According to the study, traditional metrics of economic mobility only give a broad picture and do not make it evident how simple it is for the average person to climb or descend the wealth ladder. The author used the idea of mixing, which is a new approach to quantify mobility at the individual level, and made a thorough examination of how people actually move within the wealth distribution. According to the study, mixing is crucial because it determines whether people actually have the chance to move across the various wealth distribution levels. The study also provides a statistical methodology for assessing mixing in real-world economies. Based on the data from the United States, the study reached at a conclusion that wealth mobility is somewhat limited, either because it takes a significant amount of time for individuals to mix within the distribution or because movement within the distribution is modest. The main highlight of the study is the importance of putting more focus on individual mobility experiences in addition to aggregate measures.

The impact of family factors on mobility across generations in the context of a transition economy like China has been studied by Yan and Gao (2024).The study emphasized that family backgrounds are crucial, particularly when credit systems and employment markets are underdeveloped. Parental assistance enables children to invest in their education and obtain better employment opportunities. According to the authors, mobility expectations, upward mobility, and relative mobility all increase when economies shift. In this economic transition, education is valued more than family history. The study's key finding is how crucial it is to improve employment markets and increase educational possibilities in order to promote generational mobility in developing countries. The empirical data from China provided insights into the

dynamics governing mobility in transition economies and validated the theoretical model.

With the introduction of four new datasets, Costa et al. (2024) make a significant contribution to intergenerational and multigenerational studies. These databases, which include information on the offspring and grandchildren of Union Army veterans, provide distinctive insights about the prevalence of lifespan, social and economic status, family dynamics, and generational mobility. The connection between data and the existing death records and censuses have been established by the authors and have given academics a wealth of information to investigate intergenerational dynamics. One noteworthy contribution of this research is the inclusion of an over-sample of offspring of former prisoners of war among the White samples. This inclusion has improved the dataset's depth and diversity and has set a high standard for the development and use of historical datasets in research on intergenerational trends.

The effect of mothers' educational mobility on parenting styles, children's academic achievement, and intelligence has been explored by Tamayo Martinez et al. (2024). The study while comparing the outcomes at parental and grandparental educational levels, found that positive child outcomes are associated with upward maternal educational mobility. Additionally, the study found that different outcomes are produced by children of mothers who are mobile and those who are not mobile. A noteworthy finding of the study is that grandparents' educational attainment can be used to predict children's developmental results independently of parents. Overall, this study highlights the significance of intergenerational educational trajectories in understanding child development, show casing the intricate relationship between mothers' educational mobility and child outcomes.

Fernandes et al. (2023) investigate the relationship between an applicant's gender and their parents' career and how it affects their chances of being invited for the interview in labour market. Their experimental study finds no significant evidence of differential treatment by employers based on gender or parental occupation. They suggest that policies to promote gender equality across occupations should target educational and cultural barriers influencing occupational choices at a young age.

In their thorough analysis of the literature on intergenerational mobility, Mogstad and Torsvik (2023) concentrate on empirical research while briefly touching on pertinent theoretical issues. Measuring intergenerational persistence in socio-economic outcomes, quantifying the significance of family environment and genetic factors, and making causal inferences about the precise impact of family environment on children's future attainment are the three primary research components they cover. Numerous methods and conclusions in these fields are critically examined in this study, including research on neighbourhoods and intergenerational mobility.

Connolly and Haeck (2023) analysed mobility trend in Canada, utilizing Intergenerational Income Database. They acknowledged the financial help from the Quebec Research Fund for Society and Culture, which supported the addition of birth cohorts to the database. The study found that for individuals born between 1960s and 1980s intergenerational mobility has declined, though economic returns to education has increased. The study reveals the widening income inequalities between children of parents who received secondary education and those who did not. Additionally, the study shows that the declining trend in income mobility is less severely experienced in those communities where parents completed high school education.

The origins of occupational status and income attainment have been explored by Karlson and Birkelund (2023) by examining the overlap in brother correlations for these two outcomes. The study discovered a considerable overlap of almost 70% in the resemblance between brothers' income and occupational status in both nations using data from Denmark and the United States and a novel variance components model. This suggests that the connection between family background and income in these two countries is mostly influenced by hidden or unmeasured unknown family factors, as the usual indicators of family background explain only a portion of this relationship. This study has demonstrated the connection between a person's familial background and their career outcomes. The study also indicates the need to conduct further research to unravel the underlying factors contributing to this overlap.

Cortes-Orihuela et al. (2023) used Two-Sample Two-Stage Least Squares (TSTSLS) strategy for estimating mobility between generations in developing

countries. To address biases in the estimate of rank-rank correlation and intergenerational earnings elasticity (IGE), they proposed a novel method called doubly corrected TSTSLS (DC-TSTSLS). The DC-TSTSLS method, by providing a lower bound estimate for these measures, offer valuable insights when linked parent-child earnings data is unavailable. Through analytical and empirical Monte Carlo analyses, the authors demonstrated the validity and significance of their methodology. This study contributes significantly to the methodological advancement of intergenerational mobility research. It also provides a practical tool to estimate mobility measures in data-constrained environments.

Feichtmayer and Riphahn (2023) analysed the intergenerational transmission of welfare benefit receipt in Germany with the aim to understand the correlation between parental and own welfare receipt among young adults. Using family fixed effects estimations and Gottschalk's (1996) study, the authors explores whether this correlation reflects causal effects of past welfare experience. Parental and individual welfare receipts were found to be significantly positively correlated. These correlations, however, weaken when unobserved heterogeneities are taken into consideration. This suggests that family background, rather than prior welfare experience, plays a major role in determining the intergenerational connection of welfare benefit receipt. According to this study, to analyse the receipt of welfare benefits across generations, family dynamics are taken into consideration.

Intergenerational mobility regarding education and occupation among Indian Muslims has been studied by Ahmed and Nauriyal (2023). Their study was based on a primary survey of 590 father-son pairings. Using mobility matrices, multinomial logit models and linear regression, the study identified the determinants impacting educational and career choices within the sample households. One of the key findings of the study is that among Indian Muslims, educational mobility is far higher than vocational mobility. They found significant correlation between occupation and family background. Analysing the data, they realised that many sons continue to work in the same field as their dads and also found that father's work and level of education have a substantial impact on a child's possibilities, affecting both their career and academic courses. It also throws light on the Indian Muslims' perception of discrimination,

indicating that their opinions are more important than their actual experiences. Improved communication and cooperation with the government, NGOs, political parties, and Muslim community leaders are necessary to address these attitudes and encourage educational advancement among this community.

Justman and Stiassnie's (2021) study uses a two-step approach to examine the transfer of financial status across generations, particularly from fathers to sons. Instead of focusing on income at a single point in time, it tries to understand people's earnings over their entire lifetime to get a clearer picture of mobility. The study indicates that a person's life time income is more reliable than the short-term income. Estimating proxies for lifetime incomes from annual incomes, education, and race, they used these proxies to calculate different mobility measures. The study finds that it has become harder for individuals to move beyond their parents' economic position, reflecting a decline mobility. According to this study, people's life chances are shaped by income level of their families leading to unequal economic opportunities in the society. Whether they use income elasticity, rank comparisons, or other indicators, the conclusion remains the same, that is mobility is decreasing. One strength of the study is its comprehensive approach to estimating mobility using life time income instead of income at a point in time. A deeper understanding of intergenerational mobility trends is made possible by the inclusion of life-cycle adjustments and the use of proxy variables for income. However, more discussion of the drawbacks of utilizing proxy variables and the possible effects on the accuracy of mobility measurements would be beneficial to the study. Furthermore, even if the study offers insights for the US, it would be worthwhile to investigate whether the results can be applied to other nations or areas with distinct socio-economic circumstances.

Yan and Deng (2021) study how economic status is passed from parents to children in China. A transition economy like China experiences significant levels of urban-rural differences, regional inequalities, and the existence of multiple ethnic groups. The estimated intergenerational income elasticity (IGE) among dads and kids and among moms and kids is 0.41 and 0.56, respectively, according to the TS2SLS technique. The study also explores how mobility differs across various groups such as age, gender, ethnicity, region, house registration type, and income levels. It

demonstrates how individual skills—both cognitive and non-cognitive—education, occupation, and even party affiliation all have a significant impact on how income is transferred from one generation to the next. Education and occupation are regarded as the most important channels. This study claims two significant advantages- one is the approach used to minimize potential biases, and second is its detailed analysis of the various elements influencing intergenerational income mobility.

Presenting a compelling approach to estimate intergenerational income mobility using machine learning on sub-optimal data Bloise et al. (2021) addressed the challenges of incomplete or unreliable data often encountered in studies of lower-income countries and long-term trends. They applied supervised learning algorithms to improve the reliability of estimates. Providing an objective criterion for model selection, the study demonstrates their approach's effectiveness across different contexts. One strength of the study is its application to both United States and South African data. The application of machine learning in this situation is novel and offers a promising way to increase the accuracy of mobility estimates. However, the study could be strengthened by a further exploration of the limitations and underlying assumptions of the machine learning models used.

García-Mainar and Montuenga (2020) analysed how father's job influence at sixteen years old kids career outcomes, in order to investigate how mobility happens among Spanish workers across generations. While acknowledging differences between age and gender, the authors generated mobility matrices and calculated the intergenerational elasticity of occupational position. According to the study, which uses data from the Spanish Quality of Working Life Survey for the years 2007–2010, mobility in Spain is moderate when compared to other nations, with daughters having somewhat higher possibilities of advancing than sons. The study's findings also suggest that younger generations are more likely to pursue higher-status careers. The low degree of occupational elasticity in the study points to a diminishing impact of the father's work on their children's careers with time. Even after several inspections, these results hold steady, suggesting that Spain's intergenerational mobility patterns are gradually changing.

Miles Corak (2020) examines the relationship between inequality and mobility across generations to demonstrate how economic advantages and disadvantages are passed down from parents to children. According to this study, income inequality hinders mobility and different forms of inequality affects mobility in different ways. This necessitates the adoption of different policies and actions. A range of statistical matrix to be used to capture the various aspects of intergenerational mobility, according to Corak. He notes that intergenerational mobility is very strong in Australia. He emphasized that to understand mobility dynamics, international comparisons are to be made taking into consideration factors other than wealth, such as social status and the potential for upward mobility. One of the key findings of the study is that countries with higher levels of inequality generally shows lower levels of mobility. This is an indication that a child's future is more strongly linked to their parents' history. According to Corak, higher levels of inequality restricts people with low socio-economic status to achieve higher standard of living and enhanced social status in life. Legislative actions are required to lessen inequality and establish equality of opportunity, especially in the areas of education and child development.

Using data from the Vietnam Household Living Standard Surveys 2004–2014, Nguyen and Nguyen (2020) investigated intergenerational mobility in Vietnam over an extended period of time. The findings show a high level of occupational mobility, underscoring the relative flexibility of Vietnam's labour market. The study also shows the limited mobility in terms of wage employment and movement between economic sectors. The study indicates the possible obstacles to obtaining more stable or higher-paying jobs. Acknowledging the significance of education in determining mobility outcomes, the study highlights the importance of skill development and training to elevate employment prospects. The intergenerational elasticity of earnings reveals that those with greater levels of education—particularly those with college or university degrees—have a far larger likelihood of increasing their income than those with lower levels of education.

An estimate of the wages gap between dads and sons in Italy may be found in Bloise and Raitano's (2020) study. They compared the magnitude of the lifecycle bias whether sons are chosen based on their age or potential experience using data gathered

from real father-son pairings in an effort to minimize potential estimation mistakes in the data. The study confirms that intergenerational inequality is high and intergenerational mobility is low in Italy compared to other countries. The estimated IGE for sons who have completed at least six years of education is around 0.41. However, when sons are grouped based on their potential work experience, the issue of life-cycle bias is reduced, raising the IGE estimate to about 0.48. Thus, the study highlights the strong link between parents' and children's incomes in Italy, pointing to limited intergenerational mobility.

Chetty et al. (2020) examine racial inequalities in income and economic opportunity in the United States from an intergenerational perspective. This study finds notable differences using extensive longitudinal data that spans almost the whole U.S. population between 1989 and 2015. The results demonstrate the persistence of intergenerational mobility disparities, with American Indians and Black Americans having greater risks of downward mobility and fewer opportunities for upward mobility than white Americans. This highlights the continuing impact of racial inequality on economic outcomes across generations Interestingly, mobility rates of Hispanic Americans are more akin to the mobility rates of whites, indicating that the economic gap between white Americans and Hispanic Americans is closing over time. According to the study, there are noticeable disparities in employment and pay between white and black men, but these inequalities are not statistically significant between white and black women. The study highlights the complexity of these differences by demonstrating how little parental wealth, education, and marital status contribute to the explanation of the income inequality. Additionally, this study shows that the gap between black and white Americans persists even among boys who grew up in the same communities, with black boys earning less as adults than white boys, underscoring the extent of these disparities. According to the report, resolving these inequities necessitates all-encompassing initiatives that cut across class and neighbourhood lines, with a particular focus on boosting upward mobility for black men.

Analysing the educational policies in China, Guo, Song, and Chen (2019) studied China's intergenerational mobility in education. Based on China's Household

Income Project (CHIP) 2013 dataset, the study shows that these measures have a positive impact on upward mobility in metropolitan regions, particularly for individuals with lower parental education levels. However, comparable programs appear to have a less positive impact on generational educational mobility in rural areas. According to the study, inadequate demand-side education reforms in rural China or lax policy enforcement are the causes of these disparities.

Thewissen (2018) emphasizes that economic mobility is crucial for promoting overall economic growth and reducing poverty and inequality by analysing mobility trends and problems across various areas. The study points out that there exist disparities in mobility between high-income and developing economies, with the latter facing greater challenges. It also finds that mobility is generally lower in developing economies, particularly in Africa and South Asia. According to this study, the probability of improving the economic status is significantly low in the case of children born in low-income families in these regions compared to children in high-income economies. It emphasizes the need for policy interventions to improve mobility which includes higher public investments and better policies to ensure equal opportunities. It notes that while there have been improvements in school enrolments in Africa and South Asia, more actions have to be taken to ensure equality of educational opportunities so that poorer households can catch up to their wealthier counterparts. Furthermore, the report addresses gender disparities in mobility, noting that girls are outperforming boys in tertiary education level in both high-income and developing countries. However, women still face challenges in earning and employment opportunities.

The study by Chetty et al. (2017) explored the significant societal change in absolute income mobility trends in the US from 1940.Their research reveals that the absolute income mobility rate had decreased from almost 90% for children born in 1940 to 50% for children born in the 1980s, based on data from the U.S. Census, Current Population Survey, and de-identified tax records. This stark decline in absolute income mobility signified a fundamental shift in the American socio-economic landscape. According to the study, rather than just increasing GDP growth rates, a fairer distribution of economic growth across income groups is required to restore

America's earlier dream of enabling upward mobility for all. Over 70% of the mobility decline can be reversed with an equitable distribution of economic growth across income groups. Their conclusions highlight how urgently policies that support inclusive economic growth are needed in order to revitalize the American dream for coming generations.

Fan (2016) clarifies the variables affecting income mobility across various cohorts and income groups in his research on intergenerational income persistence in urban China during the economic transition period. Based on data from the Chinese Household Income Projects for 1995 and 2002, Fan finds that the intergenerational income persistence increased from 0.43 to 0.51 in the case of generations learned before and after market reform, and it reached 0.71 among households whose average income exceeded the national average during the post-reform period. According to Fan, social capital is crucial for the wealthy, especially in the wake of market reform, whereas education is a major means of income transfer for the impoverished. Prior to the reform a household's work unit ownership significantly contributed to sustain income continuity in the case of families with below average earnings. However, the main factor contributing to income persistence in the post reform era is the investment parents with below-average incomes make in their children's education. Following the change, social capital becomes the primary contributor for families with above-average incomes. These results point to a change in China's intergenerational income transfer mechanisms. Fan's study also highlights how crucial it is to comprehend how parents from various income levels differ in their capacity and motivation to participate in their children's growth. The study's policy implications emphasize how important it is to provide equal opportunity for all in order to lessen economic disparity in urban China.

Yang & Qiu (2016) investigate how the innate ability, different types of education, compulsory and non-compulsory, and different grades of education influence income inequality and intergenerational mobility. Using a four-period overlapping-generations model, the authors explore the interplay between innate ability and parents' investment in children's early education. The study indicates that these two factors act a vital role in framing the future socio-economic outcomes. The study describes that the differences in innate abilities between children of wealthier families

and poorest families widen the gap in human capital after children completing both compulsory and non-compulsory education. The rise in human capital gap generated by compulsory and non-compulsory education is 2.35 and 2.89 respectively. This growing disparity is explained by low-income families spending comparatively less on their offspring's early stages of learning, which results in their below average attendance at schools and a lesser chance of enrolling in higher education. The study recommends direct subsidies as a policy stimulus to reduce poverty and assist low-income parents in investing in their children's education.

Antonio Caparrós Ruiz (2016) investigates the connection between education and generational social mobility in Spain. Using the data from the Living Condition Survey (INE, 2011), this study employed a multinomial logit model to examine the relationship between educational background and socio-economic mobility. The study found the importance of education in fostering social mobility and lessening the influence of parents' financial situation on their kids' professional choices. According to the study education offers fair opportunities and effective talent allocation, and thereby help to create a more meritocratic society.

Fan et al. (2015) examined the dynamics of intergenerational mobility and cross-sectional inequality in China during its economic transition. Their study is the first of its kind to examine these trends in the Chinese context in a systematic manner. They found that intergenerational mobility in income and education is trending downward across cohorts, with a more noticeable fall among women and people who live in economically disadvantaged areas. Additionally, they found a "Great Gatsby Curve"-like relationship between intergenerational mobility and cross-sectional inequality, where lesser mobility is linked to larger inequality. The study points out the significance of institutional and policy elements in determining these trends. The study stated the necessity of targeted measures, particularly for vulnerable groups and regions, to address inequality and improve mobility as China experiences economic development.

Weici Yuan (2015) analysed intergenerational income mobility patterns of China and gave insightful information about the nation's social mobility dynamics. Their work undergoes a thorough examination of income mobility trends. The data used for this was the panel data from the 20-year China Health and Nutrition Survey (CHNS). One of the key findings is the limited income mobility achieved in China compared to economically developed countries. This study also shows the comparative high levels of mobility attained in low-income households. This is an indication that children from underprivileged homes have the chance to better their financial situation. The study's examination of the differences in intergenerational mobility among various socio-economic levels is another intriguing feature. The findings also demonstrate that sons of wealthier parents greatly inherit their parents' economic status.

Goldthorpe (2014) examined the theoretical framework of intergenerational social mobility. While criticising the existing research paradigms, he pointed out the weaknesses of functionalist theories and advocated for the use of economic theories pertaining to labour markets and incentive-enhancing choice theory. He made valuable contributions to enrich the discussions on social mobility. One of the key contributions of the study is its observation of the evolving nature of the relationship between education and social mobility. According to Goldthorpe, the traditional view of education, which is based on the degree of schooling or credentials attained, may not hold valid today. Absolute level of education alone can’t determine social mobility therefore the role of education in promoting social mobility has to be re-evaluated. However, Goldthorpe recognizes the multifaceted nature of education such as, a vital human resource, a basis for identifying and screening productive potential, a positional good in the job market, and an agency in socializing individual's employment.

Kearney and Levine (2014) examine the connection between social mobility, inequality, and the choice to drop out of secondary school. Their study suggests that higher levels of income inequality may lead to lower rates of social mobility. According to the study inequality reduces the perceived return on investment in human capital among low income individuals. The study finds that low-income youth have high probability of dropping out of school in areas with greater income inequality. This suggests that income inequality may perpetuate economic disadvantage by

discouraging investment in education among youths of low socio-economic status households. The study's findings have implications for interventions and programs aimed at promoting upward mobility among disadvantaged youth.

Hnatkovska et al. (2013) examined intergenerational mobility in education attainment, occupation choices, and income between SC/STs and non-SC/STs in India from 1983 to 2005. Their study used data from five rounds of India's National Sample Survey (NSS) to examine trends in mobility rates over this period. The findings revealed that intergenerational educational and income mobility rates for SC/STs have increased and converged with those of non-SC/STs, with SC/STs showing a faster increase in mobility. Middle-income households showed the most significant changes in intergenerational income mobility. In particular, the likelihood that a SC/ST student will alter their educational achievement in comparison to their parents was 42% in 1983 and rose to 67% in 2004–05. The equivalent likelihood for non-SC/ST students was 57% in 1983 and rose to 67% in 2004–2005. For non-SC/ST students, the corresponding probability was 57% in 1983 and also increased to 67% by 2004-05. The study concluded that a remarkable convergence in intergenerational mobility rates between SC/STs and non-SC/STs in both educational attainment and wages has been witnessed by India during the period under study. In addition to this, over the years a decrease in intra-generational gaps in educational attainment, occupation, and income of SC/STs has also been realised. These improvements attributing to significant macro-economic changes in India during this period, actually reduced caste-based restrictions and facilitated socio-economic mobility.

Lefgren et al. (2012) model broke down the intergenerational income elasticity into three components: the causal effect of financial resources, the role of human capital in determining fathers' permanent incomes and the mechanistic transmission of human capital. They tried to use instrumental factors to separate the impacts of money and human capital transmission using a sample of Swedish sons and their fathers. The results imply that the causal effect of fathers' financial resources accounts for just a minor percentage of the intergenerational income elasticity.

With an emphasis on potential biases from income fluctuations and life cycle effects, Gong et al. (2012) calculated the intergenerational income elasticity for urban China. Despite China's fast absolute income increase, their results demonstrated an intergenerational income elasticity of 0.63 for father-son couples, suggesting that children's relative economic situation is highly influenced by their parents' salaries. The study highlighted the significance of parental education as a key element in transmitting economic status to future generations. It also shed light on income mobility in urban China, underscoring the role of education in intergenerational economic transmission.

Cultural socialisation along with educational attainment determines mobility across generations. The interplay of these factors in the UK and their impact on mobility has been investigated by Scherger and Savage (2010). The core area of this study was the examination of the effect of cultural socialization and parental support in activities like reading, art, music, and athletics on educational performance, intergenerational mobility, and the perpetuation of social class. To study the effect of childhood cultural socialisation on educational outcomes they used data from England's Taking Part Survey. The study analysed childhood socialization variables, such as visits to cultural places and involvement in cultural activities with parents and demonstrated the impact of cultural capital transmission on educational attainment. The model used for investigating the impact of parental socio-economic class on educational attainment was multinomial logistic regression model. The study found a positive correlation between cultural transmission and upward mobility, indicating that children who receive more cultural socialization are more likely to attain higher educational levels and have better intergenerational mobility. The study identified disparities in parental support across socio-economic levels, with children from less affluent homes getting less assistance in cultural capital-building activities. Consequently, compared to their classmates from more wealthy situations, children from disadvantaged backgrounds were shown to achieve lower levels of educational attainment.

The study by Pekkarinen et al. (2009) examined the influence of school reform on intergenerational income mobility in Finland. The comprehensive school reform and the introduction of a uniform nine year brought considerable decrease in the

intergenerational income elasticity and increase in mobility. They found a decrease in the intergenerational elasticity. The value in the pre-reform period was 0.30 and it decreased to 0.23 in the post reform period, indicating a decrease by 23 percent.

Haveman and Smeeding (2006) conducted a detailed investigation of the disparities in access to education and success attained in higher education in the US. The study demonstrated substantial disparities that prevail, especially in elite institutions and universities where the majority of students are from the highest socio-economic quartile. The difficulties faced by eligible students from low- and moderate-income backgrounds to get admission in these institutions were discussed in this study. The key finding of the study is the prevalence of disparity in the resources and assistance that are available to pupils from higher-income households and those from lower-income families. While parents with lower incomes might not have the resources to support their children's academic progress, parents with higher incomes are frequently better able to do so. The study points out the shortcomings of the US higher education system in proving equal opportunities to students from rich and poor income families. The study reveals that students from underprivileged and minority neighbourhoods lack knowledge and preparedness that impedes their ability to achieve academic success and pursue higher education. However, the expansion of non-need-based aid and merit scholarships has unintentionally resulted in more being given to rich students, widening the gaps in access to higher education.

The study by Deary et al. (2005) provides an understanding of the factors influencing intergenerational social mobility and the attainment of adult social status. In the context of the West of Scotland, the study analysed the influence of childhood social background, childhood cognitive ability, and education. These factors play an influential role in shaping individuals' pathways. The study identifies the substantial correlation between education and social mobility. Social background and cognitive abilities of children and opportunities to get educated determines significantly a person’s ability to move upward in the social status ladder. Using the logistic regression analysis, this study establishes the complex association between these variables. This methodology adds strength to the analysis of the study. The study concludes that, the eventual social status of person is determined by external factors

like socio-economic class in which a person is born and internal factors such as individual's cognitive capacity.

Cole and Omari (2003) used the concept of inter-sectionality to comprehend the psychological implications while examining the intricate relationship between race, class, and upward mobility for African Americans. This study also recognized the role education in elevating living standards of people. The Black community's historical and contemporary class divisions, African Americans' experiences in educational institutions as a method of mobility, and the sometimes-disregarded expenses and difficulties associated with upward mobility are the writers' three main areas of focus. Their study underlines the necessity to conduct further research to explore the interaction of gender with race and class and the impact of class on racial identity and the experiences of downward mobility among African Americans.

Gang et al. (2003), in their study on the upward income and earnings mobility of men and women in Germany, discovered that compared to women, men have more likelihood to move to high income brackets. Even if we consider men and women with similar family backgrounds and observable traits, the possibility of women to reach higher income group is very limited. This implies that gender disparities exist in upward income mobility. However, the analysis of the influence of gender on upward income mobility across different income groups shows that males have stronger mobility in upper initial income brackets whereas women have more mobility in lower initial income classes.

Solon's chapter on "Intergenerational Mobility in the Labour Market" in the Handbook of Labour Economics offers a thorough explanation of how earnings status is passed down across generations. In a comprehensive theoretical framework, he has gone through the prevailing literatures on social mobility and highlighted three important ideas such as neighbourhood effects, sibling correlations in earnings, and the intergenerational elasticity of offspring's earnings in relation to parents' earnings or income. It explains the mechanism through which earnings status is transmitted across generations. By synthesizing findings from previous studies, Solon contributes to a deeper understanding of intergenerational mobility in the labour market. His work

highlights the complexities involved in studying this phenomenon and emphasizes the significance of considering elements like neighbourhood influence and family history. He identified stronger correlation between parents' and children's earnings.

Checchi et al. (1999) examined the effect of school finance regimes on intergenerational mobility and income inequality in the US and Italy. They discovered that although Italy has less income inequality than the US, there is also less upward education mobility and occupation mobility across generations. According to the study, impoverished children might not gain from a centralized, egalitarian postsecondary education system since it might deny them a vital opportunity to show off their skills and compete with their more affluent peers.

Social scientists and politicians are interested in intergenerational economic mobility in the United States, as Solon (1992) discusses. He draws attention to the flaws in current estimates of the intergenerational connection in income and points out the dearth of empirical data on the subject. New estimates of intergenerational income mobility are provided by Solon. He discovers that there is less mobility than previously thought, with an intergenerational connection in long-term income of at least 0.4.

Duncan and Hodge (1963) conducted a regression analysis of occupational mobility, utilizing socio-economic status scores for detailed occupations. This occupational scores for the respondents and their fathers were found to be correlated by about .3. It's interesting to note that, with correlations of .4 or .5, educational attainment had a slightly bigger impact. The study also highlighted the disadvantage faced by sons of farmers and non-whites compared to respondents of non-farm origin and whites. Even though, increase in education and decrease in the dispersion of completed school years over time, education remained a crucial determinant of occupational status in 1950, comparable to its importance in 1940. Additionally, it underscores the significance of education in enhancing occupational mobility and attaining higher socio-economic status in the society.

2.5 Education and Social Mobility

Bonomi Bezzo et al. (2024) narrated the impact of parents' education on sons' wage earnings, taking various forms of sons' human capital components across eight OECD countries. The findings of the study reveal that in Norway, Germany, and the USA, the relation is fully mediated by sons' educational attainment. However, in Italy, France, Spain, Poland, and the UK, a significant residual relation remains even after controlling for all dimensions of sons' human capital. This suggests that factors beyond human capital accumulation, such as social ties or unobservable background-related skills.

Hu and Qian (2023) analyse data from 1.79 million individuals across 106 societies to explore world-wide patterns of intergenerational educational mobility. They find that as education expands, the correlation between mothers' and children's education increases, whereas the correlation between dads' and children's education decreases. The study also found that mother-child relationships are strengthened but father-child relationships are weakened by the presence of hypergamous parents (mothers with higher levels of education). On the other hand, mother-daughter relationships are weakened by the preponderance of hypergamous parents (fathers with higher levels of education). According to the study, understanding how education expansion affects intergenerational mobility requires a gender-sensitive approach.

Markussen and Røed (2023) examined the relationship between parents' prime age earnings rank and offspring's educational performance rank in Norway. They find that the intergenerational correlation has increased, with offspring from economically disadvantaged families falling behind despite government policies for levelling the playing field. They suggest that the expansion of universal childcare and increased teacher-pupil ratios have disproportionately benefited lower-class offspring. The study noted that the strengthened intra-generational relationship between earnings rank and education among parents, as well as increased parental involvement in response to higher returns to education.

Zhaobo (2023) study discussed the relationship between educational upward mobility and income upward mobility using data from the China Health and Nutrition

Survey. The study contributes to the ongoing debate about the impact of education on income. The findings suggest that education upward mobility positively affects income upward mobility. The study emphasizes the importance of intergenerational psychological distance, which quantifies the conceptualization gap between parents and children. According to the study, the beneficial impact of education upward mobility on income upward mobility is reinforced by a moderate degree of intergenerational psychological distance. However, the existence of excessive level psychological distance might reduce the beneficial effect upward mobility across generations. The effect of social capital and education upward mobility on income upward mobility also varies across rural and urban areas. The study finds that adolescents who live in rural areas and whose parents have low social capital stand to gain the most from education upward mobility. On the other hand, the effect of educational upward mobility on income upward mobility is less noticeable for children who live in cities and whose parents have social capital.

The relationship between education and household income is examined by Jolliffe (2002). This study focussed on whose education within the family has greater impact on household income. The study found that the effect of education in determining family income varies depending on the number of family members and gender of the person who attain education, reflecting gender disparity in education and labour market participation. The findings are valuable for policy-making targeted at enhancing income distribution and economic development and are useful for comprehending the dynamics of education and income mobility in developing nations.

The effect of education on intergenerational economic mobility in Chinese society is examined by Wang et al. (2022). They reviewed the existing studies to contribute towards decomposing the effect of education and finding the correlation between parents' income and their children's education. The impact of education on intergenerational income mobility, especially for Chinese age groups born in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s has been pointed out in this study. After decomposing the effect of education, the study found that the correlation between a father's income and his child's education is less significant in explaining intergenerational income mobility than the return on education.

Bell et al. (2022) explored intergenerational mobility in England and Wales, focusing on occupation, homeownership, and education across three cohorts. Using linked decennial census microdata and observing long-lasting area-level disparities in upward occupational mobility over time, the study highlights the spatially connected nature of mobility indicators. They found a substantial correlation between career mobility and upward educational mobility. Moreover, they foundthe complex connection between upward homeownership and occupational mobility, suggesting that various social mobility metrics can show diverse mobility patterns.

Kishan's (2021) exploration of intergenerational education mobility in India provides valuable insights on the factors influencing the transfer of parents' educational advantages to their offspring. Utilizing information from the Indian Human Development Survey (2011-12), Kishan considers nonlinearities in the intergenerational education relationship, the Great Gatsby Curve phenomenon. The effect of public spending on education on economic growth and educational mobility has been shown in their work. Using quantile regression analysis, the study concludes that intergenerational education mobility in India is highly influenced by economic growth, government education spending, and educational inequality in the fathers' generation.

The study by Lee and Lee (2020) examined the trends and factors that influence intergenerational educational mobility in 30 different nations. The analysis discovered that, although the degree of change varies greatly between nations and over time, educational mobility has worsened over generations in majority of countries. This suggests a growing challenge in achieving upward mobility through education in many parts of the world. The study identifies factors such as income inequality, inflation, and credit constraints which reduce intergenerational educational mobility.

Sackey et al. (2019) studied the effect of parents' educational attainment on young people's career prospects in Ghana. They used probit estimation with marginal effects to examine a sample of 250 young people, both employed and unemployed. The study found the significant influence of family and individual traits on job outcomes. Individual’s chances of getting job is determined by both individual characteristics and

family background. The study found unequal job status between young people whose parents have high levels of education and those whose parents have low levels of education. This disparity is primarily caused by variations in the youths' personal and family traits rather than variations in their parents' education. This study highlights the importance of considering a range of factors beyond parental education in understanding employment outcomes.

Mok and Wu's (2016) study offers a comprehensive analysis of the impact of higher education expansion on social mobility and labour market dynamics in China. By focusing on the case of Guangzhou and drawing on existing literature, the authors provide valuable insights on the challenges and opportunities arising from the massification of higher education. The use of empirical data and purposive sampling adds credibility to its findings and strengthens its argument about the changing patterns of social mobility in China. The authors emphasised the need for policy interventions to address issues of unemployment and underemployment of graduate, indicating the importance of these policies to react to the developing labour market.

Sturgis and Buscha (2015) investigate the connection between intergenerational social mobility and educational expansion. Although it is widely accepted that expanding educational opportunities can improve social mobility, the authors investigate this notion using empirical data. According to the study, there was no appreciable rise in the rate of intergenerational social mobility as a result of the educational reform, even though overall educational attainment increased and the relationship between attainment and class origin was decreased. This calls into question the widely held belief that increasing educational opportunities is enough to foster more social fluidity.

In his assessment of social mobility within neo-liberalism, Brown (2013) criticizes the shortcomings of existing strategies for creating a more equitable society. The focus on intergenerational social mobility as a remedy for inequality, according to the paper, ignores important sociological data. According to the study, the neo-liberal "opportunity bargain" ignores fundamental problems with equity and social justice. By talking about ideas like "social congestion," "social exclusion," and "social justice," the

study draws attention to structural obstacles to mobility, particularly in the fields of education and employment. Beyond merely improving educational chances, the report advocates for more extensive political action to address more fundamental problems of socio-economic inequality.

The relative degrees of intergenerational mobility, broken down by social class, income, and educational attainment, are the main emphasis of Blanden's (2011) study. They show a steady position in terms of education and income mobility, with the Nordic countries showing considerable mobility and South America, other developing countries, and southern European countries showing little mobility. However, distinct patterns emerge when looking at mobility according to social class, mostly because of the persistence of intergenerational incomes within social classes.

In order to evaluate the effect of educational growth on lowering social mobility disparities in developed nations, Breen (2010) studied the case of Germany, Sweden, and Britain in the 20th century. The findings of the study showed that social mobility in these nations has been greatly aided by the expansion of education. In particular, the correlation between people's socio-economic origins and destinations became weaker at higher educational levels. Breen used Log-Linear models to examine the effects of educational equalization and the compositional effect on social mobility patterns. Data from the General Household Survey (1973, 1975-76, 1979-84, and 1987-1992) for Britain, the Albus Survey (1976-2002) for Germany, and the Annual Surveys of Living Conditions conducted by Statistics Sweden (1976-1999) were used in the study. The analysis focused on men and was limited to the working-age population, following conventional practices in mobility analysis.

With a focus on caste and gender inequality, Majumder's (2010) study on intergenerational mobility in India offers a thorough examination of how educational and occupational traits are passed down through the generations. The study uses methodological techniques such as mobility matrices, ordinary least squares regression, logistic regression, and correlation analysis to investigate upward mobility trends using data from India's National Sample Survey Organization. The results show that educational attainment levels have significantly increased over time, yet there are still

large social gaps. Even though educational mobility has significantly improved, especially for the Excluded Castes (SCs, STs, and OBCs), there is still significant intergenerational stickiness in occupational attainment. The survey also reveals disparities in mobility among the Excluded Castes, with OBCs demonstrating more accomplishments and mobility nearer to Advanced Castes. The study also finds a gap between rural and urban areas, with rural populations having greater occupational mobility and urban populations having greater educational mobility.

Guo and Min (2008) investigate the relationship between education and intergenerational economic mobility in urban China. The study found that there is a significant intergenerational income transfer in urban China, with the majority of children remaining in the same income group as their fathers. Education is a crucial tactic for promoting upward mobility for children from low-income households. The paper claims that with additional marketization and appropriate social policies, education may further promote social justice and intergenerational wealth mobility.

In South Africa, a nation with a long history of racial segregation, Louw et al. (2007) carried out a thorough investigation of the contribution of parents' education to children's formation of human capital. The study emphasizes how family background and educational disparities have a significant impact on income distribution, especially when it comes to unequal access to wage-earning possibilities in the job market. By examining trends in educational achievement from 1970 to 2001, the study provides a thorough picture of improvements in educational attainment and intergenerational social mobility. Louw et al. showed increases in intergenerational social mobility within racial groups during the research period using indices developed by Dahan and Gaviria (2001) and Behrman et al. (1998). According to the survey, South African children are now in a better position than their peers in comparable nations to take advantage of educational opportunities. However, despite these advancements, significant racial barriers persist, hindering efforts to achieve equitable educational opportunities for all South African children.

Li et al. (2000) explore the impact of further education on occupational mobility, particularly focusing on upward and downward mobility, as well as gender

differences in this influence. The authors use Cox's proportional hazards model to examine the effects of three different forms of additional education on mobility rates using data from two birth cohorts in the German-speaking region of Switzerland, controlling for labor-market determinants, individual characteristics, and basic education. The results show that further education targeted at earning a formal credential—such as advanced training and retraining—increases the probability of upward mobility. It's interesting to note that this correlation is higher for women, indicating higher selection among female participants. Furthermore, involvement in higher education has a somewhat detrimental impact on downward mobility, underscoring the need of basic education as a safeguard against downward mobility.

Nachum Sicherman (1990) explores the nuanced relationship between education and occupational mobility. The study's focus on "career mobility," the upward trajectory of occupational changes in a worker's career, reveals that while more educated workers are less likely to change occupations, they are more likely to move to higher-level occupations within the same field. This demonstrates the dual role that education has in both promoting upward mobility within a field and stabilizing worker within it due to higher levels of investment. Sicherman's data also reveals that education has a stronger influence on advancing to higher-level positions in occupations with lower schooling-wage impacts. Overall, the study emphasizes how important education is in determining career pathways and promoting economic mobility, especially in certain professional domains where wage disparities are less noticeable.

2.6 Conclusion

A careful examination of earlier studies reveals the depth of social mobility research, which focuses on economic, vocational, and educational aspects in the general population. Socio-economic conditions, inequality, and other relevant aspects are also covered in these studies. Research on vulnerable groups, especially the Scheduled Caste (SC) community, is noticeably lacking in terms of thorough analyses of socio-economic conditions, factors influencing income and spending, economic disparities, and social mobility in terms of education, income, and occupation. Furthermore,

research on intra-caste disparities in socio-economic circumstances, inequality, and social mobility is limited, particularly in disadvantaged groups like the SC community. By analysing numerous facets and dimensions of socio-economic conditions and social mobility within the SC community, this study seeks to close these gaps and make a substantial contribution to the body of current scholarship.

Chapter |3|
Data Source and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The study area, data source, sampling strategy, and statistical and econometric techniques utilized for the empirical analysis to achieve the study's goals are all covered in this chapter. The chapter can be broadly divided into two sections: data and sampling and statistical and econometric approaches. The following subsections provide a thorough explanation of the methodology:

3.2 Data and Sampling

The study is based on data collected from 377 randomly chosen Scheduled Caste households from the South, Central, and North regions of Kerala. Thiruvananthapuram was selected from the Southern region, Palakkad from the Central region, and Malappuram from the Northern region. From each district, one taluk was randomly selected: Varkala from Thiruvananthapuram, Alathur from Palakkad, and Nilambur from Malappuram. From these taluks, one municipality and one gram panchayat were selected: Varkala (Municipality) and Chemmaruthy (Gram Panchayat) from Thiruvananthapuram, Shornur (Municipality) and Alathur (Gram Panchayat) from Palakkad, and Nilambur (Municipality) and Wandoor (Gram Panchayat) from Malappuram. Due to skewed distribution of some scale variables, incorrect information regarding education and income, and missing information on certain questions, eight households were excluded from the empirical analysis. Data on Scheduled Caste households were collected from the selected municipalities and panchayats using systematic random sampling, with approximately 32.45% of sample households selected from each chosen district.

Within each selected municipality and gram panchayat, all wards were treated as a single sampling frame. The survey commenced from Ward 1 and proceeded sequentially through the remaining wards until the required sample size was achieved. Eligible Scheduled Caste households were identified during the field survey with the assistance of ward representatives and local self-government institutions. A systematic sampling interval of five (k= 5) was adopted, whereby every fifth eligible household was selected for the survey. This procedure continued across successive wards until the predetermined sample size for each municipality and gram panchayat was completed. Where a selected household did not satisfy the study criteria or declined to participate,

the next eligible Scheduled Caste household was included to maintain the required sample size.

One of the important objectives of this research is to examine social-mobility in terms of intergenerational income, education, and occupation. Therefore, the sample survey was conducted only among household heads who have one male child and one female child, both of whom have either completed their education or are at least eighteen years old. The details of data and sampling are included in the Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Selection of the study area and sample households

<table>
<tr><td>Total SC Population in Kerala</td><td>3039573</td><td>Sample size- 385</td><td>Sample size for empirical analysis=377</td><td>Samples excluded=08</td></tr>
<tr><td>Thiruvananthapuram-SC Total</td><td>3,72,977</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Thiruvananthapuram district is divided into 6 taluks.</td><td></td><td></td><td colspan="2" rowspan="7">125</td></tr>
<tr><td>Thiruvananthapuram</td><td rowspan="6">Selected Taluk- Varkkala</td><td rowspan="3">Varkala (M)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Nedumangadu</td></tr>
<tr><td>Chirayinkeezhu</td></tr>
<tr><td>Kattakada</td><td rowspan="3">Chemmaruthy (GP)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Neyyattinkara</td></tr>
<tr><td>Varkala</td></tr>
<tr><td>Malappuram SC Population</td><td>308,266</td><td></td><td colspan="2" rowspan="8">125</td></tr>
<tr><td>Malappuram District is divided into 7 Thaluks</td><td></td><td rowspan="4">Wandoor (GP)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Perinthalmanna,</td><td rowspan="6">Selected Taluk- Nilambur</td></tr>
<tr><td>Nilambur</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ernad</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ponnani</td></tr>
<tr><td>Tirur</td><td rowspan="3">Nilamboor (M)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Thirurangadi</td></tr>
<tr><td>Kondotty</td></tr>
<tr><td>Palakkad SC Population</td><td>403,833</td><td></td><td colspan="2" rowspan="8">127</td></tr>
<tr><td>Palakkad District is divided into 6 Thaluks</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Alathur</td><td rowspan="6">Selected Thaluk- Alathur</td><td rowspan="4">Kozhalmannam (GP)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Chittor</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mannarkkad</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ottappalam</td></tr>
<tr><td>Palakkad</td><td rowspan="2">Shornur (M)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pattambi</td></tr>
</table>

Note: The sample was selected through a multistage sampling procedure involving the selection of districts, taluks, local self-government institutions, and households. Eight households were excluded from the initially selected 385 households, resulting in a final sample of 377 households.

Source: Author's Construction

The distribution of Kerala's total SC population across districts is given in the table 3.2. It is evident from the table that Palakkad district has highest SC population, followed by Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam, and Wayanad has the lowest concentration of SC population in Kerala. Based on the size of SC population, Thiruvananthapuram from southern region, Palakkad from central region and Malappuram from northern region were selected.

Table 3.2: District wise distribution of SC population in Kerala

District	Scheduled Castes Population
Palakkad	403833
Thiruvananthapuram	372977
Kollam	328263
Thrissur	324350
Malappuram	308266
Ernakulam	268411
Alappuzha	201211
Kozhikode	199191
Pathanamthitta	164465
Kottayam	153909
Idukki	145486
Kannur	83350
Kasargod	53283
Wayanad	32578
Total	3039573

Source: Census data 2011

To ensure representation of intra-caste diversity, the sample included households belonging to the major Scheduled Castes in Kerala, such as Pulaya, Cheruman, Kuravan, Kanakkan, Mannan, Paraya, Panan, Kalladi and Kavara. Sub-caste distribution varied by district:

- In Thiruvananthapuram (South Kerala), the Pulaya, Kuravan, Paraya, Mannan, and Panan communities were more prominently represented.
- In Palakkad (Central Kerala), Cheruaman, Kanakkan, Mannan, Panan and Parayan, households were dominant, along with Kavara sub-caste.

- In Malappuram (North Kerala), Kanakkan, Cheruman, Mannan, Kalladi, Panan, and Kuravan appeared alongside Pulaya and Paraya households.

Including all important sub-castes in the sampling frame makes it possible to examine not only the overall socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes in Kerala but also intra-caste disparities in income, education, and mobility outcomes.

3.3 Statistical and Econometric Methods Used

The study employed a variety of statistical and econometric methods to fulfil its objectives. Therefore, the methods used for each objective are separately discussed in this section

3.3.1: The socio-economic and educational conditions of Scheduled Caste households in Kerala

The study applied various descriptive statistics, including percentage distribution, frequency distribution, bar diagrams, mean, and standard deviation, to examine the socio-economic and educational conditions of Scheduled Caste households in Kerala.

3.3.2: Intra-caste socio-economic disparities among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala

The study used various statistical methods such as descriptive statistics and the Pearson chi-square test, and One-way ANOVA test to empirically verify this objective.

1. **Descriptive Statistics**: Descriptive statistics are used to summarize the data on home conditions, staying at ancestral homes, and employment status among different Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala. Descriptive statistics also used to summarize the data on the average number of family members, rooms in households, landholdings, family income, monthly consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items among different Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala. These statistics help to describe the central tendency, dispersion, and distribution of these variables within each community.

2. **Cross-Tabulations**: Cross-tabulations are used to examine the relationships between two categorical variables, such as home conditions, ancestral home

staying practices, employment status, family composition and SC communities. By cross-tabulating these variables, the study can analyse the distribution of categorical variables within each SC community and identify any patterns or differences.

3. **Chi-Square Test**: To determine the association between two categorical variables Pearson chi-square test is used. In this study, the chi-square test is used to assess the significance of differences in home conditions, staying at ancestral homes, and employment status, choice of schools among different SC communities. A low p-value (<0.09) indicates that the differences observed are unlikely to be due to random chance, suggesting a significant association between the variables.

4. **ANOVA (Analysis of Variance):** This method is used to test for significant differences in the average number of family members, rooms in households, landholdings, family income, monthly consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items among different SC communities. ANOVA assesses whether there are significant variations in these variables between SC communities.

3.3.3: Estimation of determinants of expenditure among Scheduled Caste households: To identify the determinants of expenditure among Scheduled Caste households the study estimated two functions: one for household total expenditure and another for food expenditure. These estimations are crucial for understanding the vulnerability status of Scheduled Caste households in Kerala.

Estimation of consumption expenditure function among SC households : To find out the determinants of household's consumption expenditure among SC community, study employed a multiple linear regression model

The model is specified as follows:

$$ConsumptionExpenditure_i=\beta 0+\beta 1\times Income_i+\beta 2\times Landholding_i+\beta 3\times HouseholdSize_i+\beta 4\times FamilyStatus_i+\beta 5\times EmploymentFather_i+\beta 6\times EmploymentSon_i+\beta 7\times EducationFather_i+\beta 8\times EducationSon_i+\epsilon_i \quad \text{.....(1)}$$

Where:

- $ConsumptionExpenditurei$ is the consumption expenditure of the *i*th SC household.
- *Incomei* is the monthly income of the *i*th SC household.
- *Landholdingi* is the landholding (in acres) of the *i*th SC household.
- *HouseholdSizei* is the size of the *i*th SC household.
- *Family Statusi* is the family status of the *i*th SC household, categorized as lower (baseline), middle, or high.
- *Employment Fatheri* is a binary variable indicating the employment status of the father in the *i*th SC household, where 1 represents self-employment and 0 represents other employment statuses.
- *Employment Soni* is a binary variable indicating the employment status of the son in the *i*th SC household, where 1 represents self-employment and 0 represents other employment statuses.
- *Education Fatheri* is the education level of the father in the *i*th SC household.
- *Education Soni* is the education level of the son in the *i*th SC household.

$\beta 0,1,....,\beta 8$ are the coefficients to be estimated.

- ϵi is the error term, it represents all omitted variables and errors of measurements

3.3.4: Estimation of food expenditure function among SC households

The multiple linear regression model is also used to examine the determinants of food expenditure among Scheduled Caste (SC) households.

The model is specified as follows:

$$FoodExpenditurei=\beta 0+\beta 1\times Incomei+\beta 2\times Landholdingi+\beta 3\times HouseholdSizei+\beta 4\times FamilyStatusi+\beta 5\times EmploymentFatheri+\beta 6\times EmploymentSoni+\beta 7\times EducationFatheri+\beta 8\times EducationSoni+\epsilon i \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots (2)$$

Where:

- Food *Expenditurei* is the food expenditure of the *i*th SC household.
- *Incomei* is the monthly income of the *i*th SC household.

- *Landholdingi* is the landholding (in acres) of the *i*th SC household.
- *HouseholdSizei* is the size of the *i*th SC household.
- *FamilyStatusi* is the family status of the *i*th SC household, categorized as lower (baseline), middle, or high.
- *EmploymentFatheri* is a binary variable indicating the employment status of the father in the *i*th SC household, where 1 represents self-employment and 0 represents other employment statuses.
- *EmploymentSoni* is a binary variable indicating the employment status of the son in the *i*th SC household, where 1 represents self-employment and 0 represents other employment statuses.
- *EducationFatheri* is the education level of the father in the *i*th SC household.
- *EducationSoni* is the education level of the son in the *i*th SC household.

$\beta 0,1,$.......,$\beta 8$ are the coefficients to be estimated.

- ϵi is the error term.

3.3.5: Determinants of income earnings of scheduled caste households:

The analysis of income earnings among Scheduled Caste (SC) households utilizes a multiple linear regression model to examine the impact of education, employment, age, skills, and location on monthly household income.

The model is specified as follows:

***IncomeEarningsi*=*β*0+*β*1×*EducationFatheri*+*β*2×*MotherEducationi*+*β*3 ×*SonEducationi*+*β*4×*DaughterEducationi*+*β*5×*EmploymentFatheri*+*β*6 ×*EmploymentMotheri*+*β*7×*EmploymentSoni*+*β*8×*EmploymentDaughteri*+*β*9 ×*Locationi*+*β*10×*FatherAgei*+*β*11×*MotherAgei*+*β*12×*SonAgei*+*β*13×*DaughterAgei* +*β*14×*TechnicalSkillsi*+*β*15×*ComputerSkillsBasici*+*β*16×*ComputerSkillsAdvancedi* +*ϵi*…………………….....(3)**

Where:

- *IncomeEarningsi* is the monthly income earnings of the *i*th SC household.
- *EducationFatheri*,*otherEducationi*, *SonEducationi*, and *DaughterEducationi* are the education levels of the father, mother, son, and daughter in the *i*th SC household, respectively.

- $EmploymentFather$, *EmploymentMotheri*,*EmploymentSoni*, and *EmploymentDaughteri* are binary variables indicating the employment status of the father, mother, son, and daughter in the *i*th SC household, respectively (1 for self-employed, 0 for other employment statuses).
- *Locationi* is a binary variable indicating the location of residence of the *i*th SC household (1 for urban, 0 for rural).
- $FatherAgei$, *MotherAgei*, *SonAgei*, and *DaughterAgei* are the ages of the father, mother, son, and daughter in the *i*th SC household, respectively.
- *TechnicalSkillsi* is a binary variable indicating whether the individual in the *i*th SC household possesses technical skills (1 for yes, 0 for no).
- *ComputerSkillsBasici* and *ComputerSkillsAdvancedi* are binary variables indicating whether the individual in the *i*th SC household possesses basic or advanced computer skills, respectively (1 for yes, 0 for no).
- $\beta 0,1,...,\beta 16$ are the coefficients to be estimated.
- ϵi is the error term.

The model is estimated using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. The coefficient estimates (β) indicate the marginal effect of each explanatory variable on income earnings, holding all other variables constant. The t-values test the statistical significance of each coefficient. The adjusted R-squared value measures used to explain the proportion of variance in income earnings explained by the independent variables, adjusted for the number of predictors in the model. The F-value tests used to test the overall significance of the regression model, indicating whether the set of independent variables, taken together, significantly explains the variation in income earnings.

Note: The empirical analysis assumes that the regression model satisfies the assumptions of linear regression model, including linearity, independence, homoscedasticity, and normality of residuals of model.

3.3.6: Intra-caste disparities in income, expenditure, and educational attainment among Scheduled Caste households in Kerala

The study used the Theil index of inequality to estimate intra-caste economic disparities in income, expenditure, and educational attainment among Scheduled Caste households in Kerala. The Theil index of inequality is a statistical measure used to

quantify the level of inequality within a population. It is commonly used in economics to measure income, expenditure, or wealth inequality. The index is based on the concept of entropy from information theory and is sensitive to changes in both the upper and lower ends of the distribution, making it a robust measure of inequality. Unlike the Gini coefficient, Theil index splits inequality into two parts, differences between groups and differences within groups, thereby providing insights into the contributions of different factors to overall inequality.

The inequality measured by Theil's *T* or first measure is

$$T_T = \frac{1}{N}\sum_{i=1}^{N} \frac{x_i}{\bar{x}} \ln \frac{x_i}{\bar{x}} \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots (4)$$

where x_i is the income of individual i, $\bar{x}$ is the overall average income, and N is the sample size.

The equation (5) and (6) show the decomposition of Theil Index into between group component and within-group component respectively.

$$T_b = \sum_{k=1}^{K} y_k \ln \frac{\bar{x}_k}{\bar{x}} \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots (5)$$

where y_k is the kth group's income share expressed as a proportion of the sample or population total income, and $\bar{x}$k is the mean income of group k, and a within-component,

$$T_w = \sum_{k=1}^{K} y_k \sum_{i=1}^{n_k} y_{ik} \ln \frac{x_{ik}}{\bar{x}_k} \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots (6)$$

where y_{ik} is the income share of the ith individual within the kth group, and x_{ik} is the ith individual's income within group k. Adding up equation (5) and (6), we get equation (4).

3.3.7: Investigating social mobility among Scheduled Caste households in Kerala, focusing on income, education, and occupation transitions, including relative and absolute income mobility.

The study used Mean differences and multiple linear regression models to find the inter-generational upward income mobility and its determinants among scheduled castes. And cross tabulations and chi square test used for inter-generational occupational mobility.

Estimation of Relative Social Mobility:

To examine relative social mobility among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, the study employs an intergenerational regression framework that estimates the degree of association between parental and offspring socio-economic outcomes. Relative mobility measures the elasticity or strength of dependence between parents' and children's socio-economic status—here, proxied by income and education. A lower elasticity implies greater intergenerational mobility, reflecting a weaker link between family background and the child's outcomes.

Econometric Specification

The basic empirical model is expressed as:

$$Yi = \alpha + \beta Pi + \gamma Xi + \varepsilon i \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots (7)$$

where:

- Yi represents the socio-economic outcome of the child (either income or years of education),
- Pi denotes the corresponding parental outcome (father's or mother's income/education),
- Xi is a vector of control variables including the child's age, education, technical training, computer skill, caste subgroup , and panchayat of residence,
- εi is the random error term, and
- α is the intercept, β captures the intergenerational elasticity, a key parameter reflecting the strength of persistence between generations and γ measures the effect of control variables on Xi.

The estimation is carried out using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression separately for sons and daughters, and for father–child and mother–child pairs. Two sets of models are estimated: one for intergenerational income mobility and another for intergenerational educational mobility.

3.3.8: Impact of educational upward mobility (EUM) on income upward mobility (IUM) among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala

In this analysis, the econometric method used to estimate the impact of educational upward mobility (EUM) on income upward mobility (IUM) among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala is multiple linear regression. By this

method the relationship between educational advancement and income mobility can be examined while controlling for other relevant variables.

The general form of the multiple linear regression model used in this analysis is:

$$Yi=\beta 0+\beta 1X1i+\beta 2X2i+...+\beta kXki+\epsilon i \quad \text{..... (8)}$$

where:

- Yi is the income upward mobility for household i,
- $\beta 0$ is the intercept term,
- $\beta 1,2,...,\beta k$ are the coefficients of the explanatory variables $X1,X2,...,Xk$
- ϵi is the stochastic error term.

The specific regression models used in this analysis are:

$$IUM=\beta 0+\beta 1\times EUMFather+\epsilon \text{ ..... (9)}$$

$$IUM=\beta 0+\beta 1\times EUMMother+\epsilon \text{..... (10)}$$

$$IUM=\beta 0+\beta 1\times EUMFather+\beta 2\times EUMMother+\epsilon \text{..... (11)}$$

In these models, the coefficient $\beta 1$ represents the impact of educational upward mobility on income upward mobility, controlling for other factors. The error term ϵ captures the unobserved factors that may influence income mobility but are not included in the model. The following significance levels are shown: *p<0.1, **p<0.05, and ***p<0.01. The standard errors of the coefficients are presented with estimated results. The adjusted R-squared value, which shows the percentage of the variance in income upward mobility explained by the independent variables, is also used to assess the model's goodness of fit.

These estimated models allow us to quantify the impact of educational upward mobility on income upward mobility among SC households in Kerala.

3.3.9: The impact of Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on income upward mobility (IUM) among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala

The multiple linear regression models are used to estimate the impact of Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on income upward mobility (IUM) among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala. Each model examines the impact of Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on the upward income mobility of Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, with Model 1 and Model 2 focusing on

IPD based on father's age (IPDFather) and mother's age (IPDMother) respectively, and Model 3 and Model 4 introducing interaction terms between IPD and Educational Upward Mobility (EUM) based on parents' education.

The general form of the models is:

$$\textbf{Income Upward Mobility} = \boldsymbol{\beta 0} + \boldsymbol{\beta 1}\textbf{IPD} + \boldsymbol{\beta 2}\textbf{EUM} + \boldsymbol{\beta 3}\textbf{IPD} \times \textbf{EUM} + \boldsymbol{\beta 4}\textbf{Gender} + \boldsymbol{\beta 5}\textbf{SC Community} + \boldsymbol{\beta 6}\textbf{Panchayat} + \boldsymbol{\varepsilon} \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \textbf{(12)}$$

Where:

- Income Upward Mobility is the dependent variable, representing the difference between children's income and either father's income (for Model 1) or mother's income (for Model 2).
- IPD is the intergenerational psychological distance based on either father's age (for Model 1) or mother's age (for Model 2).
- EUM is the educational upward mobility based on parents' education.
- Gender, SC Community, and Panchayat are control variables.
- ε is the error term.

The study estimated four different models for income upward mobility among households of scheduled castes in Kerala. The specifications of the estimated models are given in the following equations

Model 1 (Father's Age, no interaction):

$$\textbf{Income Upward Mobility} = \boldsymbol{\beta 0} + \boldsymbol{\beta 1}\textbf{IPDFather} + \boldsymbol{\beta 2}\textbf{EUMFather} + \boldsymbol{\beta 3}\textbf{Gender} + \boldsymbol{\beta 4}\textbf{SC Community} + \boldsymbol{\beta 5}\textbf{Panchayat} + \boldsymbol{\varepsilon} \ldots\ldots \textbf{(13)}$$

Model 2 (Mother's Age, no interaction):

$$\textbf{Income Upward Mobility} = \boldsymbol{\beta 0} + \boldsymbol{\beta 1}\textbf{IPDMother} + \boldsymbol{\beta 2}\textbf{EUMMother} + \boldsymbol{\beta 3}\textbf{Gender} + \boldsymbol{\beta 4}\textbf{SC Community} + \boldsymbol{\beta 5}\textbf{Panchayat} + \boldsymbol{\varepsilon} \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \textbf{(14)}$$

Model 3 (Father's Age + Interaction with EUM):

$$\textbf{Income Upward Mobility} = \beta 0 + \beta 1\textbf{IPDFather} + \beta 2\textbf{EUMFather} + \beta 3\textbf{IPDFather} \times \textbf{EUMFather} + \beta 4\textbf{Gender} + \beta 5\textbf{SC Community} + \beta 6\textbf{Panchayat} + \varepsilon \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \textbf{(15)}$$

Model 4 (Mother's Age + Interaction with EUM):

$$\textbf{Income Upward Mobility} = \beta 0 + \beta 1\textbf{IPDMother} + \beta 2\textbf{EUMMother} + \beta 3\textbf{IPDMother} \times \textbf{EUMMother} + \beta 4\textbf{Gender} + \beta 5\textbf{SC Community} + \beta 6\textbf{Panchayat} + \varepsilon \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \textbf{(16)}$$

In these models, the interaction terms (IPDFather \times EUMFather and IPDMother \times EUMMother) capture the moderating effect of educational upward mobility on the relationship between IPD and income upward mobility. These terms allow us to assess whether the impact of IPD on income mobility varies depending on the level of educational upward mobility. The coefficient $\beta 3$in model 3&4 capture the effects of these interaction terms, indicating the change in the relationship between IPD and income upward mobility for a one-unit change in educational upward mobility.

The models also include control variables (Gender, SC Community, and Panchayat) to account for potential confounding factors that may influence income upward mobility. These variables allow us to isolate the effect of IPD and educational upward mobility on income mobility from other factors.

3.4 Focus Group Discussion:

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were employed to capture the complex aspects of social mobility among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in order to supplement the quantitative analysis. A total of six FGDs were carried out, across selected regions of Kerala. In each group there are 8–10 participants belonging to different SC communities, age groups, educational backgrounds, and occupations. Participants were selected from the households already included in the survey, ensuring continuity and comparability of insights. The discussions were semi-structured, but centred around the key themes such as social mobility, educational upward mobility, intergenerational psychological distance, and income upward mobility. Each session was moderated by the researcher with the assistance of trained facilitators, and conducted in Malayalam to ensure comfort and openness among participants. With participants' consent, the sessions were recorded and later transcribed for thematic analysis.

Chapter |4|

Socio-Economic Development of Scheduled Castes in Kerala: Challenges and Progress

4.1 Introduction

The socio-economic development of marginalized communities is crucial for attaining inclusive growth in a modern welfare state. In India several constitutional provisions have addressed the historical injustices of these communities and has framed public policies to elevate their living standards and thereby reducing the inequality between marginalized communities and the privileged groups. The Scheduled Caste population have faced systemic exclusion from social, educational, and economic opportunities due to the deep-rooted caste system in India. Even after ensuring constitutional provisions to improve their living conditions such as, affirmative action programs, and targeted welfare schemes, their plight has not been eradicated completely. The life of marginalized communities, especially Scheduled Castes, face serious challenges in areas like land and asset ownership, education, healthcare and career opportunities.

Kerala often regarded as a model state in terms of human development and social indicators provides a different picture of SC empowerment. The social reforms and legislative policies have helped to raise the standard of living and educational opportunities of SCs compared to other parts of India. Ayyankali, a prominent social reformer in Kerala dedicated his life to the empowerment of the marginalized communities. He fought against the upper caste for the education of the Dalits. Social reformations and struggles for equality shaped the culture and socio-economic frame of Kerala to a great extent. The proclamation of land reforms giving land to tiller brought changes in the relation between tenant and landlord. Along with these, the states' effective implementation of decentralized governance marked the herald of positive change in Kerala. The introduction of Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) allocated separate fund for the development of SCs, so that their socio-economic conditions could be improved and inequality in social socio-economic status with the mainstream could be reduced. However, along with positive outcomes, the state faces some structural challenges in areas of SC and ST development efforts. These systemic challenges prevent SC groups from realising the fruits of development. Factors like landlessness, limited access to skilled professions, and gender disparities in labour force participation act as major obstacles in the path towards economic and educational advancement of SCs in Kerala. This chapter depicts the socio-economic conditions and

development plans for SCs in Kerala. Despite the dominance of the state in social and human development indicators, there remains significant socio-economic disparity between the underprivileged community and more privileged groups. This chapter also narrates the effects of policies adopted for the elimination of problems of SCs, such as concentration in low-paying agricultural work, land insecurity, lack of infrastructure, and lack of educational and employment options, highlighting areas where significant advancements have been made while those that still require further efforts.

Decentralized planning and the participation of Local Self-Government Institutions (LSGIs) are crucial in enhancing the welfare of marginalized groups. This chapter also looks at how local governance to support SC welfare, highlighting the importance of knowledge and participation at the grassroots level in framing policies and programmes for the overall well-being of its residents. This chapter offers a thorough grasp of the Kerala's initiatives to advance social justice and inclusive growth for its most vulnerable groups.

4.2 Analysis of Scheduled Castes Population Distribution in Kerala

The distribution of SC population across the 14 districts of Kerala is presented in Table 4.1 (Census of India, 2011). The SC concentration and percentage differs across districts compared to overall population. Each district's total population, SC population, and percentage of SC population to total population, based on 2011 census data, are shown in the table. It reveals that some districts have higher SC population densities than others, highlighting the disparities in SC representation between districts.

Table 4.1 shows that SC concentration is highest in Pathanamthitta (13.7%) and lowest in Kannur (3.3%) in relation to their total population. Districts like Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, and Thrissur shows moderate SC concentration.

Table 4.1: District-wise Details of Scheduled Castes Population in Kerala

District	General Population (Total)	Scheduled Castes (Total)	Percentage of SC Population
Thiruvananthapuram	3301427	372977	11.3%
Kollam	2635375	328263	12.5%
Pathanamthitta	1197412	164465	13.7%
Alappuzha	2127789	201211	9.5%
Kottayam	1974551	153909	7.8%
Idukki	1108974	145486	13.1%
Ernakulam	3282388	268411	8.2%
Thrissur	3121200	324350	10.4%
Palakkad	2809934	403833	14.4%
Malappuram	4112920	308266	7.5%
Kozhikode	3086293	199191	6.5%
Wayanad	817420	32578	4.0%
Kannur	2523003	83350	3.3%
Kasargod	1307375	53283	4.1%
Total	33406061	3039573	-

Source: Estimated from Census 2011

The table 4.2 exhibits gender wise distribution of Kerala's Scheduled Castes (SC) population. The table reveals that women are slightly more than men among SC in Kerala. The percentage of women and men in total SC population is 51.4 and 48.6 respectively. The majority of districts follow this pattern, with larger percentages of females (52.1%, 51.9%, and 52%, respectively) in districts like Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam and Pathanamthitta. In Idukki, where the male SC population is 49.8% and the female population is 50.2%, the gender difference is the smallest. On the other hand, Wayanad is the only district with a 50.5% male majority. With a slight but steady female preponderance in the majority of districts, this data shows a well-balanced gender distribution among Kerala's SC population.

Table 4.2: Gender-wise distribution of SC population in Kerala

District	Scheduled Castes (Male)	Scheduled Castes (Female)	Scheduled Castes (Total)	Male SC (%)	Female SC (%)
Thiruvananthapuram	178589	194388	372977	47.9%	52.1%
Kollam	157801	170462	328263	48.1%	51.9%
Pathanamthitta	78942	85523	164465	48.0%	52.0%
Alappuzha	97183	104028	201211	48.3%	51.7%
Kottayam	75503	78406	153909	49.1%	50.9%
Idukki	72399	73087	145486	49.8%	50.2%
Ernakulam	131573	136838	268411	49.0%	51.0%
Thrissur	156480	167870	324350	48.3%	51.7%
Palakkad	197451	206382	403833	48.9%	51.1%
Malappuram	151557	156709	308266	49.2%	50.8%
Kozhikode	97279	101912	199191	48.8%	51.2%
Wayanad	16406	16172	32578	50.5%	49.5%
Kannur	40260	43090	83350	48.3%	51.7%
Kasargod	26385	26898	53283	49.5%	50.5%
Total	1477808	1561765	3039573	48.6%	51.4%

Source: Estimated from Census 2011

4.3 Scheduled Caste (SC) Population Statistics between Kerala and India: A Comparison

The table 4.3 compares various demographic and literacy statistics of the Scheduled Caste (SC) population between Kerala and India. Kerala, a state in southern India, is known for its relatively high social development indicators compared to the national average. The proportion of SC community in Kerala's total population is 9.1%, whereas in India the proportion of SC population to total population is 16.6%. This difference in percentage reflects that SC population is distributed differently across India.

The SC population in Kerala has decreased over the last ten years, according to the decadal growth rate, which is negative (-2.7%). In contrast, the SC population in India showed a positive decadal growth rate (20.8%), indicating an increase in the SC population at the national level. Migration, birth rates, and the distinct social and economic circumstances in Kerala and India could all be contributing factors to this discrepancy. Difference in literacy rates is also significant. The literacy rate among the SC community in Kerala is 88.7%, which is much higher than the national average of 66.07%. Kerala's focus on social development and education contributed to this higher level of literacy rate attained in the state. Additionally, the literacy rate of SC females

in Kerala (85.07%) is significantly higher than the national average (56.46%), suggesting that SC ladies in Kerala have better educational chances and outcomes than the national average.

Table 4.3: Comparison of Scheduled Caste (SC) Population Statistics between Kerala and India

Sl No	Item	SC in Kerala	SC in India
1	Population (in lakh)	30.39	2013
2	Percentage to Total Population	9.1	16.6
3	Decadal Growth Rate (%)	-2.7	20.8
4	Child Population to Total Population (%)	14.5	9.4
5	Sex Ratio (Females per 1000 Males)	1057	945
6	Literacy Rate (%)	88.7	66.07
7	Literacy Rate-Female (%)	85.07	56.46
8	Literacy Rate-Male (%)	92.64	75.17

Source: Estimated from Census 2011

A number of implications for policy and development initiatives are highlighted by the demographic and literacy data in Table 4.3, especially with regard to the Scheduled Caste (SC) population in Kerala and India. The negative decadal growth rate of the SC population in Kerala suggests a unique demographic trend that diverges from the national trend of growth in the SC population. This trend could be indicative of various factors such as lower fertility rates, higher migration rates, or improved living conditions leading to longer life expectancy. Targeted healthcare, family planning, and immigration policies can be informed by an understanding of these relationships. It reflects the success of educational measures adopted in Kerala to boost literacy and educational attainment among underprivileged populations. This achievement highlights the value of funding education as a strategy for empowerment and societal advancement. Educational focussed initiatives should be adopted to raise the literacy rates across SC communities in other states. Kerala has taken several initiatives to promote gender equality in education which has resulted in the higher literacy rates among SC girls compared to the national average. Progressive thinking and movement in Kerala spearheaded the initiatives to bring gender equality through gender-sensitive education policies and actions. It highlights the importance of giving equal access to education to women and girls in India. Region specific policies and focussed interventions are needed to tackle the distinct educational and demographic challenges encountered by SC populations in various regions of India. It also highlights the

necessity of continuous monitoring of such initiatives to ensure effective implementation and overall development of all sections of the society.

4.4 Analysis of Age-wise Distribution of Scheduled Castes Population in Kerala

The age wise distribution of Scheduled Castes (SC) population of Kerala is shown in table 4.4.

Child Population (0-14 years): Among the SC population percentage of children is slightly smaller in Kerala compared to the total population. For example, in the total SC population, the 0–4 age group makes up 5.6%, whereas in the overall population it is 7.3%. Similarly, the percentages of SCs in the age group 5–9 and 10–14 are 6.3% and 6.9%, respectively, which is lower than in the general population, 7.6% and 8.4%, respectively. This implies a lower proportion of young children in the SC population, indicating declining birth rates or changing family dynamics within SC communities.

Working-Age Population (15-64 years): The SC population in the 15–64 age range shows a sizable portion with the biggest concentrations occurring in the 25–39 age range. For instance, the 25-29 and 35-39 age groups show 8.3% and 8.8% of the SC population, respectively. These numbers are slightly higher than the total population for the same age groups. This suggests that the SC group is well-represented among people of working age, which may have an impact on their involvement in the economy.

Elderly Population (65+ years):The percentage of people in SC who are 65 years of age or older is 8%, which is little higher than the population as a whole (7.4%). Notably, compared to 3.3% of SC men in this age range, SC women make up 4.7% of the entire SC population. This implies that SC women have a longer life expectancy than SC males, or that there are more older women than men in the SC population.

Gender Distribution: The gender distribution of the entire SC population, which is 51.3% female and 48.7% male, roughly resembles that of the general population (52% female and 48% male). This equilibrium suggests that the SC community's gender distribution reflects Kerala's general demographic trends.

Table 4.4: Kerala's Scheduled Caste Population Distribution by Age

Age Group	SC Population (%) - Male	SC Population (%) - Female	SC Population (%) - Total	Total Population (%) - Male	Total Population (%) - Female	Total Population (%) - Total
0-4	3.0	2.6	5.6	3.7	3.6	7.3
5-9	3.1	3.1	6.3	3.9	3.7	7.6
10-14	3.6	3.2	6.9	4.3	4.1	8.4
15-19	4.0	4.0	7.9	4.0	3.8	7.8
20-24	4.0	3.9	8.0	3.9	4.1	8.0
25-29	4.1	4.2	8.3	3.6	4.2	7.8
30-34	4.1	4.1	8.2	3.4	4.0	7.4
35-39	4.2	4.6	8.8	3.5	4.2	7.7
40-44	3.7	3.9	7.6	3.3	3.9	7.2
45-49	4.1	4.3	8.4	3.3	3.7	7.0
50-54	2.9	3.2	6.1	2.8	3.0	5.8
55-59	2.5	2.6	5.1	2.6	2.6	5.2
60-64	2.2	2.8	5.0	2.5	2.8	5.3
65+	3.3	4.7	8.0	3.2	4.2	7.4
Total	48.7	51.3	100.0	48.0	52.0	100.0

Source: Estimated from Census 2011

The age wise distribution of Kerala's Scheduled Castes (SC) population provides significant information for planning and social policy. This provides the government with information regarding the distribution pattern of SC population, on the basis of which the government can frame focused policies and action plan for the development of SCs. The table 4.4 shows a higher concentration of SC women in older age group. This information is very crucial and it underlines the necessity of addressing the unique challenges that older SC women encounters such as financial security and healthcare. Additionally, the proportion of SC women in age category of children and adolescents, suggests the importance of concentrating on education, skill development, and job opportunities for these groups to ensure their overall development so that they can reap the fruits of economic advancement. Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of implementing gender-sensitive policies and programs to solve the prevailing development gaps.

The occupational distribution of Kerala's Scheduled Caste population is given in the table 4.5. In this table 2011 census data is compared with the statistics of 2001 census. The percentage of SC people who were primary workers rose from 29.75% in 2001 to 32.93% in 2011, suggesting a positive trend toward higher employment engagement among SC people. The rise from 25.87% to 27.93% in the general population was equally noteworthy. The SC population's share of male major workers increased dramatically from 41.54% in 2001 to 47.03% in 2011, suggesting better job

prospects or labour market engagement for SC men. The percentage of female major workers in the SC category increased somewhat from 18.51% to 19.59%, but it was not as high as that of male main workers.

In comparison to the general population, which saw a rise from 7.12% to 7.18%, the percentage of SC primary workers involved in cultivation climbed from 1.61% in 2001 to 2.28% in 2011. This implies that despite notable advancements, SC people are still underrepresented in agricultural development. The percentage of main workers engaged in agriculture increased marginally from 29.48% to 29.9% in the case of SCs. But in the case of general population this percentage grew from 12.40% to 14.18. This suggests that a significant portion of the SC community is still employed in agricultural work. The proportion of SC primary workers engaged in household industries has fallen from 2.60% to 2.07%, which indicates people's move away from this type of job. The general population also depicts this trend and the percentage of primary workers engaged in household industries dropped from 77.13% to 75.71%. The percentage of SC main workers in other services decreased from 66.31% to 65.75%, indicating a minor decline. These changes indicate a shift in the occupational composition of the scheduled caste population between 2001 and 2011(Kerala State Planning Board, 2022). There is no information available for the SC population in the marginal workers category. However, the percentage of marginal workers in the general population increased somewhat from 6.43% to 6.85%. The labour participation rate in the general population increased from 32.30% to 34.78%, indicating a broad rise in employment engagement.

Table 4.5: Distribution of Scheduled caste population by occupations based on Census Reports 2001 and 2011

No	Category	General population		Scheduled caste Population	
	Occupations	2001	2011	2001	2011
1	Main Workers	25.87	27.93	29.75	32.93
2	Male Main Workers	41.77	44.8	41.54	47.03
3	Female Main Workers	10.85	12.37	18.51	19.59
4	Percentage of Cultivators to Main Workers	7.12	7.18	1.61	2.28
5	Percentage of Agricultural Labourers to Main Workers	12.40	14.18	29.48	29.9
6	Percentage of Main Workers engaged in Household Industry	3.35	2.93	2.60	2.07
7	Percentage of Main Workers engaged in Other Services	77.13	75.71	66.31	65.75
8	Marginal Workers	6.43	6.85		
9	Work Participation Rate	32.30	34.78		

Source: Census of India (2001, 2011); Kerala State Planning Board (2022)

Table 4.5 has a number of ramifications for the SC population's development and socio-economic standing. The greater percentage of SCs working, particularly as primary employees, suggests a level of economic empowerment and active involvement in the economy. This suggests that SCs are improving their own means of subsistence and possibly reducing dependency on aid programs in addition to strengthening the state's economy. The gender disparity in workforce participation is highlighted by the significant differences between male and female main workers, particularly among SCs. This suggests that government has to take steps to bring gender equality in employment opportunities so that female work participation rate can be raised. It is evident from the table 4.5 that in the case of SC population percentage of female main workers is higher than that of the overall population. Through focused interventions and initiatives to support women's entrepreneurship, career counselling, and skill development programs female work participation can be improved in the state. The table 4.5 again reveals that SC population is heavily depend on agricultural labour, particularly among female workers, and this dependence necessitates diversification into higher-skilled and higher-paying industries. Improved skill and access to non-agricultural jobs will definitely boost their financial outcomes and lessen their susceptibility to changes in the agricultural industry.

4.5 Kerala's 14th Five Year Plan: Overcoming Obstacles and Strengthening Scheduled Castes

Kerala State Planning Board's 2022 review discusses the challenges faced by Scheduled Castes (SCs) in Kerala. It identified landlessness and inadequate housing facilities as the biggest problems that SCs confront. These deficiencies contribute to their unstable means of subsistence. Their economic inequalities are worsened by the lack of access to suitable employment opportunities and higher education. Additionally, they also often have poor access to Information Technology (IT) and communication facilities, further restricting economic opportunities for the community. Lack of proper infrastructure in SC habitats and credit constraints along with failure of agencies to implement programmes pose significant challenges in the path towards inclusive development. To enhance the socio-economic conditions of SCs in Kerala, these issues must be successfully resolved.

Kerala's 14th Five Year Plan entails a number of initiatives designed to promote the development of SC community. These include implementation of empowerment programs meant to increase the understanding, self-worth, and social inclusion of SCs. Professional education has been prioritized in this plan. Professional education and skill development programmes are significant for enhancing the socio-economic conditions, social security, food security and social justice. The 14th Five Year Plan of Kerala aims to accelerate projects intended to improve the living standards of the SC, by solving the issues in areas of healthcare, sanitation, landownership, agriculture, skill development, and other income-generating activities. This will enable socio-economic advancement of SCs in a holistic way. The government hopes to improve the SC community and close the current socio-economic divides by concentrating on these areas. Since education is crucial to the empowerment of SCs, the 14th Five Year Plan strongly emphasizes increasing educational opportunities for the community. Initiatives such as improved access to high-quality education and skill development to raise knowledge, educational choices and equal rights fall under this category. By strengthening the education sector, the plan aims to equip SCs with the knowledge and skills needed to compete in the modern economy. The 14th Five Year Plan for SC development has a strong emphasis on healthcare. With a focus on preventive care and health education, the plan aims to increase SCs' access to healthcare facilities and services. This includes programs aimed at improving general health outcomes and addressing particular health issues that the SC community faces. As a result, Kerala's 14th Five Year Plan for SC development shows a dedication to tackling the community's multifaceted problems. The government seeks to empower SCs, improve their socio-economic standing, and advance their general development and well-being by putting in place a variety of focused measures across numerous sectors.

4.6 State Policies for Promoting Social and Economic Development of Scheduled Caste

Promoting the economic and educational interests of the most vulnerable segments of society, especially the SCs and STs, and shielding them from social injustice and exploitation are mandated by Article 46 of the Indian Constitution. In accordance with this constitutional mandate, the Kerala government launched the Special Component Plan (SCP), which was later renamed as the Scheduled Caste Sub

Plan (SCSP) in 2006, as a strategic initiative to guarantee the quick economic development of SCs. The Govt of Kerala conceived these initiatives by realizing that SCs have long been denied equal opportunities and rights, mostly due to the impact of caste system that hindered their progress. The SCSP allocated specific funds to the development of Scheduled Caste communities in proportion to their population. It serves as an umbrella program to implement development schemes for the upliftment of SCs, both by the State and Central Governments.

The SCSP being similar to the Tribal Sub Plan, underlines the need for specific efforts to tackle the unique challenges faced by marginalized communities. The initial steps to introduce the SCSP were made during the 1978-79 Annual Plan, although they were limited at that time. The formal introduction of the SCP in the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85), highlights a shift towards prioritizing the social and economic progress of SCs. The SCSP has started a number of socio-economic enrichment initiatives with the main objective of closing the socio-economic divide between SC/ST communities and other more developed groups.

The SCSP in Kerala encompasses several key objectives, including social empowerment to eliminate existing inequalities and disparities while ensuring access to basic services. It also aims at economic empowerment by promoting economic independence and self-reliance among SCs through employment and income generation activities. Additionally, by eradicating all types of prejudice against socially disadvantaged groups, the SCSP aims to promote social justice. This is pursued through constitutional safeguards, supportive laws, affirmative action, awareness campaigns among the groups concerned, and the ongoing efforts to gradually change societal mindsets. These objectives, together aim to raise SCs' socio-economic status so they can lead respectable lives and actively participate in society's social and economic fabric. In order to assist SCs' economic development, a comprehensive strategy is employed to implement SCSP, which involves developing and putting into action family and individual-focused programs. These programs aimed to enhance the social and economic well-being of SC communities by ensuring their participation and inclusion in the development process. Through the SCSP, Kerala strives to fulfil its

constitutional obligations and commitment to promoting social justice, equality, and inclusive development for all sides of society.

The welfare and empowerment of disadvantaged communities, particularly the Scheduled Castes (SCs), have been given top priority in Kerala's development agenda. The Kerala Panchayat Raj and Kerala Municipality Act, which was passed in 1994, marked a significant turning point in decentralized government. Following the Act's implementation, Local Self-Government Institutions (LSGIs) are now responsible for the welfare of weaker groups, including SCs. This shift to local governance for SC welfare was further emphasized throughout the Ninth Plan Period (1997–2002), highlighting the need of grassroots-level administration in addressing the socio-economic problems that SC communities face.

As the fundamental units of Kerala local government, grama panchayats are essential to the execution of beneficiary-oriented programs under the SCSP and TSP. They are in charge of a number of programs targeted at the well-being of SC/ST communities, including operating nursery schools, enhancing basic amenities in their colonies, helping students from these groups, and providing further assistance as required. Because local entities have a better grasp of local dynamics and can customize interventions accordingly, this decentralized model guarantees that the unique needs and concerns of SC/ST communities are addressed at the grassroots level.

Similarly, District Panchayats and Block Panchayats have specific responsibilities for the welfare of SC/ST people. Block Panchayats oversee pre-metric hostels and encourage the formation of cooperative groups in order to help the socio-economic development of these villages. District Panchayats, on the other hand, oversee the post-metric dormitories and vocational training facilities for SC/ST students, providing them with access to possibilities for higher education and skill development. SC/ST communities are guaranteed access to vital services and support systems that can improve their socio-economic standing and general well-being, thanks to this multi-tiered strategy.

The distribution of a sizeable amount of the SCSP budget to local self-governments is one of the main characteristics of Kerala's approach to SC welfare. The

government's commitment to enabling local organizations to take proactive steps for the welfare of SC communities is demonstrated by the fact that LSGIs get roughly 45% of the total SCSP funding. Accountability and efficient use of funding for SC welfare initiatives are ensured by this transparent local body-wise allocation, which is described in the budget documents.

Local Self-Government Organizations' contribution to the welfare of Scheduled castes in Kerala, represent a paradigm change toward community-led development and decentralized governance. Kerala has taken the lead in promoting social justice, equity, and inclusive development by granting local groups the power to address the particular needs of SC communities. This bottom-up approach not only guarantees improved welfare program execution but also empowers and empowers SC communities, ultimately leading to their holistic development and integration into the socio-economic mainstream.

The SCSP, a strategic initiative of the Kerala government, seeks to hasten the economic growth of SC communities. Every year, a portion of the State Plan spending is allocated to the SCSP fund. The SCSP fund is designated as a portion of the State Plan expenditure each year. The Scheduled Castes Development Department (SCDD) receives a sizable portion of this cash, with the remaining portion going to local governments for decentralized planning. This allocation pattern shows the government's intention to reduce inequalities and promote the overall welfare of these communities. From 2016-17 to 2020-21, a substantial amount of Rs 13,525.05 crore was allocated under the SCSP in Kerala. The SCDD received Rs 7,449.85 crore of this, while local governments received Rs 6,075.20 crore. This allocation pattern demonstrates a balanced approach, ensuring that both the central department and local bodies have the necessary resources to implement welfare schemes effectively. Additionally, the SCSP fund's portion of the State Plan's overall expenditures during this time was 9.81%, which is somewhat greater than the population share of 9.1% (according to the 2011 Census). This demonstrates the government's proactive approach to giving SC communities' welfare top priority.

Despite fiscal challenges, the Kerala State Government has maintained the SCSP's funding allotment at 9.81%. This steady distribution shows the government's steadfast dedication to improving SC communities and closing the socio-economic divide. In addition to carrying out its constitutional duty, the government is demonstrating its commitment to social justice and inclusive growth by guaranteeing a budget specifically for SC welfare. The SCSP has been essential in allocating resources to support both individual families and communities, with a focus on improving the socio-economic conditions of SCs. Initiatives promoting SC communities' self-reliance, economic independence, and social empowerment are part of these projects. The SCSP seeks to uplift SCs and advance their holistic development by concentrating on education, healthcare, sanitation, landownership, agriculture, skill development, and other livelihood activities.

The SCSP's decentralized implementation through local self-governments is one of its main features. Local governments get about 45% of the SCSP grant, which gives them the authority to handle the unique requirements of SC communities at the local level. Welfare programs are customized to local needs, which improves implementation and results for SCs. Kerala's SCSP is evidence of the state's obligation to advance social justice and inclusivity in development initiatives. The government is empowering SC communities and creating a more inclusive and equitable society by allocating a significant amount of the State Plan outlay for SC welfare and guaranteeing its successful implementation through decentralized planning. However, to guarantee that the SCSP accomplishes its goals and significantly improves the lives of SCs in Kerala, ongoing efforts and oversight are necessary.

4.7 Empowering Scheduled Caste Communities: The Development Strategy of 14th Five Year Plan of Kerala

Improving the lives of SCs in a more inclusive manner is the main goal of Kerala's 14th Five Year Plan. By successfully executing the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) and other measures, it seeks to protect their rights as provided by the Indian Constitution and assist individuals and families in moving forward. The plan focuses on managing risks brought on by the Covid-19 epidemic and natural calamities like the 2018 floods. In the direction of equality for all, including equal opportunity for women,

it also seeks to close the gap between these communities and the state's mainstream society.

The 14th Five Year Plan focuses on uplifting the lives of marginalized SC communities and helping them become a part of the social and economic mainstream. It aims to provide adequate basic facilities such as land, housing, and allied amenities by effectively implementing various developmental programmes. The strategy also places a strong emphasis on raising the physical quality of life index by giving the younger generation higher-quality education. By offering sustainable livelihood measures, such as access to skill development, employment possibilities, and improved livelihood chances, this education-focused approach seeks to raise living standards (Sivanandan and Ajmal 2023). The establishment of multipurpose resource centres in the neighbourhood is another important component of the 14th Five Year Plan. These facilities are meant to act as focal points for community development, offering resources and assistance for a range of projects meant to raise the socio-economic standing of SC communities. Through a variety of cultural and economic development activities, the strategy also highlights the importance of traditional artisan and cultural skills within SC communities and promotes their expansion and preservation. Additionally, the 14th Five Year Plan seeks to combat gender-based violence and other gender-discriminatory practices that affect SC communities. The strategy aims to improve SC communities and build a more inclusive and equitable Kerala society by concentrating on these important areas. It highlights the state government's dedication to advancing social justice and guaranteeing the general growth and welfare of SC communities. The development strategy outlined in Kerala's 14th Five Year Plan reflect a comprehensive approach to empowering SC communities and promoting their socio-economic development.

4.8 Conclusion

Kerala's Scheduled Castes (SCs) have made great strides in their socio-economic development, especially because of governmental initiatives that enhance local governance, healthcare, and education. However, enduring issues including job insecurity, landlessness, and unequal access to high-quality services still impede SC communities' overall growth. While decentralized governance through Local Self-

Government Institutions (LSGIs) has brought about positive changes, the uneven impact across different SC communities highlights the need for more targeted, community-specific interventions. In order to guarantee that the advantages of development reach every segment of the SC population and promote their long-term social and economic inclusion, future policy initiatives must concentrate on resolving these comprehensive gaps.

Chapter **|5|**

Empirical Analysis on Socio-economic Conditions, Inequality and the Dynamics of Social Mobility within the SC Community in Kerala

5.1 Introduction

This empirical chapter makes wide and in-depth analysis of the socio-economic conditions and inequality, as well as the dynamics of social mobility, within the most vulnerable sections of the Scheduled Caste (SC) community in the Indian state of Kerala. The primary contributions of this study can be delineated into two key dimensions, each addressing distinct facets of socio-economic disparity and mobility dynamics. Firstly, the current research aims to scrutinize the socio-economic conditions within different groups of the SC community, shedding light on potential inequalities. This includes an in-depth investigation into variations in income earning, expenditure pattern, and the determinants underlying these differences. Secondly, the study endeavours to examine the distinct impact of education on upward mobility in terms of income. By dissecting the relationship between education and income upward mobility separately, the research makes an elucidation of the pivotal role of education in elevating individuals, especially children, into higher income groups. The study aims to use empirical evidence to establish how educational attainment enhances the likelihood of individuals entering higher income brackets. It explains the relationship between education and income upward mobility. Furthermore, the research aims to unravel the direct effects of the upward education mobility on upward income mobility. Specifically, this study investigates whether children who attain higher levels of education than their parents are able to earn more than their parents. Beyond mere income comparison, the study intends to explore how individuals, especially children, outperform their parents in various aspects which helps in providing a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted relationship between education and upward income mobility. Acknowledging the multi factorial nature of social mobility, the research will also examine the influence of additional factors, such as the impact of Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on upward mobility. This variable is recognized as a critical contributor to the dynamics of social mobility within households or communities. The issues are discussed in the following heads:

5.2 Socio-Demographic and Economic Conditions of the Scheduled Caste Households

The demographic status of the scheduled caste households in Kerala reveals key insights into their living conditions and socio-economic challenges. This section provides details of sample distribution with respect to location, gender of household heads, family status, size of family, number of rooms in the house, house ownership, home conditions, and employment status.

5.2.1 Distribution of Scheduled Caste Households by Location, Gender of Household Heads, and Family Status

This section focuses on the analysis of three critical variables: location, gender of household heads, and family status. Table 5.1presents these variables.

The "Location" variable distinguishes between the surveyed households' rural and urban settings. Out of the total 377 households surveyed, 201 (53.3%) are situated in rural areas, indicating a slightly higher representation of rural households in the sample. This information remains crucial for understanding the socio-economic dynamics and infrastructure disparities between rural and urban communities, which can significantly impact social mobility.

The table also highlights the gender distribution among household heads in the surveyed sample. The data reveals that a significant majority, 349 households (92.6%), are male-headed, while only 28 households (7.4%) are female-headed. This pronounced gender imbalance on household leadership reflects broader societal norms and may influence decision-making processes and resource allocation within these households.

The "Family Status" variable categorizes households based on their perceived socio-economic status, with categories such as low, middle, and high. The data indicates that the majority of households, 241 (63.9%), belong to the low family status category, while 122 (32.4%) fall into the middle status category, and only 14 (3.7%) are high status category. This distribution suggests that a significant proportion of the surveyed households may face socio-economic challenges, which could influence their opportunities for social mobility.

Table 5.1: Demographic Summary Table

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Location			
Rural	201	53.3	53.3
Urban	176	46.7	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0
Gender of Household Head			
Male	349	92.6	92.6
Female	28	7.4	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0
Family Status			
Low	241	63.9	63.9
Middle	122	32.4	96.3
High	14	3.7	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.2.2 Distribution of Household by Size of Family

The percentage column in Table 5.2 shows the proportion of the scheduled caste households that falls into each category of family size, relative to the total number of scheduled caste households surveyed. As per the data presented in the table, 21.0 per cent of the scheduled caste households have 4 members, 29.4 per cent have 5 members, and 29.2 per cent have 6 members. This information provides insights into the typical family sizes within the scheduled caste community in Kerala, which will be important for understanding household dynamics, resource needs, and social structures within this population group.

Table 5.2: Number of family members in the households

Members	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
3.00	1	0.3	0.3
4.00	79	21.0	21.2
5.00	111	29.4	50.7
6.00	110	29.2	79.8
7.00	59	15.6	95.5
8.00	16	4.2	99.7
9.00	1	0.3	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.2.3 Housing Ownership Characteristics and Living Conditions of Scheduled Caste Households

The Table 5.3 provides insights into the household status of the scheduled caste households in Kerala, focusing on variables such as house ownership, home condition,

and the number of rooms in the house. Here's an explanation of the percentage column in the table for each variable:

1. **House Ownership**: This variable indicates whether the surveyed households stay in own or rented homes. The percentage column shows that 87.0 per cent of scheduled caste households own their homes, while 13.0 per cent stay in rented homes.
2. **Home Condition**: This variable categorizes the condition of the surveyed households' homes into good, liveable, and dilapidated. The percentage column indicates that 5.3 per cent of the households have homes of good condition, 53.8 per cent have homes that are just liveable, and 40.8 per cent have homes that are dilapidated.
3. **Rooms in the House**: This variable reflects the number of rooms in each household's residence. The percentage column shows that 8.9 per cent of households have only 1 room, 48.3 per cent have 2 rooms, 36.9 per cent have 3 rooms, 4.8 per cent have 4 rooms, and only 1.1 per cent have 5 rooms.

Table 5.3: Household status of the scheduled caste

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
House ownership			
Owned	328	87.0	87.0
Rented	49	13.0	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0
Home condition			
Good	20	5.3	5.3
Liveable	203	53.8	59.2
Dilapidated	154	40.8	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0
Rooms in the house			
1.00	34	8.9	9.1
2.00	182	48.3	57.3
3.00	139	36.9	94.2
4.00	18	4.8	98.9
5.00	4	1.1	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.2.4 Residence in Ancestral Home and Type of Ration card Holdings

The data presented in Table 5.4 shows distribution of the variable "Staying at Ancestral Home," overwhelmingly 83.3 per cent of respondents reported that they stay in their

ancestral home, while 16.7 per cent stated that they do not. It reveals that a significant majority of individuals in the sample have chosen to reside in their ancestral homes which indicates a strong attachment to family traditions or cultural values associated with their ancestral property.

Regarding the variable "Type of ration card holdings," the result shows that a great majority of the respondents (77.5%) hold a Yellow AYY ration card, 18.8 per cent have a Pink card BPL, and meagre 3.7 per cent possess a White & Blue card APL. This distribution suggests that the majority of respondents belong to the Yellow AYY category, which typically indicates eligibility for certain government welfare schemes or subsidies aimed at economically weaker sections of society.

Table 5.4: Staying at Ancestral Home and type of ration card holdings

Variables	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Staying at Ancestral Home			
Yes	314	83.3	83.3
No	63	16.7	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0
Type of ration card			
Yellow AYY	292	77.5	77.5
Pink card BPL	71	18.8	96.3
APL Cards (White & Pink)	14	3.7	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.2.5 Economic Characteristics: Landholdings, Income and Consumption Expenditure

The Table 5.5 presents descriptive statistics on four key variables: landholding, monthly income, monthly consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items, based on data from 377 respondents. Landholdings range from 0.00 to 0.50 acres, with an average of 0.0685 acres and a standard deviation of 0.06314 which indicates that most respondents possess very small landholdings with limited variability. Monthly income varies significantly as it ranges from ₹15,000.00 to ₹60,000.00, with a mean of ₹23,180.13 and a standard deviation of ₹6,005.26, reflecting considerable economic diversity within the sample. Consumption expenditure ranges from ₹3,500.00 to ₹30,000.00, averaging ₹16,090.19, with a standard deviation of ₹4,071.59 which suggest that a substantial portion of income is allocated to consumption, albeit with some variability. Expenditure on food items, ranging from ₹2,000.00 to ₹8,000.00, has

a mean value of ₹3,637.93 and a standard deviation of ₹879.63 which indicates that food forms a significant, yet relatively stable, part of respondents' spending. These figures collectively highlight the economic constraints and spending patterns of the respondents, characterized by small landholdings, diverse income levels, and notable allocations to consumption and food.

Table 5.5: Descriptive statistics of landholdings, monthly income, monthly consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Landholding (in acre)	0.00	0.50	0.0685	0.06314
Monthly income	15000.00	60000	23180.3714	6005.258
Consumption expenditure	3500.00	30000.00	16090.185	4071.586
Expenditure on food	2000.00	8000.00	3637.931	879.626
N	377			

Source: Primary Data

5.2.6 Employment status of household's members

The present section examines the employment status of household members belonging to scheduled castes, including the father, mother, sons, and daughters. Understanding the employment patterns within these households remains crucial for assessing their economic stability and the extent of their participation in the workforce. The data presented in Tables 6 to 9 provide insights into the types of employment prevalent among different family members, highlighting the diversity of occupations and income sources within scheduled caste households.

1. **Employment status of father in the household:** The Table 5.6 shows that the majority of fathers in the household are engaged in daily wage labour, accounting for 70.0 per cent of respondents. It indicates a significant reliance on daily wage work for income generation among the scheduled caste households. Self-employment is the next most common category, with 14.1 per cent of fathers involved in such activities. A smaller percentage are employed in the

Gulf region (1.3%), in private companies (4.0%), or are retired (2.7%). The unemployment rate among fathers stands at 8.0 per cent.

2. **Employment status of mother:** Similar to fathers, data presented in table 5.7 indicates that a large proportion of mothers are engaged in daily wage labour (67.4%). Self-employment is also a common occupation among mothers, with 18.3 per cent belonged to that category. Only a smaller percentage are employed in private companies (3.7%) or are retired (0.5%). The unemployment rate among mothers is found to be 10.1 per cent.
3. **Employment status of son:** The table 5.8 shows that a significant number of sons are engaged in daily wage labour (64.7%) and self-employment (22.0%). A smaller percentage of them are employed in the Gulf region (3.2%), private companies (6.6%), and public sector (2.1%). The unemployment rate among sons is found to be relatively low at 1.3 per cent.
4. **Employment status of daughter:** Similar to sons, table 5.9 observes that daughters are also actively involved in daily wage labour (58.6%) and self-employment (24.7%). A smaller percentage of them are employed in the Gulf region (0.5%), private companies (10.6%), and public sector (1.1%). The unemployment rate among daughters is 4.5 per cent.

These examinations illustrate the diverse employment patterns within scheduled caste households. However, a significant proportion of the SC individuals are engaged in daily wage labour and self-employment. The data also highlights that the gender disparities exist in employment, with sons more likely to be employed in private companies and government jobs compared to daughters.

Table 5.6: Employment status of father

Employment status of father	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Daily wage labour	264	70.0	70.0
Self-employment	53	14.1	84.1
Gulf migrant	5	1.3	85.4
Private company	15	4.0	89.4
Retired	10	2.7	92.0
Unemployed	30	8.0	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table 5.7: Employment status of mother

Employment status of mother	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Daily wage	254	67.4	67.4
Self employed	69	18.3	85.7
Private company	14	3.7	89.4
Retired	2	0.5	89.9
Unemployed	38	10.1	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table 5.8: Employment status of son

Employment status of son	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Daily wage	244	64.7	64.7
Self employed	83	22.0	86.7
Gulf migrant	12	3.2	89.9
Private company	25	6.6	96.6
Govt job	8	2.1	98.7
Unemployed	5	1.3	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table 5.9: Employment status of daughter

Employment status of daughter	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Daily wage	221	58.6	58.6
Self employed	93	24.7	83.3
Gulf migrant	2	0.5	83.8
Private company	40	10.6	94.4
Government job	4	1.1	95.5
Unemployed	17	4.5	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.2.7 Income Profile of Scheduled Caste Families

This section provides an insight into the income profile of scheduled caste families, focusing on the monthly earnings of different household members including the father, mother, sons, and daughters. Examining the income distribution within these families remains essential for assessing their economic well-being and identifying areas where targeted support and intervention may be required. The data presented in Table 5.10 offers a descriptive overview of the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation of monthly incomes for each family member.

1. **Fathers' income (monthly):** The table 5.10 reveals that fathers in scheduled caste households possess diverse range of monthly incomes, ranging from a minimum of ₹1,000.00 to a maximum of ₹20,000.00, with a mean income of ₹5,652.52. It reveals that while some fathers earn relatively low incomes, there is a small category of fathers earning higher amounts. The standard deviation of ₹2,462.20 suggests that there is significant variability in fathers' incomes, with some earning substantially more or less than the average.
2. **Mothers' Income (Monthly):** The monthly incomes of mothers in the Scheduled Caste households show considerable variation, ranging from ₹1,000.00 to ₹60,000.00, with a mean income of ₹4,461.54. As shown in Table 5.10, while many mothers earn modest incomes, some achieve relatively higher earnings. The standard deviation of ₹3,322.91 reflects greater variability than that of fathers, indicating that incomes differ significantly among mothers, with some earning well above or below the mean value.
3. **Sons' income (monthly):** Sons in these households have a broader range of monthly incomes, ranging from ₹2,000.00 to ₹60,000.00, with a mean income of ₹8,302.39. The data presented in table 5.10 suggests that some sons earn significantly higher incomes than others. The standard deviation of ₹3,852.85 indicates greater variability in sons' incomes, with some earning substantially more or less than the average.
4. **Daughters' income (monthly):** Daughters in scheduled caste households have a range of monthly incomes, varying from ₹1,000.00 to ₹19,000.00, with a mean income of ₹4,917.77. The statistics presented in table 5.10 indicates that while some daughters earn relatively low incomes, others earn higher amounts.

The standard deviation of ₹1,962.72 suggests relatively lower variability in daughters' incomes, with some earning significantly more or less than the average.

These statistics provide a nuanced understanding of the income distribution among family members within scheduled caste households, highlighting the differences in income levels and the variability in earnings among fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters.

Table 5.10: Descriptive statistics of income of the father, mother, son and daughter

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Father income (monthly)	1000.00	20000.00	5652.5199	2462.20371
Mother income (monthly)	1000.00	60000.00	4461.5385	3322.91060
Son income (monthly)	2000.00	60000.00	8302.3873	3852.85465
Daughter income (monthly)	1000.00	19000.00	4917.7719	1962.71830

Source: Primary Data

5.2.8 Educational status of Scheduled Caste Households in the sample

Understanding the educational status of members within the scheduled caste households remains crucial for assessing their access to educational opportunities and their overall socio-economic development. This section examines the educational levels attained by fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters within these households, providing insights into the educational landscape and potential disparities within the scheduled caste communities.

The Table 5.11 presents the educational status of members within scheduled caste households, focusing on the education levels completed by all categories from the SC community viz. fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters. The data indicates that majority of fathers have completed education up to grade 10 (47.7%), followed by grade 9 (24.4%) and grade 11 (11.1%). Only a small percentage of fathers have completed education beyond grade 12.

The educational status of mothers in the Scheduled Caste households in the study areas shows that nearly half of them (46.7%) have completed 10^{th} grade, making it the most common education level. A smaller portion, 18.0 per cent, have completed 9^{th} grade, and 19.1 per cent have reached 11^{th} grade. Only 10.1 per cent have completed 12^{th} grade while only fewer mothers attained higher levels: 1.3 per cent reaching 13^{th} grade, 0.8 per cent reaching 14^{th} grade, and 1.6 per cent achieving a 15^{th}grade level. This distribution highlights that while a significant number of mothers have attained

lower secondary education, there is limited progression to higher education levels which reflects the barriers for further education for this group.

For sons, the educational distribution shows a similar trend, with the highest percentage completing education up to grade 12 (35.0%), followed by grade 11 (26.5%) and grade 10 (10.3%). This suggests that there exists a significant proportion of sons in the scheduled caste households have completed secondary education, although higher education levels are less common.

In the case of daughters, the educational distribution differs slightly, with the highest percentage of them complete education up to grade 12 (36.3%), followed by grade 11 (18.8%) and grade 10 (2.9%). Similar to sons, a considerable proportion of daughters have completed secondary education, indicating a positive trend towards educational attainment among female members of the scheduled caste households.

Table 5.11: Educational status of members of Scheduled Caste Households in the study area

Education Level	Father Education	Mother education	Son Education	Daughter Education
7.00	2 (0.5%)			
8.00	29 (7.7%)	8(2.1%)		
9.00	92 (24.4%)	68(18.0%)		
10.00	180 (47.7%)	176(46.7%)	39 (10.3%)	11 (2.9%)
11.00	42 (11.1%)	72(19.1)	100 (26.5%)	71 (18.8%)
12.00	22 (5.8%)	38(10.1)	132 (35.0%)	137 (36.3%)
13.00	1 (0.3%)	5(1.3)	67 (17.8%)	87 (23.1%)
14.00	-	3(.8)	-	-
15.00	6 (1.6%)	6(1.6)	23 (6.1%)	19 (5.0%)
16.00	2 (0.5%)	1(.3)	5 (1.3%)	2 (0.5%)
17.00	1 (0.3%)	-	1 (0.3%)	1 (0.3%)
Total	377 (100%)	377 (100%)	377 (100%)	377 (100%)

Source: Primary Data

5.2.9 Mean Years of Education in Scheduled Caste Households

The Table 5.12 provides insights into the mean years of education for fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters in Scheduled Caste households. Fathers have an average of 9.95 years of education, with a range between 7 and 17 years. It indicates that most of them have completed secondary education, though higher education attainment remains limited. Mothers show a slightly higher average of 10.34 years, ranging from 8 to 16 years, suggesting that on average, they have completed education beyond the secondary level, possibly up to higher secondary or diploma levels.

Sons exhibit a notable improvement on educational attainment, with an average of 11.97 years and a range of 10 to 17 years, indicating that most of the sons have completed education beyond the secondary level, potentially reaching undergraduate studies or higher. Similarly, daughters have the highest average educational attainment at 12.75 years, with a range of 10 to 17 years, showing that many daughters have completed education beyond the secondary level, possibly up to undergraduate or higher levels. The Table 5.12 highlights a positive trend of increasing educational attainment among the younger generation, particularly sons and daughters, within the Scheduled Caste households. This trend clearly reflects progress in access to education and reveals the potential for enhanced socio-economic outcomes and empowerment within these communities.

Table 5.12: Mean years of education of members of scheduled caste households

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Father's education	7.00	17.00	9.9523	1.29969
Mother's education	8.00	16.00	10.3369	1.22063
Son's education	10.00	17.00	11.9735	1.27343
Daughter's education	10.00	17.00	12.7533	1.46598

Source: Primary Data

5.2.10 Age Distribution in Scheduled Caste Households

The Table 5.13 presents the age distribution of members within scheduled caste households, focusing on fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters. The data presented in the table indicates that, on average, fathers have an age of approximately 64.30 years,

with a range from 50 to 87 years. It suggests that fathers within the scheduled caste households are typically older, reflecting the generational aspect of these households.

Mothers, on the other hand, have a lower average age of approximately 59.28 years, with a range from 48 to 70 years. It indicates that mothers are younger than fathers within the scheduled caste households.

Sons have a much lower average age of 34.82 years with a wide range from 20 to 44 years. The standard deviation of 16.95 also indicates considerable variability in the age of sons within the scheduled caste households.

Similarly, daughters have a lower average age of approximately 32.42 years and a range from 19 to 49 years. The standard deviation of 7.78 suggests variability in the age of daughters within the scheduled caste households, possibly reflecting different life stages and experiences. The data provides insights into the age distribution of members within the scheduled caste households, highlighting the different life stages and generational dynamics within these communities.

Table 5.13: Age distribution of members of scheduled caste households

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age of father	50.00	87.00	64.2971	5.14749
Age of mother	48.00	70.00	59.2759	5.09675
Age of son	20.00	44.00	34.8170	16.94958
Age of daughter	19.00	49.00	32.661	7.7895

Source: Primary Data

5.2.11Technical education and computer skills of the household members

The table 5.14 provides a detailed breakdown of technical education and computer skills among the Scheduled Caste (SC) individuals in the surveyed households. Among the SC population, only 3.7 per cent have received technical education, while the vast majority (96.3%) have not received technical education. Regarding computer skills, 35.5 per cent of SC individuals do not possess any skills, 59.9 per cent have basic skills, and only 4.5 per cent have advanced skills. These findings highlight a significant gap in both technical education and advanced computer skills within the SC community which emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to enhance their education and digital literacy levels.

Table 5.14: Technical education and computer skills of the household members

Education Level	**Frequency**	**Percent(%)**
Technical Education(Yes)	14	3.7
Technical Education(No)	363	96.3
Total	377	100
Computer Skills		
No skill	134	35.5
Basic skills	226	59.9
Advanced skills	17	4.5
Total	377	100

Source: Primary Data

5.2.12 Type of School attended by Children during their Primary and Secondary Level of Education

The table 5.15 outlines the educational institutions attended by children from the Scheduled Caste households for primary and secondary education. It reveals that a majority, 62.9 per cent, of these children have studied in government schools, indicating a reliance on public educational institutions. A further 30.2 per cent attended aided schools, suggesting a substantial portion benefiting from government-supported or partially funded education. Private schools, which generally cater to a more affluent demographic, accounted for only 4.8 per cent of the children, indicating limited access to private education within the Scheduled Caste community. This data underscores importance of government and aided schools in providing primary and secondary education to the Scheduled Caste children, highlighting potential areas for policy focus and improvement.

Table 5.15: Type of school in which children studied at primary and secondary level of education

Type of School	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**	**Cumulative Percent (%)**
Government	237	62.9	62.9
Aided	114	30.2	93.1
Private	18	4.8	97.9
Other	8	2.1	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.2.13 Access to Quality Education Resources During Primary and Secondary Education

The Table 5.16 provides insights into access to quality educational resources during the primary and secondary education of individuals from the Scheduled Caste households. The Table shows that majority of the respondents (60.7%) reported having access to quality educational resources which indicates that a significant portion benefited from materials and facilities supportive of learning. In contrast, 39.3 per cent reported a lack of access, revealing a substantial gap in educational quality for a considerable segment of the Scheduled Caste population. This disparity underscores the need for more equitable access to quality educational resources, which is essential for fostering a more inclusive and effective education system for the Scheduled Caste individuals.

Table 5.16: Access to quality educational resources during primary and secondary education

Quality Education	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Yes	229	60.7	60.7
No	148	39.3	100
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.2.14 Type of Higher Education Institution Attended by Children in Scheduled Caste Households

The Table 5.17 outlines the institutions where children from Scheduled Caste households pursued advanced or specialised courses during their higher education. The data reveals that a significant portion, 45.4 per cent, of these individuals opted aided institutions, which are often government-supported or partially funded. Government institutions were also a popular choice. 37.1 per cent of the individuals pursue higher education in these establishments. Private institutions accounted for 17.5 per cent of the individuals. These institutions are typically associated with higher fees and catering to a more affluent demographic. This distribution suggests a reliance on government and aided institutions for higher education among the Scheduled Caste individuals. It reflects the importance of the accessibility and affordability of education for this community.

Table 5.17: Institution in which children pursued advanced or specialized courses during their higher education

Higher Education	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Government	140	37.1	37.1
Aided	171	45.4	82.5
Private	66	17.5	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source Primary Data

5.2.15 Challenges and Discrimination in Education by Scheduled Caste (SC) students

The section on challenges and discrimination in education among the Scheduled Caste (SC) students explores the various hurdles and biases they encounter within the educational sphere. The SC students often encounter unique hardships that impede their educational progress. This include inadequate access to superior educational institutions, learning resources along with discriminatory practices within educational institutions. This section aims to delve into these issues, providing a nuanced understanding of the barriers that hinder the educational advancement of SC students. By highlighting these challenges and discrimination, this section seeks to underscore the importance of addressing systemic inequalities within the education system to ensure a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students.

Among the Scheduled Caste students, 62.6 per cent reported challenges being faced in accessing education. These challenges could include financial barriers, lack of infrastructure, and limited availability of educational institutions in their area. It indicates that a significant portion of the Scheduled Caste students encounter obstacles hindering their ability to access education, highlighting the need for targeted interventions for improving accessibility and inclusivity in education.

Additionally, 51.7 per cent of the students specifically reported experiencing bias in their education, which could manifest as unequal treatment by teachers, limited opportunities, or exclusion by peers. The high percentage of students facing discrimination highlights the systemic challenges that the Scheduled Caste students may encounter within the education system, emphasizing the importance of addressing these issues for ensuring a more equitable learning environment for all students.

Table 5.18: Challenges and discrimination in education faced by scheduled caste students

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Challenges in access to education			
Challenge in Education (Yes)	236	62.6	62.6
Challenge in Education (No)	141	37.4	100.0
Discrimination/bias in education carrier			
Bias in Education (Yes)	195	51.7	51.7
Bias in Education (No)	182	48.3	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.2.16 The Role of Social Networks in Supporting Education and Employment for Scheduled Caste Students

The Table 5.19 presents the data signifying social networks in providing guidance and support for education and employment for the Scheduled Caste (SC) students. Social networks, comprising family, friends, and community members, often play a crucial role in shaping individuals' educational and career trajectories. For the SC students, who may face unique challenges and barriers in accessing education and employment opportunities, the role of social networks can be particularly impactful. The table 5.19 reveals that a substantial proportion of the SC students value social networks, with 39.5 per cent considering them very important and an additional 43.0 per cent regarding them as important. It indicates that the majority of the SC students consider social networks as crucial for navigating educational and employment challenges. Only 17.5 per cent of respondents view social networks as not important in this context. This analysis aims to understand the perceived importance of social networks among the SC students and analyse how these networks contribute to their educational and employment journeys. By exploring these dynamics, we can gain insights into the support structures that remain crucial for enhancing educational and employment outcomes for SC students.

Table 5.19: Importance of social networks in providing guidance and support for education and employment for SC students

Social Network Importance	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Not important	66	17.5	17.5
Important	162	43.0	60.5
Very important	149	39.5	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The Table 5.20 provides insights on the participation of Scheduled Caste (SC) individuals in community-based initiatives that promote networking. The data indicates that 51.5 per cent of respondents have participated in such initiatives, highlighting a significant level of engagement within the SC community. These community activities likely serve as platforms for networking, sharing resources, and building supportive relationships, which can be particularly beneficial for the SC individuals who may face social and economic challenges. However, it is noteworthy that 48.5 per cent of the respondents have not participated in these initiatives, suggesting that there may be opportunities for further promoting and expanding such community-based networking activities within the SC community. This examination emphasizes the importance of community engagement and networking for the SC individuals which can contribute to their social capital and access to opportunities.

Table 5.20 Participation in community-based initiatives that promote networking

Community Activity	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Yes	194	51.5	51.5
No	183	48.5	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.2.17 Social Dynamics and Experiences of Discrimination among Scheduled Caste Individuals

This section delves into the social dynamics and experiences of discrimination among the Scheduled Caste (SC) individuals and families. Discrimination, deeply entrenched in societal structures, continues to be a significant challenge faced by the SC community, impacting various aspects of their lives. Through a detailed analysis of data on experiences of discrimination within families and participation in community

initiatives, this section aims to highlight the pervasive nature of discrimination faced by the SC individuals. By exploring these experiences, we can gain a deeper understanding of the social context in which the individuals navigate their lives and the importance of addressing systemic inequalities to foster a more inclusive society.

The Table 5.21 examines whether the Scheduled Caste (SC) families have experienced any form of discrimination at any point in their lives. The data indicates that a significant majority of the SC families (71.9%) have felt discrimination. It highlights the pervasive nature of discrimination being faced by the SC community. This finding emphasizes the complex social dynamics and challenges that SC individuals and families encounter, potentially impacting various aspects of their lives, including education, employment, and social interactions. However, it is also notable that 28.1 per cent of the SC families reported that they are not feeling discrimination, suggesting that while discrimination remains prevalent, there are instances where SC families may not perceive or experience discrimination. This data underscores the importance of addressing discrimination and promoting inclusivity for ensuring the well-being and dignity of the SC families.

Table 5.21: Feeling of discrimination at any time in life

Family Feels Discrimination	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Yes	271	71.9	71.9
No	106	28.1	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.2.18 Government Support and Policies for Education and Skill Development: Perspectives of the Scheduled Caste Community

The current section examines the satisfaction levels of Scheduled Caste (SC) individuals with government support and policies related to education and skills development. It is generally perceived that education and skill development remain critical for the socio-economic empowerment of the SC community. Government policies play a crucial role in facilitating access to quality education and skill-building opportunities. The analysis of the data on satisfaction with government support gives insights into the efficacy of the ongoing policies and helps identify the areas where

progress is required. Understanding perspectives of SC individuals on government initiatives can help policymakers tailor interventions that better meet the needs of the SC community, ultimately contributing to their overall development and empowerment.

The Table 5.22 presents the satisfaction levels of the Scheduled Caste (SC) individuals with government support and policies for education and skills development within their community. The data suggest that 47.7 per cent of respondents are satisfied with the government's efforts in this regard, while 52.3 per cent are not satisfied. This implies a mixed sentiment among the SC individuals regarding the effectiveness of government policies and support for education and skills development. The relatively higher percentage of dissatisfaction suggests that there may be perceived gaps or inadequacies in the prevailing government initiatives for the SC community in these areas. It is crucial to address these concerns to make sure that government policies are effectively meeting the needs and aspirations of the SC population, ultimately contributing to their educational and socio-economic advancement. It highlights the importance of continually evaluating and improving government policies for enhancing the educational and skill development opportunities for the SC community.

Table 5.22: Satisfaction with the Government support and policies for education and skills development for the SC community

Satisfaction with Government Policy	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Yes	180	47.7	47.7
No	197	52.3	100.0
Total	377	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

5.3 Intra-caste differences in socio-economic conditions in Scheduled caste Households

While research often focuses on the socio-economic status of various social groups and religions, there exists a lack of in-depth study on intra-caste differences within the Scheduled Caste (SC) households. Kerala's SC population forms a significant segment of its overall population, making it crucial to understand the nuances of socio-economic disparities within this group. This section aims to address this gap by analysing the variations in socio-economic conditions among different SC communities in Kerala state. By conducting a sample survey in selected regions of Kerala, this section seeks to

shed light on the specific socio-economic challenges and disparities being faced by different SC communities, providing relevant insights for targeted interventions and policy formulation.

5.3.1 Differences in Home Conditions by Types of SC community

The data presented in table 5.23 highlight the differences in home conditions among different Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala, categorized into Good, Liveable, and Dilapidated conditions. Understanding the variations in home conditions among these communities remains crucial for assessing the quality of living standards and identifying areas for improvement in their housing infrastructure. This analysis aims to provide an insight on the disparities in home conditions within the SC communities in Kerala, highlighting the need for targeted interventions in addressing housing challenges and improving overall living standards for these communities.

1. **Pulayan/ Cheraman**: This group shows a majority of homes remain liveable (64.3%), while a notable portion lives in dilapidated conditions (28.6%). Only a small percentage of homes are categorised as good (7.1%).
2. **Kanakkan/ Padanna**: Similar to the first group, this community also has a significant number of homes in deplorable conditions (47.6%). 42.9 per cent and 9.5 per cent of the households in this community live respectively in liveable and good home conditions.
3. **Cheruman**: The majority of homes of this community live in liveable home conditions (56.8%), while a significant portion live in dilapidated conditions (40.5%). The percentage of good homes remains relatively low (2.7%) for them.
4. **Mannan/ Perumannan**: This group has a relatively higher percentage of homes in good conditions (11.1%) when compared to other communities. The majority of homes are in liveable conditions (60.0%), with a smaller percentage in dilapidated conditions (28.9%).
5. **Paraiyan/ Sambavar**: Homes of this community are mostly in liveable conditions (51.5%), with a significant portion in dilapidated conditions (45.5%). The percentage of homes remaining in good conditions is the lowest in this group (3.0%).
6. **Kuravan/ Sidhanar**: None of the homes of Kuruvan community are classified as good, with the majority fall in dilapidated home conditions (60.0%). Still, a

significant portion among this community stays in home having liveable conditions (40.0%).

7. **Panan**: Only one of the homes of this community are classified as good. The majority are staying in liveable conditions (53.8%), while a substantial portion of the community live in dilapidated home conditions (42.3%).
8. **Kavara**: Homes of Kavara community are mostly in liveable conditions (52.9%), with a significant portion live in dilapidated conditions (44.1%). Only a small percentage of the homes are classified as good (2.9%).
9. **Kalladi**: For this community 54.9 per cent have liveable homes, while 5.9 per cent has good home conditions and 39.2 per cent live in dilapidated conditions.

In order to compare the home conditions among the different SC groups in Kerala, we can have a look at the percentage of homes classified as "Good" and "Dilapidated" within each community. Higher percentages of "Good" category homes indicate better living conditions, while higher percentages of "Dilapidated" homes indicate poorer living conditions.

Better Home Conditions: The Mannan/ Perumannan community has the highest percentage of homes which are classified as "Good" (11.1%), indicating relatively better living conditions compared to other communities. The Kanakkan/ Padanna community also shows a relatively higher percentage of "Good" homes (9.5%), suggesting better living conditions within this SC group.

Not Better Home Conditions: The Kuravan/ Sidhanar community stands out with no homes classified as "Good" and the highest percentage of their homes are classified as "Dilapidated" (60.0%), indicating poorer living conditions within this group.The Kanakkan/ Padanna community also shows a higher percentage of "Dilapidated" homes (47.6%), suggesting poorer living conditions when compared to the other SC communities.

In short, the Mannan/ Perumannan and Kalladi communities have relatively better home conditions, while the Kuravan/ Sidhanar and Kanakkan/ Padanna communities have relatively poorer home conditions. These comparative views provide insights into the varying levels of housing infrastructure and living status among different SC communities in Kerala. The Pearson Chi-square test reflects a significant difference in home conditions among the above SC communities in Kerala. This

suggests that factors influencing home conditions vary across these groups, potentially reflecting socio-economic disparities within the SC communities in Kerala.

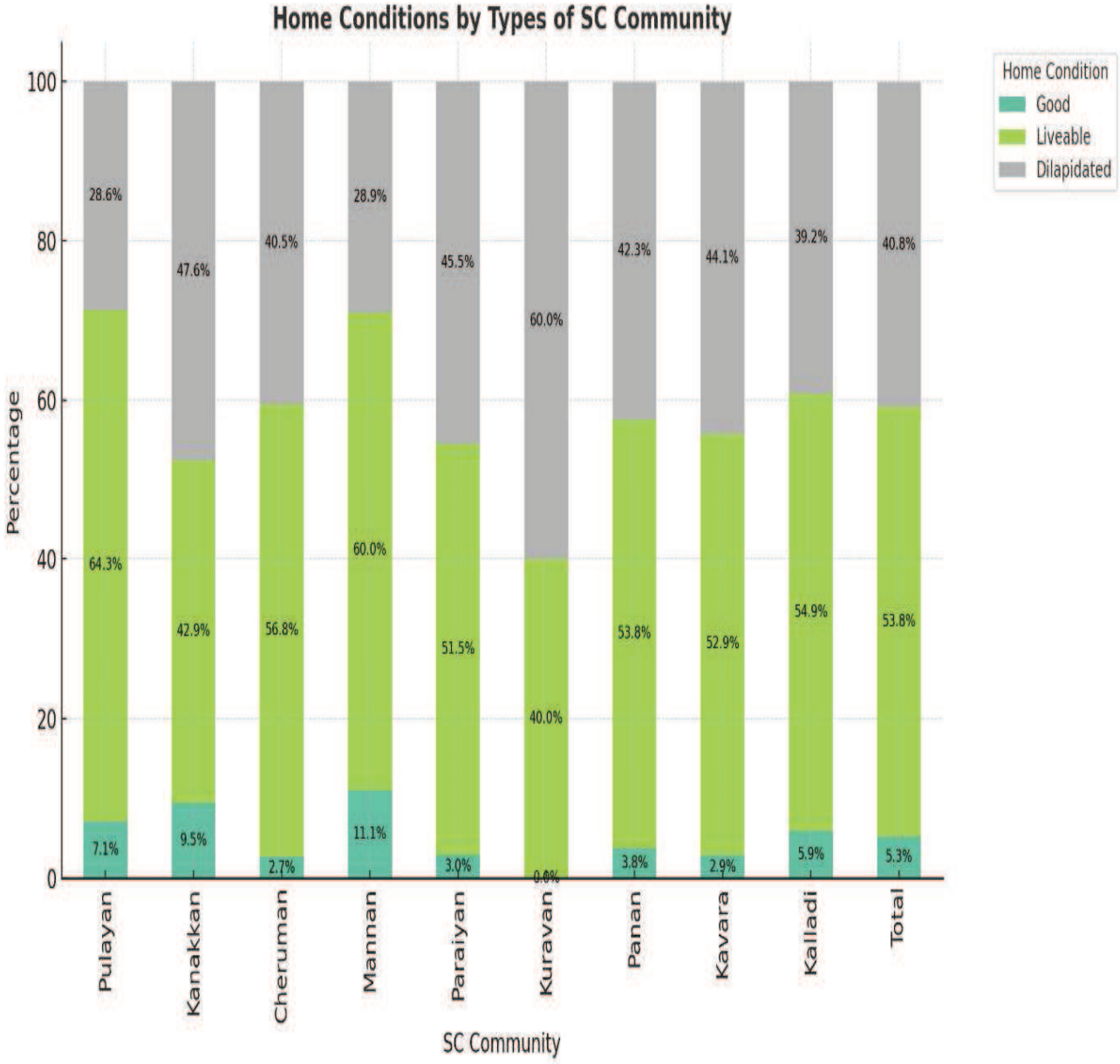
Table 5.23: Differences in Home Conditions by Types of SC community

Types of SC Community		Home conditions			Total
		Good	Liveable	Dilapidated	
Pulayan/ Cheraman	Count	3	27	12	42
	% within community	7.1%	64.3%	28.6%	100.0%
Kanakkan/ Padanna	Count	4	18	20	42
	% within community	9.5%	42.9%	47.6%	100.0%
Cheruman	Count	2	42	30	74
	% within community	2.7%	56.8%	40.5%	100.0%
Mannan/ Perumannan	Count	5	27	13	45
	% within community	11.1%	60.0%	28.9%	100.0%
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	Count	1	17	15	33
	% within community	3.0%	51.5%	45.5%	100.0%
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	Count	0	12	18	30
	% within community	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
Panan	Count	1	14	11	26
	% within community	3.8%	53.8%	42.3%	100.0%
Kavara	Count	1	18	15	34
	% within community	2.9%	52.9%	44.1%	100.0%
Kalladi	Count	3	28	20	51
	% within community	5.9%	54.9%	39.2%	100.0%
Total	Count	20	203	154	377
	% within community	5.3%	53.8%	40.8%	100.0%
Pearson Chi square Test Value	**13.456 (0.000)**				

Source: Primary Data

Figure 5.1 presents the distributions of households across good, livable, and dilapidated home conditions among the different Scheduled Caste Communities in Kerala

Figure 5.1: Differences in Home Conditions (Good, Liveable, Dilapidated) by Types of SC community



(Source: Primary Data)

5.3.2 Differences in Staying at ancestral Home by Types of SC community

The data presented in Table 5.24 shows an analysis of the practice of staying at ancestral homes among different Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala, categorized as "Yes" or "No". This analysis aims to highlight the cultural and social aspects related to ancestral homes within these backward communities, providing insights into the extent to which individuals continue to reside in their ancestral homes.

1. **Pulayan/ Cheraman:** The majority of individuals in Pulayan/Cheruman community (83.3%) continue to stay in their ancestral homes. It indicates a strong cultural tradition and attachment to their familial roots. This practice likely implies a deep respect for ancestral properties and a desire to preserve their cultural heritage.
2. **Kanakkan/ Padanna:** Similar to the previous group, a great majority (81.0%) of the of individuals in Kanakkan/Padanna community prefer to stay in their ancestral homes. It suggests a cultural continuity and sense of belonging to their ancestral properties and lineage.
3. **Cheruman:** A majority of individuals in this community (75.7%) still stay in their ancestral homes. This could indicate some degree of migration or movement away from ancestral homes to stay in new homes within this community.
4. **Mannan/ Perumannan:** This community exhibits the highest percentage (95.6%) of individuals staying in their ancestral homes. It indicates a strong cultural and familial bond with the ancestral properties of this community. The practice of staying in ancestral homes seems to be deeply ingrained in the social fabric of this community.
5. **Paraiyan/ Sambavar:** While a majority (72.7%) of individuals in Paraiyan/Sambavar community stay in their ancestral homes, a notable percentage do not. This suggests some level of migration or relocation within this community, potentially influenced by factors such as work or education opportunities.
6. **Kuravan/ Sidhanar:** An overwhelmingly large majority of individuals in this community (93.3%) continue to stay at their ancestral homes, indicating a strong cultural adherence to ancestral traditions and properties. This practice likely plays a significant role in maintaining familial ties and preserving cultural heritage.
7. **Panan:** The majority of individuals in this SC community (80.8%) stay in their ancestral homes, reflecting a strong cultural attachment to their ancestral properties. This practice can contribute to the preservation of familial traditions and cultural identity within the community.

8. **Kavara:** Similar to other communities, a majority of individuals in this community (85.3%) stay in their ancestral homes. It points to the fact that a cultural norm within the community to maintain ties with their ancestral properties and heritage.
9. **Kalladi:** A significant percentage (86.3%) of individuals in the Kalladi community continue to stay in their ancestral homes, indicating a strong cultural tradition of familial ties and attachment to ancestral properties. This practice can play a role in preserving the community's cultural identity and heritage.

Based on the results, the Mannan/ Perumannan group has the highest percentage (95.6%) of individuals staying in their ancestral homes, making them the group most strongly tied to their ancestral properties. On the other hand, the Paraiyan/ Sambavar group has the lowest percentage (72.7%) of individuals staying in the ancestral homes, implying a relatively weaker connection to ancestral properties compared to other groups.

The Pearson chi-square test value for the difference in staying in the ancestral homes among different the SC communities is 9.321, with the p value of 0.000. It implies that there exists a statistically significant difference (at 1% level) in the practice of staying at ancestral homes among these SC communities in Kerala. In other words, the distribution of individuals staying in the ancestral homes is not the same across all the SC communities. The chi-square test helps to determine whether the differences in the observed frequencies of staying in the ancestral homes among the SC communities are likely due to random chance or if there is a genuine difference in behavior or preference among the communities. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 (typically used as a threshold for statistical significance in social science research), we reject the null hypothesis, which states that there exists no difference in the distribution, and conclude that there is a statistically significant difference. It provides insight that factors specific to each of the SC community influence the decision to stay at ancestral homes which highlights the cultural diversity and unique practices within these communities.

Table 5.24: Differences in Staying at ancestral Home by Types of SC community

Types of SC Community		Staying at ancestral Home		Total
		Yes	No	
Pulayan/ Cheraman	Count	35	7	42
	% within community	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
Kanakkan/ Padanna	Count	34	8	42
	% within community	81.0%	19.0%	100.0%
Cheruman	Count	56	18	74
	% within community	75.7%	24.3%	100.0%
Mannan/ Perumannan	Count	43	2	45
	% within community	95.6%	4.4%	100.0%
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	Count	24	9	33
	% within community	72.7%	27.3%	100.0%
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	Count	28	2	30
	% within community	93.3%	6.7%	100.0%
Panan	Count	21	5	26
	% within community	80.8%	19.2%	100.0%
Kavara	Count	29	5	34
	% within community	85.3%	14.7%	100.0%
Kalladi	Count	44	7	51
	% within community	86.3%	13.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	314	63	377
	% within community	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
Pearson Chi Square Test Value	**9.321 (0.000)**			

Source: Primary Data

5.3.3 Differences in employment status of father by Types of SC community

The data presented in table 5.25 examines the employment status of father across different Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala. The employment categories include Daily Wage Labor, Self-Employment, Gulf Migrant, Private Company Employment, Retired, and Unemployed. Understanding the employment patterns among these communities sheds light on their economic activities and livelihood sources.

1. **Pulayan/ Cheraman:** The majority of household heads (father) in Pulayan/Cheraman community are engaged in Daily Wage Labor (76.2%) and a significant percentage are Unemployed (9.5%). Few individuals belong to the categories of Self-Employment (4.8%) and employed in Private Companies (4.8%).

2. **Kanakkan/ Padanna:** Daily Wage Labor is the most common employment category (66.7%) for this community, followed by Self-Employment (14.3%). Few individuals are Gulf Migrants (2.4%) or Retired (2.4%).
3. **Cheruman:** Similar to the previous groups, Daily Wage Labor (68.9%) is predominant catgeory for this category. Self-Employment (17.6%) and Private Company Employment (5.4%) are also notable employment categories.
4. **Mannan/ Perumannan:** Daily Wage Labor (60.0%) and Private Company Employment (13.3%) are the prominent categories. Self-Employment (11.1%) and being Retired (4.4%) are also observed as the other categories.
5. **Paraiyan/ Sambavar:** Daily Wage Labor is the most common (78.8%), with some Self-Employment (12.1%). Only a few individuals are observed as Unemployed (6.1%).
6. **Kuravan/ Sidhanar:** Daily Wage Labor is a prevalent category (76.7%), with some Self-Employment (10.0%) and being Unemployed (10.0%).
7. **Panan:** Daily Wage Labor (61.5%) and Self-Employment (26.9%) are the main employment categories while a few are Unemployed (11.5%).
8. **Kavara:** Daily Wage Labor (82.4%) is the dominant category, with a small percentage in Self-Employment (8.8%) and being Retired (5.9%).
9. **Kalladi:** Daily Wage Labor (64.7%) and Self-Employment (19.6%) are significant categories while some are Retired (9.8%) or Unemployed (9.8%).

Daily Wage Labor is a common employment category across the most SC communities which highlights the prevalence of this type of work within these communities. Self-Employment is also found significant among several communities, indicating entrepreneurial activities. On the other hand, the employment status that appears to be lower among the groups is "Gulf migrant," with percentages ranging from 0.0 per cent to 4.4 per cent. This indicates that only a very few household heads in these communities belonging to the category of Gulf migrants which suggest that migration for work to Gulf countries is not as prevalent among these SC communities in Kerala.

The Chi-square test results reveal statistically significant difference in the employment status of household heads among these SC communities, suggesting that employment patterns vary across different communities.

Table5.25: Differences in employment status of father by Types of SC community

Different types of SC community		Employment status of the household head						Total
		Daily wage labour	Self-employment	Gulf migrant	Private company	Retired	Unemployed	
Pulayan/ Cheraman	Count	32	2	0	2	2	4	42
	% within community	76.2%	4.8%	0.0%	4.8%	4.8%	9.5%	100.0%
Kanakkan/ Padanna	Count	28	6	1	2	1	4	42
	% within community	66.7%	14.3%	2.4%	4.8%	2.4%	9.5%	100.0%
Cheruman	Count	51	13	1	4	1	4	74
	% within community	68.9%	17.6%	1.4%	5.4%	1.4%	5.4%	100.0%
Mannan/ Perumannan	Count	27	5	2	6	2	3	45
	% within community	60.0%	11.1%	4.4%	13.3%	4.4%	6.7%	100.0%
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	Count	26	4	1	0	0	2	33
	% within community	78.8%	12.1%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.1%	100.0%
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	Count	23	3	0	1	0	3	30
	% within community	76.7%	10.0%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Panan	Count	16	7	0	0	0	3	26
	% within community	61.5%	26.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	100.0%
Kavara	Count	28	3	0	0	1	2	34
	% within community	82.4%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	5.9%	100.0%
Kalladi	Count	33	10	0	0	3	5	51
	% within community	64.7%	19.6%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	9.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	264	53	5	15	10	30	377
	% within community	70.0%	14.1%	1.3%	4.0%	2.7%	8.0%	100.0%
Pearson Chi square Test Value	**11.012 (0.000)**							

Source: Primary Data

5.3.4 Average differences in number of family members, rooms in the households and landholdings by types od SC community

The Table 5.26 provides an insight on comprehensive overview of the average differences in key household metrics among various Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala. It estimates the average number of family members in households, the number of rooms in the households, and landholdings (in acres) across these communities.

The Table 5.26 shows that the average number of family members per household ranges from 5.2059 to 5.9667 across different SC communities, with a total average of 5.5279 members. This suggests a relatively consistent household size among the most SC communities, with minor variations. In terms of housing conditions among the SC communities, the average number of rooms in households ranges from 2.0882 to 2.6667, with a total average of 2.4040 rooms per household. This indicates a similar housing structure across most communities, with slight differences in room numbers.

Regarding the land ownership, average landholding size varies from 0.0550 to 0.0982 acres across different communities, with total average of 0.0685 acres per household. This suggests some variation in land ownership patterns among the SC communities, with some communities having larger landholdings on average than the others.

Among the SC communities presented in Table 5.26, the Kuravan/ Sidhanar community has the highest average number of family members in households, with mean value of 5.9667 members. But Mannan/ Perumannan community has the highest average number of rooms in households, with a mean of 2.6667 rooms. However, in terms of landholding, the Mannan/ Perumannan community has the highest average, with a mean value of 0.0982 acres. These averages provide valuable insights into the typical household composition, housing conditions, and land ownership patterns within different SC communities in the state of Kerala.

Table 5.26: Average differences in number of family members, rooms in the households and landholdings by types of SC community

Types of SC community		**Number of members in the households**	**Number of rooms**	**Landholding (in acre)**
Pulayan/Cheraman	Mean	5.3571	2.4762	.0681
	N	42	42	42
	Std. Deviation	1.18572	.80359	.05483
Kanakkan/ Padanna	Mean	5.6667	2.5071	.0710
	N	42	42	42
	Std. Deviation	1.00406	.84229	.06328
Cheruman	Mean	5.8378	2.3649	.0592
	N	74	74	74
	Std. Deviation	1.31407	.65322	.05823
Mannan/ Perumannan/	Mean	5.5111	2.6667	.0982
	N	45	45	45
	Std. Deviation	1.17980	.79772	.11165
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	Mean	5.2727	2.3636	.0633
	N	33	33	33

	Std. Deviation	.83937	.74239	.05146
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	Mean	5.9667	2.3667	.0587
	N	30	30	30
	Std. Deviation	1.03335	.66868	.02285
Panan	Mean	5.5385	2.1923	.0550
	N	26	26	26
	Std. Deviation	.98917	.74936	.02874
Kavara	Mean	5.2059	2.0882	.0653
	N	34	34	34
	Std. Deviation	.91385	.66822	.04322
Kalladi	Mean	5.2353	2.4510	.0725
	N	51	51	51
	Std. Deviation	1.15911	.87895	.05956
Total	Mean	5.5279	2.4040	.0685
	N	377	377	377
	Std. Deviation	1.13451	.76729	.06314

Source: Estimated from Primary Data

The results of ANOVA test, presented in Table 5.27, indicate significant differences in various household characteristics among different types of the Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala. For the number of family members, the test shows a statistically significant difference (F = 2.503, p = 0.002) which suggest notable variations in household sizes across these communities. Similarly, average number of rooms in households also exhibits a significant difference (F = 2.870, p = 0.0064), highlighting the diversity in structure of houses. The difference in landholdings among the SC communities is marginally significant (F = 1.789, p = 0.048), implying some variation in landownership patterns, although the p-value is on the threshold of conventional significance at 5 per cent level. These findings emphasize the socio-economic diversity within the SC communities in Kerala, focusing on the importance of community-specific approaches in policy and development initiatives for addressing the varying living standards and characteristics across these groups.

Table 5.27: ANOVA Test Results for average differences in the number of family members, rooms in the households and landholdings by types of SC community

ANOVA Test results	**F**	**Sig.**
members * community	2.503***	.002
rooms * community	2.870***	.0064
landholding * community	1.789***	.048

*Note: *** indicates 1 percent level of significance*

Source: Estimated from Primary Data

5.3.5 Average differences in family income, consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items by types of SC community

The Table 5.28 shows the average monthly family income, consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items across various Scheduled Caste (SC) communities.

The results show that Kanakkan/Padanna households have the highest average income (₹24,714.29), while Panan households report the lowest (₹22,192.31). It reveals significant variations in financial standing of the SC households. In terms of consumption expenditure, Kavara households lead with ₹16911.7647, implying better affordability or higher living standards, whereas Kalladi households record the lowest expenditure (₹14,931.37). Similarly, Mannan/Perumannan also allocate the most to food expenditure (₹3,866.67), while Kuravan/Sidhanar community spend the least (₹3,250.00). It reveals the differences in dietary preferences or financial constraints among the SC households.

Community-specific observations suggest diverse economic behaviors. For example, Pulayan/ Cheraman households, with an income of ₹23,404.76 and consumption expenditure of ₹16,440.48, display a moderate economic position, while their food expenditure (₹3,788.10) remains slightly above the overall average. Conversely, Cheruman households, with lower income (₹22,378.38) and consumption expenditure (₹15,486.49), may face economic challenges. Interestingly, despite their lower income (₹22,484.85), Paraiyan/Sambavar households prioritize food spending (₹3,848.48), which is above average. Kavara households, with an income of ₹23,029.41 and consumption expenditure of ₹16,911.76, align closely with the overall averages, indicating relative economic stability. However, Kalladi households, despite moderate income (₹22,901.96), have the lowest consumption expenditure (₹14,931.37), suggesting financial constraints or cost-conscious spending habits. The analysis reveals notable differences in income, consumption, and food expenditure among different SC communities, highlighting the economic diversity and unique financial behaviors within these communities.

Table 5.28: Average differences in family income, consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items by types of SC community

Type of SC community		Average Monthly income of the household	Average Monthly total consumption	Average Monthly food expenditure
Pulayan/ Cheraman	Mean	23404.7619	16440.4762	3788.0952
	N	42	42	42
	Std. Deviation	6317.06757	4643.64552	1103.69720
Kanakkan,/Padanna	Mean	24714.2857	16690.4762	3571.4286
	N	42	42	42
	Std. Deviation	9077.67488	5307.55603	991.25093
Cheruman	Mean	22378.3784	15486.4865	3548.6486
	N	74	74	74
	Std. Deviation	5103.59181	4342.34721	802.26447
Mannan,/,Perumannan	Mean	24444.4444	16777.7778	3866.6667
	N	45	45	45
	Std. Deviation	8220.14033	5282.42751	855.46372
Paraiyan,/ Sambavar	Mean	22484.8485	16333.3333	3848.4848
	N	33	33	33
	Std. Deviation	3993.12857	5035.29211	1078.80756
Kuravan,/Sidhanar	Mean	23066.6667	15866.6667	3250.0000
	N	30	30	30
	Std. Deviation	3912.25601	4074.59186	537.39474
Panan	Mean	22192.3077	16230.7692	3388.4615
	N	26	26	26
	Std. Deviation	2059.49957	4607.01806	561.65963
Kavara	Mean	23029.4118	16911.7647	3691.1765
	N	34	34	34
	Std. Deviation	4706.44493	3687.55193	816.63302
Kalladi	Mean	22901.9608	14931.3725	3680.3922
	N	51	51	51
	Std. Deviation	5678.92561	4963.88921	826.32188
Total	Mean	23180.3714	16090.1857	3637.9310
	N	377	377	377
	Std. Deviation	6005.25806	4701.58237	879.62696

Source: Estimated from Primary Data

The data presented in Table 5.29 shows the ANOVA test results for analysing the average differences in family income, consumption expenditure, and expenditure on

food items across different Scheduled Caste (SC) communities. The results indicate statistically significant variations in all three categories based on the type of SC community. The ANOVA test for family income shows a significant difference between groups, with an F-statistic of 2.255 and a p-value of 0.0266. This suggests that differences in average family income across SC communities are not random and that the type of SC community plays a significant role in determining the family income levels. The variation in income between-groups is significantly greater than the within-groups variation, stressing the influence of community type on income disparities.

Similarly, for consumption expenditure, the F-statistic of 2.590 with a p-value of 0.0378 implies significant differences among the SC communities. The variation on average consumption expenditure across communities exceeds the variation within communities, confirming that the type of SC community significantly impacts spending patterns.

The ANOVA test for expenditure on food items also reveals significant differences among the SC communities, with the F-statistic of 2.714 and a p-value of 0.024. It suggests that food expenditure is strongly influenced by the community type, with notable variations in average spending on food across the groups.

The ANOVA results demonstrate that the type of SC community significantly affect family income, consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items. These findings indicate the economic diversity within the SC communities and the need for comprehensive policy interventions to address disparities and improve the economic well-being of these groups.

Table 5.29: ANOVA Test results for Average differences in family income, consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items by types of SC community

		F	**Sig.**
Family income * types of SC community	Between Groups	2.255**	.0266
Consumption expenditure * types of SC community	Between Groups	2.590**	.0378
Expenditure on food* types of SC community	Between Groups	2.714**	.024

*Note: ** indicates 5 percent level of significance*

Source: Estimated from Primary Data

5.3.6 Differences in the type of school in which children studied for primary and secondary level education by Types of SC community

Education plays crucial role in shaping individuals' lives and fostering social development. Understanding the educational landscape among different communities, particularly within Scheduled Caste (SC) communities, is essential for devising inclusive policies and ensuring equitable access to quality education. In this section, we explore the distribution of children studying in government, aided, and private schools for primary and secondary education across different SC communities.

The explanation of the differences in choosing schools (government/aided/private) for children's education within each type of Scheduled Caste (SC) community.

1. **Pulayan/Cheraman:** Within Pulayan/ Cheruman community, 35.7 per cent of children attend government schools, 40.5 per cent attend aided schools, and 23.8 per cent attend private schools. This distribution reveals a relatively balanced preference for aided and government schools, with a smaller but significant proportion attending private schools.
2. **Kanakkan/ Padanna:**Among this community, 40.5 per cent of children attend government schools, 45.2 per cent attend aided schools, and 14.3 per cent attend private schools. Majority of children among them attend either government or aided schools, with fewer opting for private education.
3. **Cheruman:** In the Cheruman community, 29.7 per cent of the children attend government schools, 47.3 per cent attend aided schools, and 23.0 per cent attend private schools. This community shows a higher preference for aided schools when compared to government or private schools.
4. **Mannan/ Perumannan:** Within Mannan/ Perumannan community, 37.8 per cent of the children attend government schools, 44.4 per cent attend aided schools, and 17.8 per cent attend private schools. This distribution suggests a relatively even spread across government and aided schools, with a smaller proportion attending private schools.
5. **Paraiyan/ Sambavar:** Among the children from Paraiyan/ Sambavar community, 39.4 per cent attend government schools, 57.6 per cent attend aided schools, and 3.0 per cent attend private schools. This community shows a strong preference for aided schools over government or private schools.

6. **Kuravan/ Sidhanar:** Within this community, 43.3 per cent of children attend government schools, 36.7 per cent attend aided schools, and 20.0 per cent attend private schools. There is relatively a balanced distribution among three types of schools.
7. **Panan:** Among children from Panan community, 38.5 per cent attend government schools, 38.5 per cent attend aided schools, and 23.1 per cent attend private schools. This community exhibits an even preference among government, aided, and private schools.
8. **Kavara:** Among children from Kavara community, 55.9 per cent of children attend government schools, 32.4 per cent attend aided schools, and 11.8 per cent attend private schools. Government schools are the most preferred school option for this community.
9. **Kalladi:** Among Kalladi community children, 27.5 per cent attend government schools, 56.9 per cent attend aided schools, and 15.7 per cent attend private schools. Aided schools are the most preferred school option in this community, followed by private schools.

Among the Scheduled Caste (SC) communities discussed, the Kavara community demonstrates the highest preference for government schools, with 55.9 per cent of children attending such institutions. It indicates a strong reliance on government-provided education within this community. In contrast, children from the Paraiyan/ Sambavar community attend aided schools with 57.6 per cent opting these institutions. It reveals a significant reliance on aided education facilities within these communities. Finally, the Pulayan/ Cheraman community exhibits the highest preference for private schools, with 23.8 per cent of children attending private schools. Similarly, the Cheruman community children also shows a substantial reliance on private education, with 23.0 per cent of children attending private schools. These variations on school preferences among different SC communities indicate diverse educational landscapes and preferences within these communities, necessitating concerted effort to ensure equitable access to quality education for all children.

The Pearson chi-square test is estimated to determine if there is a significant association between two categorical variables. In this case, the chi-square test was applied to examine the relationship between the type of SC community and the choice

of schools (government, aided, and private) for children's education. The estimated chi-square value is 6.467, which is associated with a p-value of 0.000. It reveals that there is statistically a significant association between the type of SC community and the choice of schools for children's education. In other words, the distribution of children among the government, aided, and private schools varies significantly across different SC communities. It suggests that the type of SC community plays a role in determining the educational choices made by families, possibly influenced by factors such as socio-economic status, cultural beliefs, and perceptions about the quality of education offered by different types of schools.

These distributions indicate the varying preferences for government, aided, and private schools within each SC community, which can be influenced by factors such as accessibility, affordability, and perceived quality of education. Understanding these preferences remains crucial for designing effective education policies and programs tailored to the specific needs of each community.

Table 5.30: Differences in the type of school in which children studied for primary and secondary level education by Types of SC community

Types of SC community		**Children studied for primary and secondary-level education**			**Total**
		Government	**Aided**	**Private**	
Pulayan/ Cheraman	Count	15	17	10	42
	% within community	35.7%	40.5%	23.8%	100.0%
Kanakkan/ Padanna	Count	17	19	6	42
	% within community	40.5%	45.2%	14.3%	100.0%
Cheruman	Count	22	35	17	74
	% within community	29.7%	47.3%	23.0%	100.0%
Mannan/ Perumannan	Count	17	20	8	45
	% within community	37.8%	44.4%	17.8%	100.0%
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	Count	13	19	1	33
	% within community	39.4%	57.6%	3.0%	100.0%
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	Count	13	11	6	30
	% within community	43.3%	36.7%	20.0%	100.0%
Panan	Count	10	10	6	26
	% within community	38.5%	38.5%	23.1%	100.0%
Kavara	Count	19	11	4	34
	% within community	55.9%	32.4%	11.8%	100.0%
Kalladi	Count	14	29	8	51
	% within community	27.5%	56.9%	15.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	140	171	66	377
	% within community	37.1%	45.4%	17.5%	100.0%
Pearson Chi square test value	**6.467 (0.000)**				

Source: Estimated from Primary Data

5.4 Determinants of consumption expenditure among Scheduled Caste households

5.4.1 Introduction

Understanding the factors driving consumption expenditure among Scheduled Caste (SC) households is crucial for policymakers and researchers aiming to improve the well-being of marginalized communities. This section empirically verifies the impact made by income, education, employment, and other factors on consumption expenditure both total expenditure and food expenditure in SC households. The present study develops a multiple linear regression model, with household consumption expenditure as the dependent variable and income, landholding, household size, family status, employment status, and education as explanatory variables. This analysis is paramount as it can uncover the factors influencing consumption patterns among SC households, providing insights into their economic behavior and constraints. Income is expected to have a positive impact on consumption expenditure, implying the ability to afford goods and services. Landholding may indicate access to resources and influence spending capacity. Household size and family status are likely to affect the pattern of consumption, with larger families and higher social status possibly leading to higher expenditures. Employment status, particularly of the father in the household, is expected to influence consumption, as employed individuals typically have higher income levels. Education, both of the father and son, may also impact consumption, reflecting the role of education in improving the earning potential and influencing the lifestyle choices.

5.4.2 Determinants of Total consumption expenditure among Scheduled Caste households

The Table 5.31 reports the estimated results of multiple linear regression model for determinants of consumption expenditure among Scheduled Caste households. The results demonstrate that households' income has significant positive impact on consumption expenditure of the SC households. The coefficient of 0.50 implies that for every one-unit increase in monthly income, there is a 0.50 unit increase in consumption expenditure, provided all other factors are held constant. The high t-value of 5.17 indicates that the relationship between income and consumption expenditure is statistically significant, meaning that the observed relationship is unlikely to have

occurred by chance. The significant p-value of 0.000 further supports the idea that the impact of income on consumption expenditure is real and not due to random variation. This result reveals that higher income levels are associated with higher consumption expenditure among SC households. It highlights the importance of economic empowerment and increasing income levels in improving the standard of living and quality of life for SC communities. Policies that aim to increase the income levels, such as skill development programs and employment generation schemes, can potentially lead to higher consumption and overall well-being for SC households.

The household landholding (in acre) also has significant positive impact on household consumption expenditure. The coefficient with respect to landholding is 0.070, indicates that for every one-unit increase in landholding (in acres), there will be a 0.070 unit increase in consumption expenditure, all other factors held constant. The t-value 2.53 suggests that the relationship between landholding and consumption expenditure is statistically significant.

The significant p-value of 0.012 further supports the idea that land ownership positively influences spending patterns. This finding suggests that land ownership plays a significant role in determining consumption expenditure among SC households. It reflects that policies aimed at enhancing the land ownership among SC communities, such as land redistribution programs or access to agricultural land, could potentially lead to increased consumption expenditure and improved economic conditions. However, it is paramount to consider sustainable land management practices to ensure long-term benefits and environmental sustainability.

Household size has a notable impact on consumption expenditure among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households, as evidenced by the regression analysis. For each additional member in the household, there will be a substantial 0.679 unit increase in consumption expenditure, holding all other variables constant. This finding underscores the economic challenges faced by larger households, as they tend to require more goods and services to meet their basic needs. It suggests that policymakers and social planners should consider the implications of household size when designing programs and

initiatives to support SC communities, ensuring that larger households receive adequate support to manage their expenses and improve their overall well-being.

In addition, family status plays a significant role in determining consumption expenditure among the SC households. Those in the middle or high-status category exhibit higher levels of consumption expenditure compared to the baseline lower status group. Specifically, being in the middle status category is associated with a 0.656-unit increase, while being in the high-status category is associated with an even higher 0.841 unit increase in consumption expenditure, holding all else constant. This finding underscores the impact of social factors on consumption patterns and highlights the need for policies addressing social inequalities to enhance the economic conditions of SC communities.

The employment status of father in the household has a modest but significant impact on consumption expenditure among Scheduled Caste (SC) households. Specifically, being self-employed, compared to other employment statuses, results in a 0.0286 unit increase in consumption expenditure, holding all other factors constant. This finding suggests that self-employment provides a narrow economic advantage, potentially due to higher income or greater control over work and earnings. The significant t-value of 2.52 and p-value of 0.030 indicate that this relationship is unlikely to have occurred accidentally, further supporting the positive impact of self-employment on consumption expenditure.

In contrast, the employment status of sons does not significantly influence consumption expenditure among the SC households. The non-significant t-value of -0.11 and p-value of 0.914 suggest that whether sons are employed or not does not have a discernible effect on household consumption patterns. This finding highlights the complex nature of household dynamics and economic decision-making, indicating that factors beyond individual employment status may play a pivotal role in determining consumption expenditure.

The data presented in Table 5.31 reveals contrasting impacts of parental education on consumption expenditure among Scheduled Caste (SC) households. Surprisingly, the education level of the father does not significantly influence

consumption expenditure, as indicated by the non-significant t-value of 0.91 and p-value of 0.362. This suggests that, within the SC households, the father's education level does not directly transform into higher consumption patterns, highlighting the potential complexities in how education affects economic outcomes in these communities.

In contrast, the education level of the son shows a significant impact on consumption expenditure. Specifically, a one-unit increase in son's education level leads to a 0.177 unit increase in consumption expenditure, holding all other factors constant. This finding suggests that higher education attainment among sons is associated with higher household consumption expenditure, indicating a positive impact of education on economic well-being within the SC households. The significant t-value of 2.49 and p-value of 0.013 further validate this relationship, indicating that the observed effect is unlikely due to random chance.

The adjusted R-squared value in the regression model helps to understand how effectively the independent variables explain the variation in the dependent variable (consumption expenditure) while accounting for the number of predictors in the model. In this case, the adjusted R-squared value of 0.453 reveals that approximately 45.3 per cent of the variation in consumption expenditure among Scheduled Caste (SC) households can be explained by the predictor variables included in the model (income, landholding, household size, family status, employment status of father, employment status of son, education of father, and education of son). The remaining 54.7 per cent of the variation remains unexplained and could be attributed to other factors not included in the model or to random variation.

The F-value in the regression analysis is used to test the overall significance of the regression model employed in the research. It is calculated by comparing the variance explained by the model to the variance that is not explained. In this case, the F-value of 123.455 is associated with a p-value of 0.000, indicating that the regression model is statistically significant at 1 per cent level. It indicates that the independent variables, taken together, have a significant impact on consumption expenditure among the SC households. In other words, there exists a relationship between the set of

independent variables (income, landholding, household size, family status, employment status of father, employment status of son, education of father, and education of son) and consumption expenditure in the SC households.

Table 5.31: Determinants of consumption expenditure among Scheduled Caste households: Estimation Multiple Linear Regression Model

Variable	Coefficient	t-value	p-value
Dependent variable: Consumption expenditure			
Explanatory variables			
Income (monthly)	0.50***	5.17	0.000
Landholding (in acre)	0.070***	2.53	0.012
Household size	.679***	6.72	0.000
Family status (baseline=lower)			
1. Middle	.656***	2.49	0.013
2. High	.841***	3.58	0.000
Employment status of father (self-employed=1; others=0)	.0286***	2.52	0.030
Employment status of son (self-employed=1; others=0)	-.739	-0.11	0.914
Education of father	.301	0.91	0.362
Education of son	.177***	2.49	0.013
Constant	2.397***	2.14	0.033
F value	123.455 (0.000)		
Adjusted R squared	0.453		

*Note: *** represents 1% level of significance*

Source: Estimated from Primary Data

5.4.3 Determinants of Food expenditure among Scheduled Caste household

The study also examined the determinants of food expenditure among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in the study area, highlighting its importance in addressing the food security and improving nutritional well-being. Food security remains a critical issue, particularly for vulnerable populations like the SC community, where access to adequate and nutritious food is often constrained. Understanding the factors influencing

food expenditure among these households will be crucial for policymakers and researchers in designing effective interventions in enhancing food security and nutritional outcomes.

The empirical analysis was made utilizing household food expenditure as the dependent variable and considers income, landholding, household size, family status, employment status of the father, employment status of the son, education of the father, and education of the son as explanatory variables. Each of these variables is hypothesized to have a distinct impact on the food expenditure, reflecting the complex interplay of economic, social, and demographic factors that can influence food consumption patterns among SC households. The significance of this analysis lies in the potential to influence policy interventions aimed at improving food security and nutritional outcomes for the SC community, ultimately contributing to their overall well-being and quality of life.

Income plays a pivotal role in determining food expenditure among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households, as indicated by the regression test. For each one-unit increase in monthly income, there will be 0.602 unit increase in food expenditure, holding all other variables constant. This relationship is statistically significant at the 5 per cent level as well, highlighting the importance of income in influencing food consumption patterns. The findings reveal that higher income levels are associated with higher food expenditure among the SC households, emphasizing the role of economic empowerment in improving food security and nutritional outcomes in these communities. It underscores the need for policies and programs that aim to increase income levels and economic opportunities for SC populations in enhancing their food security and overall well-being.

On the other hand, landholding, while showing a positive relationship with food expenditure, does not reach statistical significance at the 5 per cent level. A one-unit increase in landholding leads to a 0.085 unit increase in food expenditure, revealing a marginal impact. Although not statistically significant, this finding implies that landownership may play a moderate role in influencing food expenditure among the SC households. Given the historical and social contexts of landownership among the SC communities, policies promoting landownership and access to agricultural resources could potentially have positive impacts on food security and economic development.

However, further studies and nuanced policy approaches are needed to fully understand and address the complexities of landownership and its impact on food expenditure within SC populations.

Household size significantly influences food expenditure among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households, as evident from the regression analysis. For each additional member in the household, there will be a 0.575 unit increase in food expenditure, holding all other variables constant. This relationship is statistically significant at the 1% level as well, indicating that larger households tend to spend more on food. This finding aligns with expectations, as larger households require more food to meet the needs of additional members. The significance of this relationship underscores the importance of considering household size in addressing food security and designing welfare programs for SC communities, ensuring that larger households receive adequate support for meeting their nutritional needs.

In contrast, family status, specifically middle and high-status categories compared to the baseline lower status, does not show statistical significance in impacting food expenditure. While being in the middle or high-status category is associated with a 0.1923 and 0.359 unit increase in food expenditure, respectively, these relationships are not found to be statistically significant. It suggests that within SC households, factors other than family status may have a stronger influence on food expenditure patterns. Further study may be required to explore the nuances of social status and its impact on food consumption among SC communities, helping policymakers better tailor interventions to improve food security and nutritional outcomes.

The employment status of the father significantly impacts food expenditure among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households, as suggested by the regression analysis. Being self-employed, compared to the other employment statuses, leads to a 0.538 unit increase in food expenditure, holding all other variables constant. This relationship is statistically significant at the 5 per cent level, indicating the influence of the father's employment status on the household food consumption patterns. The findings reveal that self-employment provides a higher level of economic stability or income, enabling households to allocate more resources towards food expenses. This underscores the

importance of promoting self-employment opportunities and economic empowerment among SC communities in enhancing food security and well-being.

Conversely, the employment status of the son does not significantly influence food expenditure among the SC households, as the relationship is not statistically significant at the 5 per cent level. The non-significant impact of the son's employment status suggests that, within the SC households, other factors may play an even more significant role in determining the food expenditure patterns. This finding indicates the complexity of household dynamics and economic decision-making processes, focusing on the need for comprehensive approaches to address food security issues among SC communities.

The education status of both the father and the son do not significantly influence food expenditure among Scheduled Caste (SC) households, as revealed by the regression analysis. For the education level of the father, the coefficient is -0.928, the t-value is -0.58, and the p-value is 0.560, indicating a lack of statistical significance at the 5 per cent level. Similarly, for the education level of the son, the coefficient is -0.883, the t-value is -0.25, and the p-value is 0.801, also revealing no statistically significant impact on food expenditure. These findings suggest that within the SC households, the education levels of the father and the son do not play a significant role in determining food expenditure patterns. Other factors such as income, household size, and employment status may have a stronger influence on food consumption decisions. While education is widely recognized as a key determinant of economic well-being and social mobility, the direct impact on food expenditure in this context appears to be limited. This underscores the need for a holistic approach to address the food security and improve the livelihoods among SC communities, considering a range of socio-economic factors beyond education alone.

The constant term in a regression model represents the estimated value of the dependent variable when all independent variables are set to zero. In the context of the regression model for food expenditure among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households, the constant term (7.459) indicates the estimated level of food expenditure when all other variables such as income, landholding, household size, family status, and employment and education statuses are zero or not applicable. In practical terms, the constant value provides a baseline or starting point for food expenditure, assuming no

income, landholding, household members, or specific family or employment statuses. However, since many of these variables cannot realistically be zero (e.g., household size, income), the constant is more useful for understanding the baseline level of food expenditure in a hypothetical scenario rather than for direct interpretation in the real-world terms. In this model, the constant term is statistically significant (with a p-value of 0.000), highlighting that it contributes to explaining the variation in food expenditure among the SC households. This suggests that even when all other factors are accounted for, there is a baseline level of food expenditure that is influenced by factors not included in the model or by the inherent variability in food spending behaviour among the households.

The adjusted R-squared value in the regression analysis helps to understand how well the independent variables explain the variation in the dependent variable (food expenditure) while accounting for the number of predictors in the model. In this case, the adjusted R-squared value of 0.413 indicates that approximately 41.3 per cent of the variation in food expenditure among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households can be explained by the independent variables included in the model (income, landholding, household size, family status, employment status of father, employment status of son, education of father, and education of son). The remaining 58.7 per cent of the variation remains unexplained and could be attributed to other factors that are not included in the model or to random variation.

The F-value in the regression analysis is used to test the overall significance of the regression model. It is calculated by comparing the variance explained by the model to the variance that is not explained. In this case, the F-value of 76.455 is associated with a p-value of 0.000, indicating that the regression model is statistically significant at 1 per cent level. This means that the independent variables, taken together, have a significant impact on food expenditure among the SC households. This finding supports the validity of the regression model and reveals that the included variables collectively explain a significant portion of the variation in food expenditure among the SC households.

Table 5.32: Determinants of food expenditure among Scheduled Caste households: Estimation Multiple Linear Regression Model

Variable	Coefficient	t-value	p-value
Dependent variable: Food expenditure			
Explanatory variables			
Income (monthly)	0.602***	2.20	0.000
Landholding (in acre)	0.085**	1.89	0.052
Household size	0.575***	2.83	0.005
Family status (baseline=lower)			
1. Middle	.1923	-0.87	0.387
2. High	.359*	1.96	0.053
Employment status of father (self-employed=1; others=0)	.538**	2.58	0.026
Employment status of son (self-employed=1; others=0)	-.470	0.20	0.842
Education of father	-.928	-0.58	0.560
Education of son	-.883	-0.25	0.801
Constant	7.459***	4.70	0.000
F value	76.455 (0.000)		
Adjusted R squared	0.413		

*Note: *** represents 1% level of significance; ** represents 5% level of significance; *represents 10% level of significance*

Source: Estimated from Primary Data

5.4.4 Conclusion

This study provides critical insights into the determinants of consumption and food expenditure among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households, highlighting the interactions between economic, social, and demographic factors influencing the spending patterns. Income emerges as the most significant determinant, emphasizing the importance of policies aimed at enhancing economic opportunities and improving the financial resilience of the SC households. Landholding, while exerting a modest influence on overall consumption, underscores the role of resource ownership in economic stability, although its effect on food expenditure is modest.

The household size is a key factor driving expenditure, reflecting the increased economic burden faced by larger families. Family status and employment, particularly

self-employment of the father, significantly shape both total and food expenditure, underscoring the role of economic stability and social mobility in determining the consumption behaviour. The findings on education reveal an intergenerational shift, with the son's educational attainment positively influencing consumption expenditure, while the father's education indicates no direct effect. It highlights the evolving economic dynamics within SC households.

The results underline the multifaceted nature of consumption behaviour, where economic factors such as income and employment intersect with social and demographic variables. It suggests that policymakers should prioritize income enhancement strategies, skill development programs, and targeted support for larger families and self-employed individuals. In addition, fostering educational opportunities for younger generations in the SC communities can have long-term benefits for economic well-being and consumption patterns. Addressing these determinants in a comprehensive manner can enable more effective interventions, contributing to the equitable development of the SC households and reducing disparities within marginalized communities.

5.5 Determinants of Income Earnings of Scheduled Caste Households

5.5.1 Introduction

The analysis of income determinants among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala is paramount for addressing economic inequalities and promoting equitable development. The SC communities, historically marginalized and socio-economically disadvantaged, often face systemic barriers that limit their access to opportunities for improving income and living standards. Understanding the factors that can influence income earnings within these households provides valuable insights for designing targeted and evidence-based interventions to enhance their economic well-being.

This section explores the relationship between income earnings and key socio-economic variables such as education, employment status, age, skills, and location using multiple linear regression model. By examining the interplay of these factors, the analysis aims to identify the primary predictors of income and suggest actionable recommendations for policy and programmatic interventions. The importance of this inquiry lies in the critical role income plays in determining access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and housing, while also serving as a measure of

economic security and quality of life. Moreover, the findings contribute to the broader discourse on inclusive development, suggesting strategies to uplift the SC households and bridge socio-economic disparities. Through this empirical investigation, the study not only evaluates economic dynamics of the SC households in Kerala but also provides a foundation for addressing structural inequalities and promoting long-term socio-economic mobility within these communities.

5.5.2 Estimation Results of Multiple Linear Regression Model

Table 5.33 reported the multiple linear regression results. In the regression analysis of income earnings among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households, several key findings emerge regarding the impact of various factors on monthly income.

Effect of education on income earnings

Education emerges as a significant factor influencing income earnings among Scheduled Caste (SC) households, particularly for male members. The positive impact of education is evident in the father and son, with each additional unit of education leading to substantial income increases of approximately 0.965 and 0.925 units, respectively. This finding emphasizes the critical role of education, especially for males, in enhancing income levels within the SC households (See Table 5.33).

Interestingly, the impact of education differs for daughters, as an increase in their education level is associated with a fall in income by 0.205 units. While this may seem counterintuitive, it could be indicative of the broader socio-economic factors. For instance, higher education for daughters might delay their entry into the workforce or result in job choices that prioritize factors other than immediate income, such as job satisfaction or societal roles. These findings have important implications for policy interventions aimed at improving the economic status of the SC community. Efforts for enhancing educational opportunities for the SC individuals, particularly males, can be instrumental in increasing their earning potential and overall socio-economic well-being.

Effect of employment status on income earnings

Employment status is a crucial determinant of income earnings among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households, with self-employment showing a significant positive impact. The findings indicate that being self-employed leads to notable increases in income for different family members. For instance, father's self-employment status is associated

with a 0.0917 unit increase in income, indicates that entrepreneurial activities contribute positively to household earnings. Similarly, both the son's and daughter's self-employment statuses lead to substantial income gains of 0.209 and 0.489 units, respectively (See Table 5.33).

The negative association between the mother's self-employment status and income earnings reveals the presence of gender dynamics in income generation within the SC households. This finding may reflect broader socio-economic factors, such as the types of self-employment opportunities available to women, access to resources and markets, and societal norms regarding women's roles in economic activities. Addressing these gender disparities in income earnings is pivotal for promoting gender equality and enhancing the economic empowerment of women within the SC communities. Policies and interventions supporting and enabling women to engage in self-employment ventures and access income-generating opportunities can help mitigate these disparities and contribute to overall household income improvement.

Effect of age on income earnings

Age appears to have some influence on income earnings among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households, although the relationship is not statistically significant at the 5% level for both fathers and mothers. The analysis indicates that for each additional year of age, the father's income increases by 0.490 units, and the mother's income increases by 0.0622 units. While these results reveal a positive association between age and income, the lack of statistical significance implies that other factors may play a more substantial role in determining income earnings among the SC households. The relationship between age and income earnings could be attributed to various factors. For instance, older individuals may have accumulated more experience and skills, which could potentially lead to higher income levels. However, other factors such as changes in job roles, industry trends, and economic conditions could counterbalance these effects. Additionally, the impact of age on income may vary based on individual circumstances and the specific context of the SC households. Further studies and analyses may be required to better understand the complex interplay between age and income among SC communities.

Effect of skills on income earnings

Skills, particularly technical and computer skills, emerge as significant factors influencing income earnings among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households. Possessing technical skills is associated with a notable increase in income, with individuals having these skills earning approximately 0.392 units more than the individuals having these skills. Furthermore, having basic and advanced computer skills can lead to income increases by 0.344 and 0.415 units, respectively. These findings emphasize the importance of skill development in enhancing income earnings among the SC households, highlighting the potential benefits of investing in training and education programs that focus on technical and computer skills.

Effect of Rural/Urban location on income earnings

Moreover, the location of residence plays a role in income earnings, with living in an urban area associated with higher income. While this relationship is marginally significant at 5% level, it aligns with the common understanding that urban areas provide more employment opportunities and higher wages compared to rural areas. The finding reveals that geographical factors can influence income levels among the SC households, underscoring the need to consider regional disparities in income and employment opportunities when designing policies and interventions aimed at improving economic outcomes for the SC communities.

It is shown in the table 5.33 that the Adjusted R-squared value is 0.48. This means that approximately 48% of the variance in monthly household income earnings among the Scheduled Caste households can be explained by the independent variables included in the regression model. It indicates a moderate-to-good fit of the model to the data, revealing that the included variables (education, employment status, age, skills, and location) collectively have a significant impact on income earnings among the SC households. The F-value associated with the regression model is 65.021, with a p-value of 0.000. It implies that the overall regression model is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. In other words, there is strong evidence to suggest that at least one of the independent variables (education, employment status, age, skills, and location) has a significant effect on the dependent variable (monthly household income earnings). It further supports the validity and usefulness of the regression model for predicting income earnings among the SC households.

Table 5.33: Determinants of income earnings of Scheduled Caste households: Estimation Multiple Linear Regression Model

Variable	Coefficient	t-value	p-value
Dependent variable=monthly households income earnings			
Explanatory variables			
Education of father	.965*	1.82	0.070
Mother education	.066	0.22	0.822
Son's education	.925***	2.49	0.007
Daughter's education	-.205	-2.30	0.004
Employment status of father (self-employed=1; others=0)	.0917	4.99	0.000
Employment status of mother (self-employed=1; others=0)	0.108**	-19.19	0.035
Employment status of son (self-employed=1; others=0)	.209***	5.85	0.000
Employment status of daughter (self-employed=1; others=0)	-0.489*	-1.82	0.070
Location (urban=1; rural =0)	0.287*	1.98	0.071
Father age	0.490*	1.74	0.084
Mother's age	.0622*	1.90	0.058
Son's age	.342	0.09	0.930
Daughter's age	-.222	-0.19	0.853
Technical skills (yes=1; no=0)	0.392***	3.25	0.001
Computer skill (baseline=no skill)			
2. basic skill	.344*	1.88	0.088
3.Advanced skill	.415***	2.24	0.025
Constant	5.77	4.25	0.000
F value	65.021 (0.000)		
Adjusted R squared	0.48		

*Note: *** represents 1% level of significance; ** represents 5% level of significance; *represents 10% level of significance*

Source: Estimated from Primary Data

5.5.3 Conclusion

This analysis underscores the determinants influencing income earnings among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, offering crucial insights into the socio-economic dynamics shaping their livelihoods. Education emerges as a pivotal factor, with higher education levels—particularly among sons—significantly enhancing the

household income. However, the negative association between daughters' education and income highlights complex socio-cultural factors that may limit their labour market participation or influence their occupational choices, warranting in-depth-study.

Employment status is found to be another key determinant, with self-employment contributing positively to income generation across family members. Nevertheless, gender disparities in the returns to self-employment point to structural inequalities that constrain women's economic participation. Skills, particularly technical and computer proficiency, are estimated to have made substantial impact on income, underlining the importance of targeted skill development initiatives for the SC communities. Moreover, urban residency and the age of household members exhibit moderate effects on income, implying the nuanced role of demographic and locational factors in shaping the economic opportunities. The regression model, which explains nearly 48% of the variance in income, highlights the role of educational attainment, employment type, skills, and demographic factors in determining household earnings. These findings emphasize the necessity of policy measures that address systemic inequalities and promote economic empowerment within the SC communities. Enhancing educational access, fostering skill development, and supporting entrepreneurial initiatives—particularly for women and rural households—can serve as effective pathways in improving income levels and reducing disparities. By addressing these determinants through evidence-based and community-specific interventions, policymakers can contribute to economic upliftment of the SC households, fostering equity and inclusive socio-economic progress.

5.6 Intra-caste income and expenditure inequality in scheduled caste households

5.6.1 Introduction

Intra-caste income and expenditure inequality within the Scheduled Caste (SC) households is a crucial issue that requires attention. Economic inequality remains a significant concern worldwide, especially in developing countries like India, which is known for its high levels of inequality. This inequality is not only evident between different countries but also within countries, across various social groups. Marginalized communities, including SCs, often face substantial economic disparities compared to the general population, leading to significant gap in economic status.

The Scheduled Castes, as a marginalized and vulnerable community, experience notable economic deviations from the rest of the population belonging to various forward communities. Moreover, within the SC community itself, there exists a wide disparity in economic status. Despite the importance of understanding and addressing this intra-caste economic inequality particularly among the SC community, there is limited evidence available in the literature on this specific aspect. Therefore, the current study aims to fill this gap by examining intra-caste economic inequality in terms of both income and expenditure among the SC households.

To measure this inequality, the current study will utilize the Theil Index of Inequality and Decomposition Analysis. These methods are well-suited for estimating the nature and quality of inequality within the SC community, that can provide valuable insights into the factors contributing to economic disparities among the SC households. By examining intra-caste economic inequality, this research seeks to investigate the nuances of economic disparities within the SC community and contribute to the broader discourse on inequality and social justice in India.

5.6.2 Intra-caste income inequality among Scheduled Caste Households

Income inequality within the Scheduled Caste (SC) households remains a significant concern, indicating broader economic disparities within marginalized communities. The Table 5.34 presents group wise income inequality for different SC communities, highlighting the differences in income distribution among these communities. The table presents the income share, population share, mean income, and the Group Theil index for each SC community group. The Group Theil index measures the inequality within each group, with higher values demonstrating greater inequality. For example, the group consisting of Kanakkan/ Padanna communities has a Group Theil index of 0.288671, revealing relatively a high-income inequality within this group when compared to others.

The data presented in Table 5.35 provides Theil's decomposition of income inequality by SC community, providing insights into the factors contributing to overall income inequality. The Theil index represents the total income inequality within the SC population, while the Theil between and Theil within components indicate the inequality between and within SC community groups, respectively. The shared within component (0.072898) indicates that a significant portion of the income inequality is

due to differences within the SC community groups. On the other hand, the inequality within component (-0.022242) implies the differences between SC community groups which contribute negatively to overall income inequality, possibly suggesting some level of balancing or equalization between groups.

Table 5.34 and table 5.35 provide a detailed analysis of income inequality within different SC community groups and offer insights into underlying factors contributing to this inequality. Understanding these dynamics remains crucial for policymakers and researchers seeking to address economic disparities and promote social and economic inclusion within the marginalized communities**.**

The implications of the income inequality analysis within the Scheduled Caste (SC) communities are significant for understanding the socio-economic conditions and designing targeted interventions. The findings from tables5.34 and 5.35 highlight several key points:

1. **Intra-Community Disparities:** The existence of varying income shares and Group Theil indices among different SC communities indicates that there are significant economic disparities within the SC population itself. It suggests that certain SC communities may be more economically disadvantaged than others, requiring some tailored strategies to uplift these backward communities.
2. **Need for Targeted Policies:** The Theil decomposition in Table 5.35 reveals that a substantial portion of income inequality is due to differences within the SC communities. It emphasizes the importance of implementing targeted policies that address specific economic challenges faced by different SC sub-communities, such as access to education, employment opportunities, and social welfare schemes.
3. **Resource Allocation:** Understanding the distribution of income within the SC communities is crucial for allocating resources efficiently. Policymakers can utilize this information to for the same, ensuring that interventions reach those who need them the most and have the greatest impact on reducing inequality.
4. **Empowerment and Inclusion:** Addressing income inequality within the SC communities is not mere a matter of economic development, it is a matter of social empowerment and inclusion too. By reducing economic disparities,

society can ensure that all members, regardless of their background, have equal opportunities for thriving and contributing to the overall development.

Table 5.34: Group wise income inequality for different SC community groups

Different SC Communities	Income Share	Population Share	Mean Income	Group Theil
Pulayan/ Cheraman	0.108034	0.111406	23,405	0.026736
Kanakkan/ Padanna	0.153643	0.111406	24,714	0.288671
Cheruman	0.181998	0.196286	22,378	0.019572
Mannan/ Perumannan	0.120892	0.119363	24,444	0.038359
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	0.081547	0.087533	22,485	0.014742
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	0.076052	0.079576	23,067	0.011894
Panan	0.063414	0.068966	22,192	0.004310
Kavara	0.086053	0.090186	23,029	0.016229
Kalladi	0.128366	0.135279	22,902	0.022915

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data.

Table 5.35: Theil's decomposition of income inequality by SC community

Aspect	Value
Theil's Index	0.058502
Theil between	0.007846
Theil within	0.050656
Shared within	0.072898
Different within	-0.022242

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

5.6.3 Intra-caste Expenditure inequality among Scheduled Caste Households

Income and expenditure inequality within the Scheduled Caste (SC) households are critical issues impacting the socio-economic well-being of these communities. While income inequality reflects disparities in earnings, expenditure inequality discuss how these earnings are utilized and distributed within different SC community groups. The Table 5.36 presents group wise expenditure inequality among various SC communities, demonstrating differences in the expenditure shares, population shares, mean expenditure, and Group Theil indices. The intra-caste expenditure inequality reflected in the Theil indices across different SC communities indicates notable variations in the distribution of household expenditure. Among the groups, the Kalladi community exhibits the highest inequality with a Group Theil index value of 0.072, revealing a

wide gap in expenditure levels within this group, possibly due to uneven access to stable income sources or varying employment opportunities. In contrast, the Kavara community shows the lowest inequality (0.032), suggesting a more uniform distribution of expenditure among the members. Other communities, such as Kanakkan/Padannan (0.059) and Panan (0.056), also display relatively higher levels of inequality compared to the overall average, indicating internal disparities in living standards and resource utilization. These differences point to the fact that even within the broader category of Scheduled Caste community, economic inequality is not homogeneous, some communities are experiencing deeper inequalities than the others.

The findings from the data provided in Table 5.37, which presents Theil's decomposition of expenditure inequality by the SC community, further elucidate the nature of expenditure disparities. The Theil's Index of 0.054946 indicates a significant level of expenditure inequality within the SC communities. The decomposition reveals that the majority of expenditure inequality is due to differences within the SC community groups (Theil within), rather than between these groups (Theil between). It reveals that specific sub-groups within the SC population are found to be more economically vulnerable or marginalized, requiring focused efforts to improve their economic status and reduce the expenditure disparities. The understanding and addressing expenditure inequality within the SC communities remains crucial for promoting economic empowerment, reducing poverty, and cultivating inclusive growth.

Table 5.36: Group wise expenditure inequality for different SC community groups

Different SC Communities	Expenditure Share	Population Share	Mean expenditure	Group Theil
Pulayan/Cheraman	0.113	0.111	16,440	0.051
Kanakkan/ Padannan	0.115	0.111	16,690	0.059
Cheruman	0.188	0.196	15,486	0.054
Mannan/Perumannan	0.124	0.119	16,778	0.055
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	0.088	0.088	16,333	0.058
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	0.078	0.080	15,867	0.043
Panan	0.069	0.069	16,231	0.056
Kavara	0.094	0.090	16,912	0.032
Kalladi	0.130	0.135	14,931	0.072

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

Table 5.37: Theil's decomposition of expenditure inequality by SC community

Aspect	Value
Theil's Index	0.054946
Theil between	0.000548
Theil within	0.054398
Shared within	0.058536
Different within	-0.004138

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

5.6.4 Intra-caste Food Expenditure inequality among Scheduled Caste Households

Food expenditure is a fundamental aspect of household welfare, reflecting access to nutritious food and overall economic well-being. In the context of the Scheduled Caste (SC) households, understanding intra-caste food expenditure inequality remains crucial for addressing the economic disparities and ensuring food security within these communities. Table 5.38 presents group wise food expenditure inequality for different SC community groups, showing variations in expenditure shares, population shares, mean income, and Group Theil indices. These metrics offer insights into the economic challenges being faced by various SC communities, highlighting the need for targeted interventions for improving food access and affordability.

The Table 5.39 further examines food expenditure inequality through Theil's decomposition, revealing that a significant portion of inequality is driven by differences within the SC community groups (Theil within), rather than between these groups (Theil between). It reveals that certain sub-groups within the SC population may be more vulnerable to food insecurity and economic hardships, necessitating tailored policies in addressing these disparities. Overall, understanding the intra-caste food expenditure inequality remains essential in promoting food security, reducing poverty, and enhancing the overall well-being of SC households.

The Table 5.38 presents an analysis of food expenditure inequality among different Scheduled Caste (SC) community groups. Here's a breakdown of the key elements:

1. **Expenditure Share:** This column in table 5.38 shows the percentage of total food expenditure contributed by each SC community group. For example, the

Pulayan/ Cheraman group of the SC community contributes 11.3% of the total food expenditure.

2. **Population Share:** Reflecting the demographic weight of each SC community group within the total SC population, this column shows, for example, that the Kanakkan/ Padanna group represents 11.1% of the total population.
3. **Mean Expenditure:** The column allotted for mean expenditure provides the average food expenditure of households in each SC community group. For instance, households in the Mannan/ Perumannan group have an average food expenditure of 4,570.
4. **Group Theil:** This index measures the inequality in food expenditure among households within each SC community group. A higher Group Theil value indicates greater inequality in food expenditure within that group. For example, The Mannan/ Perumannan group exhibits a Group Theil of 0.136, indicating relatively higher food expenditure inequality within this group when compared to others.

Table 5.39 presents the Theil's decomposition for food expenditure inequality:

1. **Theil's Index:** This metric represents the overall food expenditure inequality among households in the SC communities, considering all community groups, with a Theil's Index of 0.041987.
2. **Theil Between:** This component measures the inequality in food expenditure between different SC community groups, with a value of 0.004062 indicating a relatively low inter-group food expenditure inequality.
3. **Theil Within:** Representing the inequality in food expenditure within each SC community group, the Theil Within value of 0.037925 suggests that the majority of food expenditure inequality lies within SC community groups rather than between the groups.
4. **Shared Within and Different Within:** These components further break down the within-group food expenditure inequality into shared and different aspects, offering additional insights into the distribution of food expenditure within each group.

These estimated results offer a comprehensive analysis of food expenditure inequality among the SC households, highlighting the disparities within and between different SC

community groups. Understanding these inequalities remains essential for formulating targeted policies and interventions aimed at reducing food insecurity and promoting economic equity within SC communities.

Table 5.38: Group wise food expenditure inequality for different SC community groups

Different SC Communities	Expenditure Share	Population Share	Mean expenditure	Group Theil
Pulayan/ Cheraman	0.113	0.111	3,888	0.035
Kanakkan/ Padanna	0.107	0.111	3,571	0.030
Cheruman	0.187	0.196	3,549	0.023
Mannan/ Perumannan	0.146	0.119	3,867	0.136
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	0.091	0.088	3,848	0.033
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	0.069	0.080	3,250	0.014
Panan	0.063	0.069	3,388	0.013
Kavara	0.089	0.090	3,691	0.022
Kalladi	0.134	0.135	3,680	0.023

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

Table 5.39: Theil's decomposition of food expenditure inequality by SC community

Aspect	Value
Theil's Index	0.041987
Theil between	0.004062
Theil within	0.037925
Shared within	0.087405
Different within	-0.049481

5.6.5 Intra-caste Son’s income inequality among Scheduled Caste Households

Son's income inequality within the Scheduled Caste (SC) households is a critical dimension of economic disparity that often reflects broader socio-economic trends. Despite efforts in addressing inequality, income gaps persist, impacting the well-being and opportunities of individuals within the SC communities. The current section examines the disparity in sons' income across different SC community groups,

shedding light on the varying economic realities within these communities. By analysing the distribution of sons' income, this study aims to explore the factors contributing to income disparities and their implications for socio-economic development and policy formulation. Understanding son's income inequality is essential for designing targeted interventions that can uplift the most economically disadvantaged sections of the SC communities and promote more equitable growth.

In Table 5.40, the focus is on son's income inequality among different Scheduled Caste (SC) community groups. It includes metrics such as son's income share, population share, mean son's income, and Group Theil index for each community group. Son's income share indicates the proportion of total income earned by sons in each community group among the scheduled castes, highlighting their relative contribution to overall son's income. Population share represents the proportion of the SC population represented by sons in each group. Mean income of sons denotes the average income earned by sons in each group, providing crucial insights into their economic conditions. The Group Theil index quantifies the level of inequality in son's income within each community group, with higher values indicating greater inequality among sons of group members.

The Table 5.41 presents the decomposition of the Theil's index for son's income inequality by SC community. The Theil's index for son's income inequality is 0.061948, indicating overall income inequality across all SC communities. The decomposition breaks this down into Theil between (0.002722) and Theil within (0.059226). Theil between represents the inequality between different SC communities, while Theil within represents the inequality within each SC community. The shared within component (0.026204) indicates the portion of inequality that is shared among different SC communities, while the different within component (0.033022) represents the portion that is unique to each SC community. These tables offer detailed analysis of son's income inequality among the SC households, highlighting the disparities within and between different community groups.

Table 5.40: Group wise son's income inequality for different SC community groups

Different SC Communities	Son's Income Share	Population Share	Mean Income of Son	Group Theil
Pulayan/ Cheraman	0.111	0.111	8,290	0.065
Kanakkan/ Padanna	0.115	0.111	8,570	0.077
Cheruman	0.187	0.196	7,910	0.050
Mannan/Perumannan	0.124	0.119	8,640	0.074
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	0.080	0.088	7,610	0.029
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	0.077	0.080	8,000	0.024
Panan	0.086	0.069	10,400	0.147
Kavara	0.089	0.090	8,180	0.047
Kalladi	0.131	0.135	8,020	0.045

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

Table 5.41: Theil's decomposition of son's income inequality by SC community

Aspect	Value
Theil's Index	0.061948
Theil between	0.002722
Theil within	0.059226
Shared within	0.026204
Different within	0.033022

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

5.6.6 Intra-caste daughter's income inequality among Scheduled Caste Households

Daughters' income inequality within the Scheduled Caste (SC) households is a crucial aspect of economic disparity reflecting broader socio-economic conditions. Despite advancements in addressing inequality, income gaps persist, influencing the well-being and opportunities of individuals within the SC communities. The current section examines the disparity in daughters' income across different SC community groups, aiming to understand the economic realities within these communities. By doing the distribution of daughters' income, this study seeks to unearth the factors responsible for income disparities and their implications for socio-economic development and policy formulation.

The Table 5.42 presents group wise daughter's income inequality for different SC community groups. The column allotted for "Income Share" indicates the proportion of total income held by each group, while the "Population Share" column

shows the distribution of the population among these groups. "Mean Income" represents the average income of daughters within each group, and "Group Theil" is a measure of income inequality within each group.

The Table 5.43 presents the decomposition of the Theil's index for daughter's income inequality by SC community. The Theil's index for daughter's income inequality is 0.069656, indicating the overall income inequality across all SC communities for daughters. The decomposition breaks this down into Theil between groups (0.001480) and Theil within groups (0.068177). Theil between represents the inequality between different SC communities, while Theil within represents the inequality within each SC community. The shared within groups component (0.088309) indicates the portion of inequality that is shared among different SC communities, while the different within the groups component (-0.020132) represents the portion that is unique to each SC community. Overall, data presented in the table 5.43 provide a detailed view of daughter's income inequality across different SC community groups in Kerala, highlighting both the inequality within each group and the inequality between different groups.

Table 5.42: Group wise daughter's income inequality for different SC community groups

Different SC Communities	Income Share	Population Share	Mean Income	Group Theil
Pulayan/Cheraman	0.118	0.111	5,190	0.076
Kanakkan/ Padannan	0.114	0.111	5,050	0.064
Cheruman	0.182	0.196	4,550	0.045
Mannan/Perumannan	0.128	0.119	5,290	0.080
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	0.090	0.088	5,060	0.050
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	0.083	0.080	5,130	0.103
Panan	0.070	0.069	4,960	0.077
Kavara	0.088	0.090	4,790	0.052
Kalladi	0.127	0.135	4,630	0.085

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

Table 5.43: Theil's decomposition of daughter's income inequality by SC community

Aspect	Value
Theil's Index	0.069656
Theil between	0.001480
Theil within	0.068177
Shared within	0.088309
Different within	-0.020132

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

5.6.7 Conclusion

The examination of intra-caste income, expenditure, and food expenditure inequalities within the Scheduled Caste (SC) households reveals significant disparities, emphasizing the multifaceted economic vulnerabilities faced by marginalized communities. Across all dimensions, the decomposition results suggest that inequality within individual sub-groups among the SC community contributes more substantially to overall disparities than inequalities between groups. These findings underscore the heterogeneity within the SC population, with certain communities' experience heightened economic deprivation.

The results highlight the necessity for specially devised, community-specific policy interventions rather than broad, generalized programs. Addressing income disparities requires equitable access to education, skill development, and employment opportunities, particularly for sub-groups with higher intra-caste inequalities. Similarly, reducing inequalities, prevalent in terms of overall expenditure in general and food expenditure in particular, necessitates targeted welfare schemes aimed at improving living standards, ensuring food security, and promoting access to affordable services for the most disadvantaged sub-groups.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that a reorientation of resource allocation mechanisms is required to address the intra-caste vulnerabilities effectively. Policymakers must give priority for identifying and addressing the unique challenges

faced by economically weaker SC sub-groups. A nuanced approach combining redistributive policies, social empowerment programs, and community-specific interventions can contribute to reduce intra-caste disparities and foster inclusive economic growth. The study highlights the critical need for evidence-based policies in bridging intra-caste economic divides, ensuring that progress toward social justice and economic equity within the SC community is both holistic and sustainable.

5.7 Intra-caste educational inequality among Scheduled Caste Households

5.7.1 Introduction

Education is the cornerstone of socio-economic development and a key facilitator of upward mobility, particularly for marginalized communities like the Scheduled Castes (SC). However, disparities in educational attainment within and across the SC households display significant barriers in achieving equitable social and economic outcomes. Understanding these intra-caste disparities remains critical for designing targeted policies to bridge educational gaps and promote inclusive development.

Educational inequality within the Scheduled Caste (SC) households is a critical aspect of socio-economic disparity that has far-reaching implications. Education is a key driver of social mobility and economic prosperity, yet disparities in access to education can hinder the advancement of individuals within the SC communities. The current section examines the educational inequality among sons and daughters across different SC community groups, aiming to understand the disparities in educational attainment and their implications.

5.7.2 Son's Educational Inequality across Different SC Community Groups

The data presented in Table 5.44 outlines educational disparities among sons across various Scheduled Caste (SC) community groups. Several key observations emerge:

1. **Education Share:** This column allotted for education share indicates the percentage contribution of each SC community group to the total educational attainment (in years of schooling) of sons within the SC households. For

example, Pulayan/ Cheraman section contributes 10.8% of the total educational attainment among sons.

2. **Population Share:** Reflecting the demographic weight of each SC community group within the total SC population, this column reveals, for example, that Kanakkan/ Padanna community represents 11.1% of the total population.

3. **Mean Education:** Providing the average years of schooling attained by sons in each SC community, the particular column shows, for example, that sons in the Mannan/Perumannan group have an average of 12.111 years of schooling.

4. **Group Theil**: This index measures the inequality in educational attainment among sons within each SC community group. A higher Group Theil value indicates greater inequality in educational attainment within that group. The Mannan/Perumannan community, for instance, exhibits a Group Theil of 0.007, indicating relatively higher educational inequality within this group when compared to others.

The Table 5.45 delves into Theil's decomposition for son's educational inequality:

1. **Theil's Index:** This metric represents the overall educational inequality among sons in the SC households, encompassing all community groups, with a Theil's Index of 0.005440.

2. **Theil Between:** This component measures the inequality in educational attainment between different SC community groups, with a value of 0.000116 indicating lower inter-group educational inequality.

3. **Theil Within:** Representing the inequality in educational attainment within each SC community group, the Theil Within value of 0.005324 indicates that the majority of educational inequality lies within the SC community groups rather than between them.

4. **Shared Within and Different Within:** These components further dissect the within-group educational inequality into shared and different aspects, offering

additional insights into the distribution of educational attainment within each group.

The data presented in tables5.44 and 5.45 provide a nuanced examination of educational inequality among sons across different SC community groups, revealing disparities both within and between the groups.

Table 5.44: Groupwise son's education inequality for different SC community groups

Different SC Communities	education Share	Population Share	Mean education	Group Theil
Pulayan/ Cheraman	0.108	0.111	11.595	0.004
Kanakkan/ Padanna	0.113	0.111	12.167	0.006
Cheruman	0.196	0.196	11.986	0.004
Mannan/Perumannan	0.121	0.119	12.111	0.007
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	0.087	0.088	11.848	0.005
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	0.081	0.080	12.167	0.005
Panan	0.070	0.069	12.192	0.006
Kavara	0.090	0.090	12.000	0.007
Kalladi	0.134	0.135	11.824	0.005

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

Table 5.45: Theil's decomposition of son's education inequality by SC community

Aspect	Value
Theil's Index	0.005440
Theil between	0.000116
Theil within	0.005324
Shared within	0.015850
Different within	-0.010527

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

5.7.3 Daughter's Educational Inequality Across Different SC Community Groups

The Table 5.46 presents an analysis of educational inequality among daughters across different Scheduled Caste (SC) community groups:

1. Education Share: This column indicates the percentage of total educational attainment (in schooling years) contributed by each SC community group to the daughters' educational attainment. For example, the Pulayan/Cheraman group contributes 11.3% of the total educational attainment among daughters.
2. Population Share: Reflecting the demographic weight of each SC community group within the total SC population, this column shows, for example, that the Kanakkan/ Padanna group represents 11.1% of total population.
3. Mean education: The column allotted for mean education provides the average schooling years attained by daughters in each SC community group. For example, daughters in the Mannan/Perumannan group have an average of 12.556 years of schooling.
4. Group Theil: This index measures the inequality on educational attainment among daughters within each SC community group. A higher Group Theil value demonstrates greater inequality in educational attainment within that group. The Mannan/Perumannan group, for example, exhibits a Group Theil of 0.005, indicating relatively higher educational inequality within this group when compared to others.

The Table 5.47 presents the Theil's decomposition for daughter's education inequality:

1. Theil's Index: This metric represents the overall educational inequality among daughters in the SC households, considering all community groups, with a Theil's Index of 0.004686.
2. Theil Between: This component measures the inequality on educational attainment between different SC community groups, with a value of 0.000133 reflecting relatively low inter-caste educational inequality.
3. Theil Within: Representing the inequality on educational attainment within each SC community group, the Theil Within value 0.004553 indicates that the majority of educational inequality lies within SC community groups rather than between them.

4. Shared Within and Different Within: These components further break down the within-group educational inequality into shared and different aspects, offering additional insights into the distribution of educational attainment within each group.

These results provide a detailed picture of educational inequality among daughters across all SC community groups, highlighting disparities both within and between these groups.

Table 5.46: Group wise daughter's education inequality for different SC community groups

Different SC Communities	Education Share	Population Share	Mean education	Group Theil
Pulayan/Cheraman	0.113	0.111	12.595	0.005
Kanakkan/ Padanna	0.112	0.111	12.548	0.004
Cheruman	0.196	0.196	12.405	0.005
Mannan/Perumannan	0.121	0.119	12.556	0.005
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	0.086	0.088	12.152	0.003
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	0.077	0.080	12.033	0.005
Panan	0.070	0.069	12.654	0.004
Kavara	0.088	0.090	12.147	0.005
Kalladi	0.137	0.135	12.608	0.004

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

Table 5.47: Theil's decomposition of daughter's education inequality by SC community

Aspect	Value
Theil's Index	0.004686
Theil between	0.000133
Theil within	0.004553
Shared within	0.009771
Different within	-0.005218

Source: The figures were estimated using the Theil index inequality measure based on primary data

5.7.4 Conclusion

The analysis of intra-caste educational inequality among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households highlights enhanced educational disparity existing within community groups rather than between them. Both sons and daughters experience varying degrees of educational inequality, with some groups showing higher mean education levels but also significant within-group disparities. It suggests that internal factors such as socio-economic conditions and access to resources are key contributors to these educational gaps.

The findings discussed in this section emphasize the importance of targeted interventions that focus on reducing within-caste inequality by improving access to quality education, addressing socio-economic barriers, and implementing community-specific policies. These efforts are crucial in promoting equitable educational outcomes and fostering broader socio-economic development within the SC households.

5.8 Social mobility within the Scheduled Caste Households in Kerala

5.8.1 Introduction

Social mobility among the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala is a significant area of study, particularly focusing on intergenerational transitions in terms of income, education, and occupation. Social mobility research analyses the correlation and change of income between generations, change of education between generations, change of occupation between generations, encompassing relative and absolute income mobility. Relative income mobility, which is also known as intergenerational transmission, explores the extent to which children's income or education levels depend on the parents' income or levels of education. Absolute income mobility, on the other hand, identifies whether children's absolute number or rank surpasses that of their parents.

Most studies in this realm concentrate on impact of education on the relative income mobility. Children of the parents with higher educational levels tend to have higher education levels themselves, as well as higher cognitive levels and social skills, leading to higher incomes. However, the relationship between education and relative

income mobility may not be consistent across all contexts. For example, while some studies suggest that education policy affects relative income mobility, others find little effect of education on relative income mobility.

In the context of Kerala's Scheduled Caste households, understanding both relative and absolute income mobility is crucial. While relative mobility provides insights into the correlation between parents' and children's income or education levels, absolute mobility sheds light on whether children's incomes surpass those of their parents. In addition to income and educational mobility, the study of social mobility among Scheduled Caste households in Kerala also includes the analysis of occupational mobility. Occupational mobility examines the movement of individuals or families between different occupational categories across the generations. Understanding the occupational mobility remains essential as it provides insights into the extent to which individuals are able to move into higher-status occupations when compared to their parents, thus reflecting changes in social status and economic opportunities within a society. Studying both forms of mobility among the Scheduled Caste households can provide crucial insights into the dynamics of social mobility in the SC households of Kerala and contribute to policy discussions aimed to promote upward mobility among marginalized communities.

5.8.2 Upward Income Mobility among Scheduled Caste Households in Kerala

The Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in India and Kerala have historically faced social and economic marginalization, resulting in limited access to resources and opportunities. However, in the recent years, there has been a growing focus on policies and programs aimed at promoting the socio-economic development of the SC communities. Understanding the dynamics of upward income mobility among the Scheduled Caste households is crucial for assessing the effectiveness of these efforts and identifying areas for further intervention.

Income mobility, particularly upward mobility, is an important indicator of socio-economic progress within a community. It reflects the extent to which individuals are able to improve their economic status compared to their parents, thereby breaking the cycle of poverty and achieving the higher standards of living. For the Scheduled

Caste households in Kerala, a state known for its relatively high levels of human development, studying income mobility provides insights into intergenerational transmission of economic well-being and the impact of socio-economic policies on the lives of marginalized communities.

This analysis focuses on the comparison of average incomes between generations, specifically examining the income of fathers and mothers compared to their children. The tables below present the average income levels of fathers, mothers, and children in the Scheduled Caste households, along with measures of upward income mobility.

The Table 5.48 presents the average income of fathers and children in the Scheduled Caste households. The average income of fathers is estimated to be 5652.52, with a standard deviation of 2462.204. The minimum and maximum father's incomes are 1000 and 20000, respectively. On the other hand, the average income of children in these households is 8302.387, with a standard deviation of 3852.855. The minimum and maximum children's incomes are 2000 and 60000, respectively. The table also includes a measure of upward income mobility, which is measured as the difference between the average income of children and fathers, indicating an upward movement in income across generations.

Table 5.48: Average income of fathers and children of Scheduled Caste Households

Variable	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Fathers' income	377	5652.52	2462.204	1000	20000
Children income	377	8302.387	3852.855	2000	60000
Upward income mobility		2649.86			

Source: Estimated from primary data

The data presented in Table 5.49 shows the average income of mothers and children in Scheduled Caste households. The average income of mothers is estimated to be 4461.538, with a standard deviation of 3322.911. The minimum and maximum mother's incomes are 1000 and 60000, respectively. Similarly, the average income of children in these households is 8302.387, with a standard deviation of 3852.855. The minimum and maximum children's incomes are 2000 and 60000, respectively. The

table also includes a measure of upward income mobility, which is calculated as the difference between the average income of the children and mothers, revealing an upward movement in income across generations.

Table 5.49: Average income of mothers and children of Scheduled Caste Households

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Mother's Income	377	4461.538	3322.911	1000	60000
Children's Income	377	8302.387	3852.855	2000	60000
Upward income mobility	377	3840.849			

Source: Estimated from primary data

The examination demonstrates significant upward income mobility among Scheduled Caste households in Kerala. Children's average incomes exceed those of their parents, indicating a positive intergenerational income progression. This suggests that children from the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala are generally surpassing their parents' income levels, demonstrating improved economic status over generations. Examining the difference in average incomes between children and parents provides further insight. As per the data presented in Table 5.48, children's average income exceeds that of fathers by 2649.86 units, indicating substantial upward income mobility. Similarly, in Table 5.49, the data shows that children's average income surpasses that of mothers by 3840.849 units, highlighting ongoing upward income mobility among the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala.

The implications of the upward income mobility are significant. Despite historical challenges and socio-economic disparities, there are opportunities for economic advancement within the Scheduled Caste communities in Kerala. It can lead to improved standard of living, better access to education and healthcare, and overall socio-economic development. Furthermore, upward income mobility can be helpful in reducing income inequality and promote social cohesion within the state. From a policy perspective, these findings emphasize the importance of investing in programs that support the economic empowerment of the Scheduled Caste communities. Enhancing access to education, skill development, and employment opportunities can further accelerate upward income mobility among the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala, contributing to more inclusive and sustainable development outcomes for the state.

5.8.3 Upward Income Mobility across different sub groups of Scheduled Caste Households in Kerala

The analysis of upward income mobility among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala can be further elucidated by examining the income differences between parents and children across different subgroups within the SC community. This analysis provides insights into how various types of the SC households in Kerala are experiencing upward income mobility, highlighting potential disparities and areas for the targeted interventions.

The Table 5.50 shows the average income difference between fathers and children across different types of the SC community households in Kerala. The table shows the mean income of fathers, the mean income of children, and the mean income difference (children's income minus father's income) for each type of the SC community. This allows for a comparison of upward income mobility across different subgroups of the SC households based on the type of community they belong to. Similarly, Table 5.51 presents the average income difference between mothers and children across different types of the SC community households in the state of Kerala. The table provides insights into how the income of mothers compares to that of their children within each type of the SC community, further highlighting the dynamics of upward income mobility among the SC households.

The Table 5.50 highlights average income difference between fathers and children across various types of Scheduled Caste (SC) community households in Kerala.

1. **Pulayan/ Cheraman**: The average income of fathers in this group of the SC community is 5309.524 units, while the average income of children is 8285.714 units. The income difference of 2976.19 units indicates upward income mobility.
2. **Kanakkan/ Padanna**: Fathers belonging to this category have an average income of 5976.19 units, while children have an average income of 8571.429 units. The income difference is 2595.238 units.
3. **Cheruman**: The average income of fathers in Cheruman community is 5581.081 units, and the average income of children is 7905.405 units, resulting in an income difference of 2324.324 units.

4. **Mannan/Perumannan**: Fathers belonging to this sub community have an average income of 6244.444 units, while children have an average income of 8644.444 units. The income difference is found to be 2400 units.
5. **Paraiyan/Sambavar**: The average income of fathers in this community is 5393.939 units, and the average income of children is 7606.061 units, leading to an income difference of 2212.121 units.
6. **Kuravan/ Sidhanar**: Fathers in this community have an average income of 5533.333 units, while children have an average income of 8000 units. The income difference is found to be 2466.667 units.
7. **Panan**: The average income of fathers in this category is 4769.231 units, and the average income of children is 10384.62 units, leading to an income difference of 5615.385 units.
8. **Kavara**: Fathers in Kavara community have an average income of 5735.294 units, while children have an average income of 8176.471 units. The income difference is found to be 2441.176 units.
9. **Kalladi**: The average income of fathers belonging to this category is 5882.353 units, and the average income of children is 8019.608 units, resulting in an income difference of 2137.255 units.

The Table 5.50 indicates varying degrees of upward income mobility among different types of the SC community households in Kerala. Some communities show higher levels of upward income mobility, as reflected in larger income differences between fathers and children, while others show relatively lower levels. For instance, the Pulayan/ Cheraman community exhibits a substantial income difference of 2976.19 units, indicating that children in this group earn significantly more than their fathers, on an average. Similarly, the Panan community shows a remarkable income difference of 5615.385 units, indicating a considerable improvement in the economic status across generations. At the same time, some communities exhibit lower levels of upward income mobility. For example, the Kalladi community has a relatively modest income difference of 2137.255 units, indicating less pronounced increase in children's income when compared to their fathers'. These variations underscore the importance of targeted interventions for enhancing the economic opportunities and promote upward income mobility among all the SC communities in Kerala.

Table 5.50: Average income difference between father and children by types of SC community households

Types of SC Community	Father's Income Mean	children's Income Mean	Income Difference (children - Father) Mean
Pulayan/ Cheraman	5309.524	8285.714	2976.19
Kanakkan/ Padanna	5976.19	8571.429	2595.238
Cheruman	5581.081	7905.405	2324.324
Mannan/Perumannan	6244.444	8644.444	2400
Paraiyan/Sambavar	5393.939	7606.061	2212.121
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	5533.333	8000	2466.667
Panan	4769.231	10384.62	5615.385
Kavara	5735.294	8176.471	2441.176
Kalladi	5882.353	8019.608	2137.255

Source: Estimated from primary data

Table 5.51 provides an analysis of the average income difference between mothers and children across various types of the Scheduled Caste (SC) community households in Kerala. Similar to the data presented in Table 5.50, this table also categorizes SC households based on their community type and presents the mean income of mothers, the mean income of children, and the mean income difference (children's income minus mother's income) for each category.

1. **Pulayan/Cheraman:** Mothers belonging to this category have an average income of 4428.571 units, while children have an average income of 8285.714 units. The income difference of 3857.143 units indicates upward income mobility.
2. **Kanakkan/ Padanna:** Mothers in Kanakkan/ Padanna community have an average income of 6309.524 units, while children have an average income of 8571.429 units. The income difference is found to be only 2261.905 units.
3. **Cheruman:** The average income of mothers in this group is 4013.514 units while the average income of children is 7905.405 units. It results in an income difference of 3891.892 units.
4. **Mannan/Perumannan:** Mothers from this category have an average income of 4244.444 units, while children have an average income of 8644.444 units. The income difference is calculated as 4400 units.

5. **Paraiyan/Sambavar:** The average income of mothers from this community is 4242.424 units, and the average income of children is 7606.061 units, resulting in an income difference of 3363.636 units.
6. **Kuravan/ Sidhanar:** Mothers in Kuruvan/ Sidhanar group have an average income of 4333.333 units, while children have an average income of 8000 units. The income difference is 3666.667 units.
7. **Panan:** The average income of mothers from this community is 4115.385 units, and the average income of children is 10384.615 units, resulting in a whopping income difference of 6270.231 units.
8. **Kavara:** Mothers belonging to Kavara community have an average income of 4294.118 units, while children have an average income of 8176.471 units. The income difference is estimated to be 3882.353 units.
9. **Kalladi:** The average income of mothers from this category is 4313.725 units, and the average income of children is 8019.608 units, resulting in an income difference of 3705.882 units.

The analysis on the basis of data presented in Table 5.51 highlights significant variations in upward income mobility among different types of the Scheduled Caste (SC) community households in Kerala. The Panan community stands out with a notably high-income difference of 6270.231 units. It indicates that children in this group earn substantially more than their mothers. Similarly, the Pulayan/Cheraman community shows a considerable income difference of 3857.143 units, indicating a strong trend of upward income mobility. On the other hand, some communities exhibit lower levels of upward income mobility. For example, the Kanakkan/ Padanna community has the lowest income difference of only 2261.905 units, suggesting a less pronounced increase in children's income compared to their mothers'. These findings underscore the importance of targeted interventions in enhancing economic opportunities and promoting upward income mobility among all the SC communities in Kerala.

Table 5.51: Average income difference between mother and children by types of SC community households

Types of SC Community	Mother's Income (Mean)	children's Income (Mean)	Income Difference (children - Mother) (Mean)
Pulayan/ Cheraman	4428.571	8285.714	3857.143
Kanakkan/ Padanna	6309.524	8571.429	2261.905
Cheruman	4013.514	7905.405	3891.892
Mannan/ Perumannan	4244.444	8644.444	4400.000
Paraiyan/Sambavar	4242.424	7606.061	3363.636
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	4333.333	8000.000	3666.667
Panan	4115.385	10384.615	6270.231
Kavara	4294.118	8176.471	3882.353
Kalladi	4313.725	8019.608	3705.882

Source: Estimated from primary data

5.8.4 Upward Educational Mobility Among Scheduled Caste Households in Kerala

Education plays a central role in shaping the socio-economic mobility of individuals and communities. For the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, access to education can be a key driver of upward mobility. The current section analyses the upward educational mobility among the SC households in Kerala by examining the differences in education levels between parents and children. It focuses on two aspects: the average education levels of fathers and mothers when compared to their children, and the extent of upward educational mobility within the SC households. The Tables 5.52 and 5.53 present the data on average education levels of fathers and mothers, respectively, when compared to their children, along with the differences in education levels within the SC households. These tables provide insights into the educational progress and opportunities for advancement among the SC communities in Kerala, bringing attention on the intergenerational transmission of educational attainment within these households.

The Table 5.52 provides the data on average education levels of fathers and children in the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, along with the difference in

education levels between fathers and children. The table shows that fathers have an education level of 9.952255 years on an average, with a standard deviation of 1.299694 years. In comparison, sons have an average education level of 12.2732 years, with the standard deviation of 1.63965 years. It indicates that children in the SC households in Kerala are more educated than their fathers.

The table 5.52 also shows the difference on education levels (in years) between sons and fathers of the SC households. The average education difference is 2.021215 years, with a standard deviation of 1.148167 years. This means that children from the SC households in Kerala have completed approximately 2 years more education than their fathers on an average. The data presented in Table suggests a significant degree of upward educational mobility among the SC households in Kerala. The positive education difference indicates that children in these households are achieving higher levels of education than their fathers, reflecting an improvement on educational attainment across generations. This upward educational mobility is crucial for enhancing socio-economic opportunities and breaking the poverty cycle within the SC communities. However, further research is required to identify the factors responsible for this upward mobility and to identify strategies to sustain and enhance educational progress among the SC households in Kerala.

Table 5.52: Average education of fathers and children of Scheduled Caste Households

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Father's Education	377	9.952255	1.299694	7	17
Son's Education	377	11.97347	1.273434	10	17
Upward educational mobility (difference)	377	2.021215	1.148167	-1	8

Source: Estimated from primary data

The Table 5.53 provides data on average education levels of mothers and children in the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, along with the difference in education levels between mothers and children. The table shows that mothers have an education level of 10.33687 years on an average, with a standard deviation of 1.220631 years. In comparison, sons have an average education level of 11.97347 years, with a

standard deviation of 1.273434 years. It indicates that children in SC households in Kerala are more educated than their mothers.

The table 5.53 also shows the educational difference between mothers and children, which is calculated as the difference in education levels (in years) between sons and mothers. The average education difference is 1.636602 years, with a standard deviation of 0.965417 years. This means that, on average, children from the SC households in Kerala have completed approximately 1.6 years education than their mothers.

Similar to the Table 5.52, data presented in Table 5.53 suggests a significant degree of upward educational mobility among the SC households in Kerala. The positive education difference indicates that children in these households are achieving higher levels of education than their mothers, reflecting an improvement in educational attainment across generations. This upward educational mobility is crucial in enhancing socio-economic opportunities and breaking the poverty cycle within the SC communities. Further research is suggested to understand the factors responsible for this upward mobility and to identify strategies to sustain and enhance educational progress among SC households in Kerala.

Table 5.53: Average education of mothers and children of Scheduled Caste Households

Variable	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Min**	**Max**
Mother's Education	10.33687	1.220631	8	16
Son's Education	11.97347	1.273434	10	17
Upward educational mobility (difference)	1.636602	0.965417	-1	6
Sample size	377			

Source: Estimated from primary data

5.8.5 Upward Educational Mobility across different sub groups of Scheduled Caste Households in Kerala

The data presented in Tables5.54 and 5.55 provide helps for an in-depth analysis of the upward educational mobility among different subgroups of the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, focusing on the educational differences between parents and children across various SC communities. These tables present the average education levels of fathers and mothers, respectively, when compared to their

children, along with the mean difference in education levels (in years) between parents and children for each of the SC community subgroup. Table 5.54 specifically examines the average educational difference between fathers and children across different types of the SC community households in Kerala. It shows the mean education levels of fathers, the mean education levels of children, and the mean education difference (son's education minus father's education) for each SC community subgroup. This analysis offers insights into how educational attainment is progressing from one generation to the next within each of the SC community subgroup, highlighting potential disparities and areas for improvement in educational outcomes.

Table 5.54 provides the data on the average education difference between fathers and children across different types of Scheduled Caste (SC) community households in Kerala.

1. **Pulayan/ Cheraman**: Fathers in belonging to category have a mean education level of 9.904762 years, while children have a mean education level of 11.59524 years. The mean education difference, indicating upward educational mobility, is found to be 1.690476 years.
2. **Kanakkan/ Padanna**: Fathers from this category have a mean education level of 10.2381 years, while children have a mean education level of 12.16667 years. The mean education difference is 1.928571 years.
3. **Cheruman**: The mean education level of fathers from Cheruman community is 9.932432 years, and the mean education level of children is 11.98649 years, resulting in a mean education difference of 2.054054 years.
4. **Mannan/Perumannan**: Fathers in this category have a mean education level of 10.02222 years, while children have mean education level of 12.11111 years. The mean education difference is estimated as 2.088889 years.
5. **Paraiyan/ Sambavar**: The mean education level of fathers from this community is 9.787879 years, and the mean education level of children is 11.84848 years, resulting in a mean education difference of 2.060606 years.
6. **Kuravan/ Sidhanar**: Fathers in this category have a mean education level of 10.1 years, while children have a mean education level of 12.16667 years. The mean education difference is estimated to be 2.066667 years.

7. **Panan**: The mean education level of fathers is 9.846154 years, and the mean education level of children is 12.19231 years, resulting in a mean education difference of 2.346154 years.
8. **Kavara**: Fathers from this community have a mean education level of 9.676471 years, while children have a mean education level of 12 years. The mean education difference is 2.323529 years.
9. **Kalladi**: The mean education level of fathers from Kalladi group is 9.980392 years, and the mean education level of children is 11.82353 years, resulting in a mean education difference of 1.843137 years.

Among the SC community households in Kerala, the Panan community exhibits the highest upward educational mobility, with children attaining 2.346154 years more education than their fathers on an average. This suggests significant improvement in educational attainment across generations within the Panan community. Conversely, the Kalladi community demonstrates lower upward educational mobility, with children surpassing their fathers' education levels by an average of 1.843137 years, when compared to the other communities. While still indicative of progress, this lower educational mobility suggests that there may be challenges or barriers hindering greater advancements on education within the Kalladi community. These findings underscore the importance of understanding the specific factors driving educational mobility within each of the SC community subgroup to formulate targeted interventions that can further enhance educational opportunities and outcomes across generations.

Table 5.54: Average education difference between fathers and children by types of SC community households

Types of SC Community	Father's Education(mean)	Son's Education(mean)	Mean Difference (Son - Father)
Pulayan/ Cheraman	9.904762	11.59524	1.690476
Kanakkan/ Padanna	10.2381	12.16667	1.928571
Cheruman	9.932432	11.98649	2.054054
Mannan/Perumannan	10.02222	12.11111	2.088889
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	9.787879	11.84848	2.060606
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	10.1	12.16667	2.066667
Panan	9.846154	12.19231	2.346154
Kavara	9.676471	12	2.323529
Kalladi	9.980392	11.82353	1.843137

Source: Estimated from primary data

The data presented in Table 5.55 supports the analysis of the average education difference between mothers and children across different types of the Scheduled Caste (SC) community households in Kerala.

1. **Pulayan/Cheraman**: Mothers in this SC category have a mean education level of 10.21429 years, while children have a mean education level of 11.59524 years. The mean education difference, indicating upward educational mobility, is 1.380952 years.
2. **Kanakkan/ Padanna**: Mothers in this category have a mean education level of 10.47619 years, while children have a mean education level of 12.16667 years. The mean education difference in this category is 1.690476 years.
3. **Cheruman:** The mean education level of mothers from Cheruman community is 10.51351 years, and the mean education level of children is 11.98649 years, resulting in a mean education difference of 1.472973 years.
4. **Mannan/Perumannan:** Mothers from this category have a mean education level of 10.48889 years, while children have a mean education level of 12.11111 years. The mean education difference for Manna/ Perumannan category is 1.622222 years.
5. **Paraiyan/ Sambavar:** The mean education level of mothers from Paraiyan community is 9.969697 years, and the mean education level of children is 11.84848 years, resulting in a mean education difference of 1.878788 years.
6. **Kuravan/ Sidhanar**: Mothers from this category have a mean education level of 10.5 years, while children have a mean education level of 12.16667 years. The mean education difference of this community is 1.666667 years.
7. **Panan**: The mean education level of mothers belonging to Panan community is 10.03846 years, and the mean education level of children is 12.19231 years, resulting in a mean education difference of 2.153846 years.
8. **Kavara:** Mothers of this category have a mean education level of 10.44118 years, while children have a mean education level of 12 years. The mean education difference is therefore 1.558824 years.
9. **Kalladi:** The mean education level of mothers of Kalladi community is 10.15686 years, and the mean education level of children is 11.82353 years, resulting in a mean education difference of 1.666667 years.

Similar to the Table 5.54, Table 5.55 also indicates varying degrees of upward educational mobility among different types of SC community households in Kerala. Some communities show higher levels of upward educational mobility, as reflected in larger education differences between mothers and children, while others show relatively lower levels.

Among the SC community households in Kerala, the Panan community demonstrates the highest upward educational mobility, with children achieving 2.153846 years more education than their mothers. It reveals significant improvement in educational attainment across generations within the Panan community. Conversely, the Pulayan/ Cheraman community shows lower upward educational mobility, with children surpassing their mothers' education levels by an average of 1.380952 years. While still indicative of progress, this lower educational mobility suggests that there could be challenges or barriers hindering greater advancements in education within the Pulayan/Cheraman community.

Table 5.55: Average education difference between Mother and children by types of SC community households

Community	Mother's Education(mean)	Son's Education(mean)	Difference (Son - Mother)
Pulayan/ Cheraman	10.21429	11.59524	1.380952
Kanakkan/ Padanna	10.47619	12.16667	1.690476
Cheruman	10.51351	11.98649	1.472973
Mannan/Perumannan	10.48889	12.11111	1.622222
Paraiyan/ Sambavar	9.969697	11.84848	1.878788
Kuravan/ Sidhanar	10.5	12.16667	1.666667
Panan	10.03846	12.19231	2.153846
Kavara	10.44118	12	1.558824
Kalladi	10.15686	11.82353	1.666667

Source: Estimated from primary data

5.8.6 Upward Occupational Mobility Among Scheduled Caste Households in Kerala

Occupational mobility is key in analysing social mobility which reflects the ability of individuals to move between different occupational positions across generations. Among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, understanding the

patterns of intergenerational occupational mobility is crucial for assessing progress and identifying potential barriers to economic advancement. This section analyses the intergenerational shift in occupation among the SC community households in Kerala, focusing on the occupational mobility of children compared to their fathers and mothers.

Tables 5.56 and 5.57 present the data on intergenerational occupational mobility patterns between fathers and children (Table 5.56) and between mothers and children (see Table 5.57) within the SC households in Kerala. These tables categorize the occupations of fathers and mothers and compare them to the occupations of their children, detailing the transitions between different occupational categories. The analysis highlights the extent to which the children have shifted from their parents' occupations and the types of occupations they have moved into, providing insights into the dynamics of occupational mobility within the SC households in Kerala. Major inter-generational shifting of occupations among different SC communities are explained as follows.

Children of fathers in daily wage labour show significant occupational continuity with 66.7 per cent also becoming daily wage laborers. However, 25.0 per cent of the children transitioned to self-employment, while smaller proportions chose private company jobs (5.7%) or Gulf migration (1.5%). Only 1.1 per cent remained unemployed, and none secured government jobs, indicating limited upward mobility among the SC communities.

For children of fathers in self-employment, 73.6 per cent continued in the same occupation, showing the highest level of continuity among all categories. A smaller percentage of them diversified into private company jobs (11.3%) or have become Gulf migrants (1.9%), while another 1.9 per cent remains unemployed. None of them have entered government jobs.

Children of fathers who were Gulf migrants demonstrated the highest occupational continuity overall, with 80.0 per cent following their fathers' path and opted Gulf migration. The remaining 20.0 per cent have become daily wage laborers,

while no children were transitioned into self-employment, private companies, government jobs, or unemployment.

For fathers employed in private companies, only 6.7 per cent of children followed the fathers' path, indicating low continuity. Instead, the largest proportion (46.7%) have become daily wage laborers, while 20.0% transitioned to self-employment. Smaller percentages pursued Gulf migration (13.3%) or government jobs (6.7%), with 6.7% also remains unemployed. This group have showed the most occupational diversity.

Children of retired fathers from the SC communities exhibited significant upward mobility, with 70.0 per cent securing government jobs. The remaining children were evenly distributed across the daily wage labour, Gulf migration, private company jobs, and self-employment, each at 10.0 per cent. None of them remains unemployed, reflecting better opportunities compared to other groups.

Finally, children of unemployed fathers primarily entered daily wage labour (66.7%) or self-employment (26.7%). Only 6.7 per cent pursued private company jobs, while none transitioned to Gulf migration, government jobs. However, none of them remains unemployed. It indicates the grave reality of limited occupational mobility for this group.

The Chi-square test value presented in Table 5.56, which compares the occupational mobility between fathers and children in the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala, is 350.66. This value is associated with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant relationship between the fathers' and children's occupations. The Chi-square test is used to find if there is a significant association between two categorical variables. In this context, it suggests a significant association between the occupation of fathers and the occupation chosen by their children. It implies that the choice of occupation for children is not independent of their fathers' occupation, indicating some level of intergenerational occupational mobility or continuity within these households.

Table 5.56: Inter-Generational Occupational Mobility: Father Versus Children

Father occupation	Occupation of children						Total
	Daily wage	Self employed	Gulf migrant	Private company	Govt job	Unemployed	
Daily wage labour	176	66	4	15	0	3	264
	66.7%	25.0%	1.5%	5.7%	0.0%	1.1%	100.0%
Self-employment	39	6	1	6	0	1	53
	73.6%	11.3%	1.9%	11.3%	0.0%	1.9%	100.0%
Gulf migrant	1	0	4	0	0	0	5
	20.0%	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Private company	7	3	2	1	1	1	15
	46.7%	20.0%	13.3%	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%	100.0%
Retired	1	0	1	1	7	0	10
	10.0%	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	70.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Unemployed	20	8	0	2	0	0	30
	66.7%	26.7%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	244	83	12	25	8	5	377
	64.7%	22.0%	3.2%	6.6%	2.1%	1.3%	100.0%
Pearson Chi square test	350.66 (0.000)						

Source: Estimated from primary data

Table 5.57 presents the data on intergenerational occupational mobility between mothers and their children within the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala. Children of mothers in daily wage labour exhibit significant continuity, with 65.4 per cent also becoming daily wage laborers. Additionally, 23.6 per cent transitioned into self-employment, and 7.5 per cent opted private company jobs. A smaller proportion pursued Gulf migration (2.4%) or remains unemployed (1.2%), but none of them entered government jobs, indicating limited upward mobility.

For children of mothers in self-employment, 62.3 per cent continued in the same occupation, showing high level of continuity. Others were diversified into private company jobs (5.8%), Gulf migration (4.3%), and government jobs (4.3%). Only a

small percentage (1.4%) remains unemployed, reflecting moderate mobility within this group.

Children of mothers employed in private companies displayed occupational diversity. While 64.3 per cent entered daily wage labour, 14.3 per cent pursued self-employment, and 7.1 per cent became Gulf migrants. Notably, 14.3 per cent secured government jobs, showing some upward mobility. None of them remains unemployed or continued in private company jobs, indicating low occupational continuity.

Among the children of retired mothers, 100% secured government employment, indicating a clear pattern of occupational continuity and following across generations, reflecting perfect upward mobility.

Children of unemployed mothers have predominantly entered daily wage labour (68.4%) or self-employment (15.8%). Smaller percentages pursued Gulf migration (5.3%) or private company jobs (5.3%), while 2.6 per cent secured government jobs or remained unemployed. This group exhibits limited upward mobility. This shift indicates a strong trend towards seeking opportunities abroad among the younger generation, potentially driven by perceptions of better economic prospects outside the state of Kerala.

It is clear from the Table 5.57 that the Chi-square test value is 114.56, with a p-value of 0.000. It indicates a statistically significant relationship between the mothers' and children's occupations in the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala. The significant Chi-square value suggests that the choice of occupation for children is not independent of their mothers' occupation. This results how the evidence of occupational mobility and also continuity between mothers and their children within these households, with the children's choice of occupation being influenced by mothers' occupation.

Table 5.57: Inter-generational occupational mobility: mother versus children

Mother occupation	Children occupation						Total
	Daily wage	Self employed	Gulf migrant	Private company	Govt job	Unemployed	
Daily wage	166	60	6	19	0	3	254
	65.4%	23.6%	2.4%	7.5%	0.0%	1.2%	100.0%
Self employed	43	15	3	4	3	1	69
	62.3%	21.7%	4.3%	5.8%	4.3%	1.4%	100.0%
Private company	9	2	1	0	2	0	14
	64.3%	14.3%	7.1%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Retired	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Unemployed	26	6	2	2	1	1	38
	68.4%	15.8%	5.3%	5.3%	2.6%	2.6%	100.0%
Total	244	83	12	25	8	5	377
	64.7%	22.0%	3.2%	6.6%	2.1%	1.3%	100.0%
Pearson Chi square test	114.56 (0.000)						

Source: Estimated from primary data

5.8.7 Intergenerational Relative Social Mobility among Scheduled Caste Households

The previous sections focused on *absolute upward mobility* measuring the difference between the economic and educational attainments of children and their parents. The current section examines relative social mobility among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala. Relative mobility measures the *degree of dependence* of children's socio-economic outcomes on those of their parents. In this framework, lower intergenerational elasticity implies higher relative mobility, indicating that children's achievements are less determined by the parental status. Conversely, higher elasticity denotes higher level of persistence across the generations.

The Table 5.58 presents the results of the intergenerational income regressions, where children's income (for sons and daughters separately) is regressed on their parents' income, controlling for individual and household-wise characteristics such as age, education, technical education, computer skills, type of SC community, and panchayat. The coefficient on parental income represents the *intergenerational income elasticity* (IGE), a key indicator of relative mobility. A higher elasticity implies a

stronger dependence on parental income (lower mobility), while a lower elasticity indicates weaker dependence (higher mobility).The estimated coefficient of 0.316 for the father–son relationship is found to be statistically significant at the 1 per cent level, suggesting a moderate level of income persistence across generations. It means approximately 31.6% of income differences among sons can be traced to differences in their fathers' income levels, reflecting moderate relative mobility. In contrast, the coefficients for father–daughter (0.049) and mother–child pairs (0.036 for sons and 0.033 for daughters) are statistically insignificant, indicating that mothers' income exerts a relatively weaker direct influence on their children's earnings. These results imply that while intergenerational income persistence exists among the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala, the degree of dependence is moderate. The results further suggest that structural transformations, educational expansion, and affirmative action policies have partially mitigated strength of income-based inheritance effects, promoting gradual but incomplete income mobility.

The data presented in Table 5.59 reports the results of the intergenerational educational mobility regressions, which estimate the elasticity between parents' and children's years of schooling. The coefficients on parental education are notably higher and statistically significant in all the models, revealing stronger persistence on educational attainment when compared to income. Specifically, the estimated elasticity between fathers' and sons' education is 0.396, and between fathers and daughters is 0.286, both are significant at 1% level. It suggests that around 39.6% of the variation on sons' education and 28.6% of the variation in daughters' education can be explained by fathers' educational levels. Similarly, when mothers' education is considered, the coefficients remain high (0.340 for sons and 0.331 for daughters). These results indicate a moderate degree of relative educational mobility—that is, while the influence of parental education remains considerable, some intergenerational movement on educational attainment is evident. The findings underscore the educational persistence that remains stronger than income persistence It reflects that education continues to be closely tied to family background, even as economic opportunities have somewhat diversified. The empirical analysis reveals distinct patterns of intergenerational mobility among the SC households in Kerala. The study finds that while the gradually loosening link between family background and income outcomes, education remains

the stronger channel of persistence. These findings point to the need for continued policy interventions particularly those aimed at educational equity and skill development for fostering more inclusive forms of relative mobility among marginalized communities.

Table 5.58: Intergenerational Income Regressions

	Effect of father income on son income		**Effect of mother income on son income**	
Dependent variable	**1) Son Income**	**2) Daughter Income**	**3) Son Income**	**4) Daughter Income**
Parent Income	0.316*** (0.079)	0.049 (0.041)	0.036 (0.060)	0.033 (0.030)
Constant	6515.454*** (487.833)	4641.955*** (253.268)	8139.705*** (332.765)	4769.142*** (169.331)
Age	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Education	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Technical education (yes=1, no=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Computer skill (yes=1, no=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Type of SC (Cheruman=1; others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Panchayat (Chemmaruthy=1, others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	377	377	377	377
R-squared	0.0408	0.0037	0.0010	0.0032
Adj. R-squared	0.0383	0.0011	−0.0017	0.0005
F-statistic	15.96	1.41	0.37	1.20
Prob > F	0.0001	0.2357	0.5427	0.2747

Significance levels:
*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1
Standard errors in the bracket

Table 5.59: Intergenerational Educational Mobility

	Effect of father education on son income		Effect of mother education on son income	
Dependent variable	**(1) Son Education**	**(2) Daughter Education**	**(3) Son Education**	**(4) Daughter Education**
Parent Education	0.396*** (0.046)	0.286*** (0.046)	0.340*** (0.051)	0.331*** (0.049)
Constant	8.032*** (0.464)	9.582*** (0.462)	8.461*** (0.530)	9.008*** (0.505)
Type of Sc community (Cheruman=1, others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Panchayat (Chemmaruthy=1, others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	377	377	377	377
R-squared	0.1634	0.0935	0.1061	0.1103
Adj. R-squared	0.1611	0.0910	0.1037	0.1079
F-statistic	73.22	38.66	44.51	46.49
Prob > F	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

Significance levels:
*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1
Standard errors in the bracket

5.9 The impact of educational upward mobility (EUM) and Intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) on income upward mobility of Scheduled Caste Households in Kerala

The current section of this study empirically examines the impact of educational upward mobility (EUM) and Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on Income Upward Mobility (IUM) of Scheduled Caste Households in Kerala. These components are defined as follows.

1. **Income Upward Mobility (IUM):** Income Upward Mobility refers to the difference between the income levels of the parents and their children. It measures the extent to which children achieve higher incomes than their parents. IUM is an important indicator of economic mobility and is influenced by factors including education, occupation, and social capital.

2. **Educational Upward Mobility (EUM):** Educational Upward Mobility refers to the difference between the education levels of parents and their children. It measures the extent to which children attain a higher level of education than their parents. EUM is often seen as a key factor driving socio-economic advancement, as higher levels of education can lead to better job opportunities and higher income.
3. **Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD):** Intergenerational Psychological Distance measures the difference in age between parents and their children. It measures the generational gap in terms of life experiences, values, and perspectives. IPD can influence various aspects of life, including choices on educational and career, which in turn can impact income mobility.

The study of the impact of Educational Upward Mobility (EUM) and Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on Income Upward Mobility (IUM) among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala holds significant importance for several reasons. Firstly, the SC community in Kerala has historically faced social and economic marginalization, making it crucial in understanding the factors that contribute to their upward mobility. By examining the role of education and generational differences in income mobility, this study can provide insights on the way in which economic disparities within the SC community can be addressed. Secondly, Kerala is known for its relatively high levels of education and human development when compared to other Indian states, understanding the dynamics of income mobility within the SC community in such a context can provide valuable lessons for other regions grappling with similar issues of social inequality and economic development. Moreover, this study can offer insights on the effectiveness of education as a tool for economic empowerment within marginalized communities. If EUM is found to have made a significant impact on IUM among SC households in Kerala, it would highlight the importance of investing in education as a means for breaking the cycle of poverty and improving overall social mobility. Furthermore, by examining the role of IPD, this study can offer insights on how generational differences in values, attitudes, and life experiences influence income mobility. Understanding these intergenerational dynamics remains essential for designing targeted policies and interventions that can better support economic advancement within the SC community.

Previous research has shown divergent views on the relationship between education and income. Some arguing that education significantly affects intergenerational income transmission, providing more opportunities for increased income, while others suggest that education has made little effect on children's income. The current section aims to explore whether increasing children's education levels lead to higher incomes than their parents, a crucial factor in understanding the potential of education to increase national income levels, particularly in the marginalised SC households. It seeks to find out whether children's incomes surpass those of their parents and the extent to which education and intergenerational psychological distance contributes to this upward mobility of the scheduled caste households in Kerala.

5.9.1 Summary Statistics of the important variables used for estimating upward social mobility

The statistics on income reveal notable differences among fathers, mothers, and sons within Scheduled Caste households in Kerala. Mean income of the fathers is estimated to be 5652.52, showcasing a moderate level of income, with a standard deviation of 2462.204, indicating some variability in their earnings. In contrast, mothers have a slightly lower mean income of 4461.538 but exhibiting a higher standard deviation of 3322.911, indicating a wider range of income distribution among mothers when compared to fathers. Sons, on the other hand, have the highest mean income of 8302.387, suggesting an upward trajectory in income across two generations. However, their standard deviation of 3852.855 indicates higher variability in sons' incomes, with some earning as low as 2000 and others as high as 60000, showcasing a diverse range of income levels among sons in the sample. Overall, these income statistics highlight the economic diversity within the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala, indicating varying income levels among fathers, mothers, and sons.

The education statistics reveal interesting insights into the educational attainment levels of parents within the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala. Fathers have a mean schooling year of 9.952255, with a standard deviation of 1.299694, indicating some variability in their education years. The wide range of fathers' education levels in the sample that spans from 7 to 17, showcasing a diverse range of educational attainment among fathers. Similarly, mothers have a slightly higher mean

education level of 10.33687, with a standard deviation of 1.220631, indicating variability in mothers' education levels as well. The range of mothers' education levels in the sample extends from 8 to 16, indicating a diverse range of educational status among the mothers. Overall, these education statistics highlight the variability in educational attainment among parents within the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala, showcasing a range of educational levels among both fathers and mothers.

The age statistics provide an overview of the age distribution within the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala state. The mean age of the fathers stands at 64.29708, with a standard deviation of 5.147486, indicating some variability in their ages. The age for fathers in the sample ranges from 50 to 87, reflecting a diverse age distribution among fathers. Mothers, on the other hand, have a slightly lower mean age of 59.27586, with a standard deviation of 5.096753, also indicating some variability in mothers' ages. The age range for mothers extends from 48 to 70, showing a range of ages among mothers in the sample. Children within these households have a mean age of 34.81698, with a higher standard deviation of 16.94958, indicating greater variability in the ages of children. The age for children ranges from 20 to 44 that indicates a diverse age distribution among children in these households. These age statistics highlight the diverse age distribution among fathers, mothers, and children within the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala.

5.9.2 Statistics on upward mobility variables and intergenerational psychological distance

The statistics on upward mobility variables and intergenerational psychological distance provide valuable insights into the dynamics of social and economic progression within the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala (See Table 5.60A).

1. **Income Upward Mobility:** The mean income upward mobility from fathers to children is 2649.867, indicating that, on average, children tend to have higher incomes than their fathers. However, this upward mobility varies significantly, as shown by the standard deviation of 4132.056.Itreveals a wide range of income outcomes among children when compared to their fathers. The mean income upward mobility from mothers to children is 3840.849, which remains

higher than the upward mobility from fathers, indicating that children tend to have higher incomes than their mothers.

2. **Education Upward Mobility:** The mean education upward mobility from fathers to children is 2.0212, indicating that children tend to attain higher levels of education than their fathers. The mean education upward mobility from mothers to children is 1.6366 which indicates that children tend to attain higher levels of education than their mothers. This variability reveals differing educational achievements among children when compared to their mothers.
3. **Intergenerational Psychological Distance:** The mean intergenerational psychological distance between fathers and children is -29.480. The standard deviation of 15.9917 indicates variability in psychological distance. This variability suggests differing generational gaps in terms of life experiences, values, and perspectives among fathers and children. The mean intergenerational psychological distance between mothers and children is -24.458 which indicates that children are younger than their mothers. The standard deviation of 15.71891 indicates variability in psychological distance. This variability suggests differing generational gaps in terms of life experiences, values, and perspectives among mothers and children of the SC communities.

Table 5.60: Summary Statistics of the important variables used for estimating upward social mobility

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Father's Income	5652.52	2462.204	1000	20000
Mother's Income	4461.538	3322.911	1000	60000
Son's Income	8302.387	3852.855	2000	60000
Father's Education	9.952255	1.299694	7	17
Mother's Education	10.33687	1.220631	8	16
Father's Age	64.29708	5.147486	50	87
Mother's Age	59.27586	5.096753	48	70
Children's Age	34.81698	16.94958	20	44

Table 5.60 A: Summary Statistics of the important variables used for estimating upward social mobility

Upward Mobility Variables	Mean	SD
Income Upward Mobility (Children Income-Father income)	2649.867	4132.056
Income Upward Mobility (Children Income-Mother income)	3840.849	5008.092
Education Upward Mobility (children education-Father education)	2.0212	1.148167
Education Upward Mobility (children education-mother education)	1.6366	0.965417
Intergenerational psychological distance (Children age-father age)	-29.480	15.9917
Intergenerational psychological distance (Children age-mother age)	-24.458	15.71891

Source: Estimated from primary data

5.9.3 Impact of educational upward mobility on income upward mobility of SC households

Education is often viewed as a key factor driving upward social mobility, particularly among marginalized communities such as the Scheduled Castes (SC) in India. The current section focuses on examining the impact of educational upward mobility (EUM) on income upward mobility (IUM) among the SC households in Kerala. The primary objective of the current study is to estimate the impact of EUM on IUM among the SC households in Kerala. It involves analysing the effect of EUM based on both father's and mother's education levels on income mobility of their children. The study also calculates income upward mobility separately based on father's income and mother's income, providing comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing income mobility within the SC households. The study utilizes survey data collected from the SC households and employs multiple linear regression models to estimate the impact of EUM on IUM. The models are estimated separately for IUM based on father and children, as well as IUM based on mother and children. The analysis controls for factors such as the gender of the household head, types of the SC community, and panchayat, to isolate the specific impact of EUM on IUM. Estimated results are given in the Tables5.61and5.62.

The results presented in Table 5.61 are based on the calculation of income upward mobility using the father's income. Model 1 presented in Table 5.61 examines the impact of educational upward mobility based on father's education (EUM Father)

on income upward mobility among the Scheduled Caste (SC) children in Kerala. The coefficient estimate for EUM Father is 0.237 which reveals that for every one-unit increase in educational upward mobility, there will be a 0.237 unit increase in income upward mobility for their children, holding other variables constant. This coefficient is statistically significant at the 1% level, suggesting strong relationship between fathers' educational advancement and the improved income prospects of their children.

Model 2 highlights the impact of educational upward mobility based on mother's education (EUMM other) on income upward mobility. The coefficient estimate for EUMM other is 0.073, implying that for every one-unit increase in educational upward mobility with respect to mother, there is an increase of 0.073 unit in income upward mobility for their children, holding other variables constant. Similar to EUM Father, this coefficient is statistically significant at 1% level, indicating that mothers' educational progress also positively influences their children's income mobility.

In Model 3, which is the full model incorporating both EUM Father and EUM Mother, the coefficient estimates are 0.212 and 0.070, respectively. This suggests that when considering both parents' educational advancement, fathers' education has a stronger impact on income upward mobility when compared to mothers' education. This model provides a comprehensive understanding of how both parents' educational achievements can contribute to the income mobility of the SC children in Kerala.

The inclusion of control variables such as gender of the household head, types of the SC community, and panchayat is crucial in controlling for potential confounding factors. Gender of the household head shows gender dynamics within the household, which can influence income mobility. Types of the SC community and panchayat represent community and locality-specific effects that can impact income mobility. By including these variables, the study ensures that the estimated effects of educational upward mobility are not biased by the other factors.

The constant term in the regression models represents the expected value of the dependent variable (income upward mobility) when all independent variables are considered to be zero.

The adjusted R-squared value of 0.375 suggests that the independent variables in the model (including educational upward mobility, control variables, etc.) explain

37.5% of the variance in income upward mobility among SC households in Kerala. It indicates a moderate-to-strong explanatory power of the model, revealing the included variables being relevant for understanding the income mobility.

The F test statistic which is used to test the overall significance of the regression model is presented in Table 5.61. The estimated value is 124.34, which is highly significant ($p < 0.01$). It indicates that the overall model, which includes educational upward mobility and control variables, is a good fit for the data and provides a meaningful explanation of income upward mobility among the SC households in Kerala.

Table 5.61: Impact of educational upward mobility on income upward mobility of SC households (Income Upward Mobility = Children Income-Father income)

	Model 1 (Coefficient)	**Model 2 (Coefficient)**	**Model 3 (Coefficient)**
Dependent variable= income upward mobility (Children Income-Father income)	**(EUM^{Father})**	**(EUM^{Mother})**	**Full model**
Independent variables			
Educational Upward Mobility (EUM^{Father})	0.237*** (0.018)		0.212*** (0.016)
Educational Upward Mobility (EUM^{Mother})		0.073*** ((0.015)	0.070*** ((0.014)
Constants	0.456*** (1.764)	.359*** (2.454)	1.343*** (2.068)
Gender of household head (male=1; female=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Types of SC Community (Cheruman=1; all others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Panchayat (Chemmaruthy=1; others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	377	377	377
Adjusted R squared	0.345	0.356	0.375
F test Statistic	124.34*** (0.000)		

Note: The dependent variable is upward income mobility
Standard errors are given in brackets, where P values for the corresponding estimated coefficients are _p<0.1, __p<0.05, and ___p<0.01.
Source: estimated from primary data

The results presented in Table 5.62 are based on the calculation of income upward mobility using the mother's income. Model 1 in the table investigates the impact of educational upward mobility based on mother's education (EUMMother) on

income upward mobility among the Scheduled Caste (SC) children in Kerala. The coefficient estimate for EUMMother is 0.044, indicating that for every one-unit increase in educational upward mobility with respect to father, there will be a 0.044 unit increase in income upward mobility for their children, keeping other variables held constant. This coefficient is statistically significant at the 1% level as well, suggesting a positive relationship between educational advancement and the improved income prospects of their children.

The Model 2 highlights the impact of educational upward mobility based on mother's education (EUMMother) on income upward mobility. The coefficient estimate for EUMMother is 0.030, implying that for every one-unit increase in educational upward mobility with respect to mother, there will be a 0.030 unit increase in income upward mobility for their children, holding other variables constant. Similar to EUMFather, this coefficient is also statistically significant at the 1% level which indicates that educational progress also positively influences their children's income mobility.

In Model 3, the full model incorporates both EUMFather and EUMMother with the coefficient estimates of 0.101 and 0.030, respectively. It suggests that when considering both parents' educational advancement, educational upward mobility based on father has a stronger impact on income upward mobility compared to mothers' educational upward mobility. This empirical result show educational achievements compare to parents contribute to the income mobility of the SC children in Kerala.

The control variables in these models, such as gender of the household head, types of SC community, and panchayat, help control for potential confounding factors. They ensure that the estimated effects of the educational upward mobility are not biased by other factors that remain specific to the household or community.

The constant term in Model 1 is 0.555 with a standard error of 1.664. It refers to baseline level of income upward mobility even when the educational upward mobility variables are zero. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.375 indicates that the independent variables in the model explain 37.5% of the variance in income upward mobility. It reveals a moderate-to-strong explanatory power of the model. The F test statistic is highly significant at 124.34 ($p < 0.01$), indicating that the overall model, which includes educational upward mobility and control variables, is a good fit for the

data and provides a meaningful explanation of income upward mobility among the SC households in Kerala.

Table 5.62: Impact of educational upward mobility on income upward mobility of SC households (Income Upward Mobility= (Children Income-Mother income)

	Model 1 (Coefficient)	**Model 2 (Coefficient)**	**Model 3 (Coefficient)**
Dependent variable= income upward mobility (Children Income-Mother income)	**(EUM^{Father})**	**(EUM^{Mother})**	**Full model**
Independent variables			
Educational Upward Mobility (EUM^{Father})	0.122*** (0.010)		0.101*** (0.0110)
Educational Upward Mobility (EUM^{Mother})		0.044*** ((0.011)	0.030*** ((0.019)
Constants	0.555*** (1.664)	.656*** (4.023)	1.645*** (2.001)
Gender of household head (male=1; female=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Types of SC Community (Cheruman=1; all others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Panchayat (Chemmaruthy=1; others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	377	377	377
Adjusted R squared	0.345	0.356	0.375
F test Statistic	124.34*** (0.000)		

Note: The dependent variable is upward income mobility
Standard errors are given in brackets, where _p<0.1, __p<0.05, and ___p<0.01.
source: estimated from primary data.

5.9.4 Impact of intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) on upward income mobility of SC households

Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD), representing the age difference between parents and children, plays a pivotal role in shaping the income mobility of individuals within the SC households. This metric captures not only the chronological gap but also the socio-cultural and psychological distances between generations, reflecting the evolving dynamics within families. Understanding IPD remains crucial as it sheds light on how these intergenerational dynamics influence the economic prospects of households, particularly among marginalized communities belonging to the Scheduled Castes (SC). IPD is a multifaceted concept that encapsulates various dimensions of family dynamics, such as parental influence, cultural transmission, and resource allocation. These dynamics can significantly impact the opportunities

available to children to surpass their parents' income levels. In the context of the SC households in Kerala, where socio-economic disparities are pronounced, studying IPD offers a nuanced understanding of the challenges and pathways to economic advancement. The current study not only contributes to the academic discourse on income mobility but also provides practical insights for designing interventions and policies that addressing the unique needs of the SC communities, ultimately fostering more equitable economic development.

The Table 5.63 presents the results of estimated multiple linear regression models explaining the impact of Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on the upward income mobility of the SC households in Kerala. This estimation of income upward mobility is based on income of father. These models include different specifications of IPD, educational upward mobility (EUM), and their interactions.

Model 1 (IPDFather): The coefficient estimate for IPDFather is -0.234, with a standard error of 0.075. It reveals that a one-unit increase in the intergenerational psychological distance based on father's age leads to 0.234 unit decrease in income upward mobility for their children, holding other variables constant. The coefficient is statistically significant at the 1% level which indicates that a greater age difference between fathers and children negatively affects children's income mobility.

Model 2 (IPDMother): The coefficient estimate for IPDMother is -0.157, with a standard error of 0.217. It implies that one-unit increase in the intergenerational psychological distance based on mother's age is associated with a 0.157 unit decrease in income upward mobility for their children, holding other variables constant. Similar to IPDFather, this coefficient is statistically significant too at the 1% level, indicating a negative impact of age difference between mothers and children on income mobility.

Model 3 (Interaction: IPDFather X EUMFather): The coefficient estimates for the interaction term between IPDFather and EUMFather is 0.129, with a standard error of 0.024. It reveals that the impact of father's age difference on income mobility is moderated by the educational upward mobility based on father's education. One-unit increase in this interaction term leads to 0.129 unit increase in income upward mobility, holding other variables constant. This coefficient is statistically significant at the 5% level which implies that the effect of IPDFather on income mobility depends on educational factors.

Model 4 (Interaction: IPDMother X EUMMother): The coefficient estimate for the interaction term between IPDMother and EUMMother is 0.116, with a standard error of 0.035. It implies how mother's age differences affect income mobility, which is moderated by educational upward mobility based on mother's education. One-unit increase in this interaction term is associated with a 0.116 unit increase in income upward mobility, holding other variables constant. This coefficient is statistically significant at the 5% level, suggesting that the effect of IPDMother on income mobility is influenced by educational factors.

The results highlight the importance of considering intergenerational psychological distance and its interaction with educational factors in understanding income mobility among the SC households in Kerala.

The inclusion of control variables such as gender of the household head, types of the SC community, and panchayat remains critical for controlling potential confounding factors. Gender of the household head reflects gender dynamics within the household, which can impact income mobility. Types of the SC community and panchayat represent community and locality-specific effects that may influence income mobility. By including these variables, the study ensures that the estimated effects of the intergenerational psychological distance and educational upward mobility are not biased by other factors.

The constant term in the regression models represents the expected value of the dependent variable (income upward mobility) when all independent variables are zero. In this case, the constant terms vary across the models (ranging from -1.234 to -1.456), with corresponding standard errors. These constant terms indicate the baseline level of income upward mobility, even when all variables are held constant.

The adjusted R-squared values for the models range from 0.345 to 0.375. It suggests that the independent variables included in the models (including IPD, EUM, and control variables) explain between 34.5% to 37.5% of the variance in income upward mobility among the SC households in Kerala. These values indicate a moderate-to-strong explanatory power of the models, suggesting that the included variables remain relevant for understanding income mobility.

The F test statistic is employed for testing the overall significance of the regression models. In this case, the F test statistics are highly significant ($p < 0.01$) for

all the models, indicating that the overall models, which include IPD, EUM, and control variables, are good fits for the data and provide meaningful explanations of income upward mobility among the SC households in Kerala.

Table 5.63: Impact of intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) on upward income mobility of SC households (Income Upward Mobility = Children Income-Father income)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**
Dependent variable= income upward mobility (Children Income-Father income)	**IPD^{Father}**	**IPD^{Mother}**	**IPD^{Father} X EUM^{Father}**	**IPD^{Mother} X EUM^{Mother}**
Independent variables				
Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD^{Father})	-0.234*** (0.075)			-0.212** (0.074)
Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD^{Mother})		-0.157*** (0.217)		-0.145*** (0.210)
IPD^{Father} X EUM^{Father}			0.129** (0.024)	
IPD^{Mother} X EUM^{Mother}				0.116** (0.035)
Constants	-1.456*** (0.034)	-1.467*** (0.086)	-1.388*** (0.086)	-1.234*** (0.065)
Gender of household head (male=1; female=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Types of SC Community (Cheruman=1; all others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Panchayat (Chemmaruthy=1; others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	377	377	377	
Adjusted R squared	0.345	0.356	0.375	
F test Statistic	124.34*** (0.000)			

Note: The dependent variable is upward income mobility
Standard errors are given in brackets, where _p<0.1, __p<0.05, and ___p<0.01.
Source: estimated from primary data

The Table 5.64 presents the results of four estimated models examining the impact of intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) on upward income mobility of the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala. This estimation is based on income upward mobility derived using mothers' income. In Model 1, IPD based on father's age (IPDFather) shows a coefficient estimate of -0.111 with a standard error of 0.065. It indicates that a larger age difference between fathers and children leads to a 0.111 unit decrease in income upward mobility for their children, when other variables are held constant. Model 2 focuses on IPD based on mother's age (IPDMother), showing a

coefficient estimate of -0.187 with a standard error of 0.176. It suggests that a greater age difference between mothers and children leads to 0.187 unit decrease in income upward mobility for their children. Both coefficients are statistically significant at the 1% level, highlighting the stronger negative impact of age differences between parents and children on income mobility. Models 3 and 4 introduce interaction terms between IPD and Educational Upward Mobility (EUM) based on the parents' education. These models indicate that the relationship between IPD and income upward mobility is moderated by parents' educational upward mobility, with statistical significance at the 1% level. The constant terms in these models represent the baseline level of income upward mobility, ranging from -1.456 to -3.432, with corresponding standard errors. The adjusted R-squared values that range from 0.366 to 0.374indicate that the models explain a moderate-to-high proportion of the variance in income upward mobility. The F test statistics remains highly significant statistically ($p < 0.01$), revealing that the overall models are a good fit for the data.

Table 5.64: Impact of intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) on upward income mobility of SC households (Income Upward Mobility = Children Income-Mother income)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**
Dependent variable= income upward mobility (Children Income-Father income)	**IPD^{Father}**	**IPD^{Mother}**	**IPD^{Father} X EUM^{Father}**	**IPD^{Mother} X EUM^{Mother}**
Independent variables				
Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD^{Father})	-0.111*** (0.065)			-0.110** (0.074)
Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD^{Mother})		-0.187*** (0.176)		-0.176*** (0.210)
IPD^{Father} X EUM^{Father}			0.233** (0.022)	
IPD^{Mother} X EUM^{Mother}				0.213*** (0.144)
Constants	-2.555*** (0.033)	-1.576*** (0.076)	-3.432*** (0.066)	-1.456** (0.088)
Gender of household head (male=1; female=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Types of SC Community (Cheruman=1; all others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Panchayat (Chemmaruthy=1; others=0)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	377	377	377	
Adjusted R squared	0.366	0.369	0.374	
F test Statistic	124.34*** (0.000)			

Note: The dependent variable is upward income mobility
Standard errors are given in brackets, where _p<0.1, __p<0.05, and ___p<0.01.
Source: estimated from primary data

5.10 Focus Group Discussion

5.10.1 Introduction

While the quantitative analysis provides robust evidence on patterns of socio-economic conditions and mobility among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, it is equally important to understand the lived experiences, perceptions, and aspirations of these communities. To capture these nuanced perspectives, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted as a supplementary qualitative method.

The FGDs are aimed to explore in greater depth the core issue of social mobility, educational upward mobility (EUM), intergenerational psychological distance (IPD), and income upward mobility (IUM). Through group interaction, participants were encouraged to share their experiences, compare intergenerational changes, and reflect collectively on the barriers and opportunities shaping their mobility trajectories. Each focus group consisted of 8–10 participants drawn from different Scheduled Caste households across selected samples from the selected regions of Kerala, ensuring representation of different age groups, genders, educational backgrounds, and occupations. The discussions were conducted in a semi-structured manner, guided by key themes but allowing participants to freely articulate their views. The strength of this approach lies in its ability to triangulate quantitative findings with qualitative insights, thereby providing a more holistic understanding of mobility among the SC households.

5.10.2 Results of Focus Group Discussions

The focus group discussions provided important qualitative insights that complement and extend the survey-based findings on social mobility and the role of education among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala. The results are presented thematically, structured around the major objectives of the study.

1. **Perceptions of Social Mobility**

Participants generally confirmed the survey's finding of significant but uneven mobility. Most of them acknowledged that their children have achieved higher levels of education and occupational diversification than their parents. For example, while the older generation was largely forced to engage agricultural or casual labour, the younger generation enters salaried jobs, technical roles, or pursued higher education. Yet, many participants pointed out that the pace of upward mobility depended heavily on initial

household resources—those with land, better housing, or stable income were more likely to experience consistent upward movement.

2. **Education as a Pathway to Income Mobility**

Education was widely recognized as the primary factor driving mobility in the focus group discussion, consistent with the regression results that found EUM to be a significant determinant of IUM. Parents described investing heavily in children's schooling, while younger participants emphasized that education enhanced their self-confidence and employability. However, the FGD also highlighted barriers identified in the quantitative results. They are underemployment, mismatch between qualifications and jobs, and caste-based discrimination. It suggests that while education statistically enhances income upward mobility, its effects are moderated by structural constraints.

3. **Intergenerational Aspirations and Psychological Distance**

The FGDs strongly support the role of intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) in mobility, as shown in the regression analysis. While parents valued job security, especially in government positions, children expressed aspirations for professional and entrepreneurial careers. It is of course true that this expectations gap has created tension in some of the households. But still, it pushed younger members to strive for new opportunities. The discussions have confirmed that IPD acts as a motivating factor, encouraging the younger generation to pursue income levels higher than their parents.

4. **Barriers and Structural Constraints**

Consistent with the quantitative findings, participants identified key barriers for converting education into secure income mobility:

- Lack of productive assets (land and property) to ensure long-term security.
- Discrimination in the labour market, which continues to limit opportunities.
- Job saturation in the public sector, pushing many job seekers into precarious private employment.
- Dependence on migration (domestic or Gulf) as an alternative mobility strategy.

5. **Beyond Income: Social Transformation**

Participants emphasized that education has played a crucial role in contributing for non-economic forms of mobility, such as greater dignity, awareness about rights, and reduced dependence on caste-based occupations. This dimension of mobility, while not

directly identified in quantitative models, this qualitative approach adds depth to the understanding of how the SC households perceive progress.

The FGDs corroborate the quantitative findings that social mobility exists and is statistically significant among the SC households supporting Hypothesis 56. They further validate that EUM and IPD are strong contributors to IUM supporting Hypothesis 6. At the same time, the discussions reinforce that the strength of these factors is conditioned by structural barriers, echoing uneven effects revealed in the econometric analysis.

The integration of survey and FGD results demonstrate that while the SC households in Kerala experience upward mobility, this process remains fragile and dependent on addressing persistent inequalities in assets, labour markets, and social inclusion.

Chapter |6|
Summary, Findings & Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The Scheduled Caste (SC) community in Kerala has long been facing persistent isolation and vulnerability, despite government policies aimed at improving their socio-economic status. In order to address these challenges, it is crucial to understand the current status of the SC community, the gaps when compared to the rest of the population, and the diversity in terms of socio-economic conditions within the SC community. It includes examining their expenditure patterns, income levels, and economic inequality. Such analyses help policymakers make targeted interventions for addressing the specific needs of the SC community and promoting their socio-economic upliftment. Social mobility, especially in terms of education and occupation, is another key area of focus. Factors including access to education, skill development, and job opportunities can play a significant role in determining social mobility within the SC community. Understanding these factors help design effective strategies for promoting upward mobility among the SC individuals. Education is often seen as a crucial factor responsible for social mobility. However, its impact within the SC community can be influenced by factors like caste-based discrimination and access to resources. Therefore, it is important to study how education and other social factors interact to affect social mobility within the SC community.

The studies on enhancing economic conditions, such as income, has already been extensive, with contributions from various scholars. In developing nations like India, education is considered to play a key factor in improving income and wages. However, there is no consensus on the relationship between education and income. Some studies suggest that education significantly impacts intergenerational income transmission by expanding employment opportunities for offspring, while some others argue for a more limited impact of education on children's income. This study aims to investigate this relationship within the context of Kerala, considering the unique societal challenges in the region.

The literature on social mobility has extensively studied the relationship between income across generations, focusing on relative and absolute income mobility. Relative income mobility examines how children's education or income is influenced by their parents' education or income, while absolute income mobility assesses whether

children's education or income surpasses that of their parents. Studies indicate that higher parental education levels lead to higher educational attainment and income for their children, highlighting the importance of education in promoting the upward mobility. However, there exists a gap in understanding the effect of education on income upward mobility, especially in developing countries like India.

In India, education is considered to be critical in alleviating poverty and augmenting income. Despite efforts to promote education, disparities exist among different social groups, with SC, ST, and OBC communities facing challenges in accessing education. Government initiatives, including free and compulsory education, aim to improve educational status. However, the effectiveness of these initiatives on promoting upward income mobility and socio-economic development needs further investigation. Conducting research in India, particularly in states like Kerala, can provide valuable insights for developing contextually relevant policies fostering socio-economic progress.

In Kerala, often seen as a developed state in India, significant and persistent gaps exist on areas like education, income, and asset ownership among different social groups such as the Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC), compared to the general population. Despite overall progress, the vulnerable groups like SC and ST continue to face socio-economic and educational challenges, potentially leading to limited social mobility. Within the SC community, there are also variations in socio-economic conditions and mobility challenges that remain underexplored in existing literature. This study aims to address these gaps by examining socio-economic disparities and social mobility within the SC community in Kerala, providing insights for guiding policies to reduce inequality and promote development.

The research focuses on two main aspects. Firstly, it aims to analyse the socio-economic conditions within different sub-groups of the SC community, looking at disparities in income, expenditure patterns, and the factors influencing these differences. Secondly, the study investigates the impact of education on income mobility. By separately studying the relationship between education and income mobility, the research focuses on understanding how education helps individuals,

especially children, move into higher income groups. Through empirical analysis, the current study demonstrates how higher education levels increase the chances of individuals moving into higher income brackets, highlighting the link between education and income mobility. Additionally, the study explores whether improvements in children's education levels lead to higher income levels than their parents, going beyond simple income comparisons to understand how individuals can surpass their parents in various aspects, providing a holistic view of the education-income mobility relationship. The research also considers other factors influencing social mobility, such as Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD), which remains crucial in understanding social mobility dynamics within households or communities.

This study aims to explore several key aspects of the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, focusing on their socio-economic conditions, intra-caste disparities, and social mobility. It seeks to answer the following questions: What are the socio-demographic and economic conditions of the SC households in Kerala, and how do these conditions vary within the SC community, particularly in terms of housing conditions, ancestral home staying practices, employment status, family composition, land ownership, income, consumption expenditure, and school choice for children? What are the key determinants of consumption expenditure and income earnings among the SC households, including factors like education, employment, age, skills, and location? How can economic disparities within the SC community be analysed and addressed? What is the nature of social mobility among the SC households, including income, education, and occupation transitions? Finally, what is the impact of educational upward mobility and intergenerational psychological distance on income upward mobility among the SC households? By answering these questions, the study provides valuable insights for policy-making and interventions for improving the socio-economic status of the SC households in Kerala, as well as contribute to a deeper understanding of social mobility in this context.

The objectives of this study are multifaceted, aimed at generating a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic landscape of the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala. It first seeks to assess their socio-economic and educational conditions, with a particular focus on identifying intra-caste disparities within these

dimensions. The study then aims to identify and explain the determinants of household income and expenditure, while also examining the extent and nature of inequalities in these areas. Furthermore, it investigates the dynamics of social mobility among the SC households by evaluating transitions in income, education, and occupation, including both relative and absolute income mobility. Lastly, the research explores the impact of Educational Upward Mobility (EUM) and Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on Income Upward Mobility (IUM), with the goal of understanding how educational advancement and psychological distance between generations influence economic progression within the SC communities.

To address the study objectives, several hypotheses have been formulated and empirically tested. Firstly, it is hypothesized that there exist significant differences in the socio-economic and educational conditions, specifically in areas such as home conditions, ancestral home staying practices, employment status, family composition, land ownership, income, consumption expenditure, and school choice for children among the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala, contrary to the null hypothesis of no significant difference. Secondly, it is hypothesized that factors including income, education, and employment significantly influence consumption expenditure among the SC households, contrary to the null hypothesis of no significant influence. Thirdly, it is hypothesized that factors such as education, employment, age, skills, and location significantly influence income earnings among the SC households, in contrast to the null hypothesis of no significant impact. It is further hypothesized that there are intra-caste economic disparities in income, expenditure, and educational attainment among the SC households in Kerala, contrary to the null hypothesis of existing no such disparities. In addition, it is hypothesized that there is significant social mobility among the SC households in Kerala, including income, education, and occupation transitions, including relative and absolute income mobility, in contrast to the null hypothesis of no significant social mobility. Lastly, it is hypothesized that educational upward mobility (EUM) and intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) significantly impact income upward mobility (IUM) among the SC households in Kerala, contrary to the null hypothesis of no significant impact.

The review of literature on the particular research issues revealed a significant gap in the understanding the socio-economic conditions, intra-caste disparities, and social mobility among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala. While there is existing literature on the general socio-economic status of the SC communities in India, there is a lack of comprehensive studies focusing specifically on Kerala and the distinctions within the SC community. Existing studies often provide a broad overview or focus on specific aspects, such as education or income, without delving into particular group or caste or the detailed intra-caste disparities and the impact of factors like education, employment, and location on socio-economic outcomes. Additionally, research on social mobility was limited among the SC community in Kerala, especially concerning income, education, and occupation transitions. Furthermore, the literature lacks a thorough examination of the impact of educational upward mobility (EUM) and intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) on income upward mobility (IUM) among the SC households in Kerala. Thus, this study aims to bridge these gaps by providing a comprehensive analysis of these issues, contributing an in-depth understanding of socio-economic conditions and mobility dynamics within the SC community in Kerala.

The study sample comprises 377 cross-sectional households selected from various regions in Kerala, including the Southern, Central, and Northern regions. Specific districts and localities were randomly chosen for inclusion, with Thiruvananthapuram, Palakkad, and Malappuram representing the respective regions. Within each district, one taluk was randomly selected, such as Varkala from Thiruvananthapuram, Alathur from Palakkad, and Nilambur from Malappuram. Subsequently, one municipality and one Gram Panchayat were chosen from each taluk, such as Varkala (Municipality) and Chemmaruthy (Gram Panchayat) from Thiruvananthapuram, Shornur (Municipality) and Alathur (Gram Panchayat) from Palakkad, and Nilambur (Municipality) and Wandoor (Gram Panchayat) from Malappuram. Due to issues like skewed scale variable distribution, incorrect education and income information, and missing data on certain questions, eight households were excluded from the empirical analysis. Data on Scheduled Caste households were collected from these selected municipalities and panchayats using systematic random sampling. Total samples comprised of 125 households from Thiruvananthapuram, 127

households from Palakkad and 125 households from Malappuram. The research focuses on examining social mobility concerning intergenerational income, education, and occupation, specifically among the household heads with one male and one female child, both of whom have completed their education or are at least eighteen years old.

The study employs a diverse range of statistical and econometric methods to address its research objectives. Firstly, to analyse the socio-economic and educational conditions of the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala, descriptive statistics including percentage distribution, frequency distribution, and measures of central tendency like means and standard deviations are utilized. Secondly, the study investigates intra-caste socio-economic disparities using statistical tools such as the Pearson chi-square test and the One-way ANOVA. These methods help identify significant differences in housing conditions, ancestral home staying practices, employment status, and other factors among the different Scheduled Caste communities in Kerala, shedding light on the disparities within the group. The study examines the determinants of consumption expenditure and income earnings among the Scheduled Caste households. For this, multiple linear regression models are developed, allowing the researchers for assessing the impact of various factors such as income, education, employment, and skills on consumption expenditure and income earnings.

Furthermore, the study delves into the details of social mobility among the Scheduled Caste households, particularly focusing on income, education, and occupation transitions. Mean differences and multiple linear regression models are used for exploring intergenerational upward income mobility and its determinants. Cross-tabulations and chi-square tests are also employed to analyse intergenerational occupational mobility, providing insights into the mobility patterns within the Scheduled Caste community. Additionally, the impact of educational upward mobility (EUM) on income upward mobility (IUM) is investigated using multiple linear regression models. These models help quantify the influence of educational advancement on income mobility, providing valuable insights into the role of education in enhancing economic prospects among the Scheduled Caste households. Moreover, the study investigates the impact of Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on income upward mobility among the Scheduled Caste households. Multiple linear

regression models are utilized for estimating the effects of IPD on income mobility, offering an understanding of the psychological factors influencing economic mobility within the community. Theil Index was also employed for estimating economic inequalities among the scheduled caste communities in Kerala.

6.2 Findings of the Study

The findings of the study are discussed in the following sub headings:

6.2.1 Socio-Demographic Economic Conditions of the scheduled caste households

The demographic status of scheduled caste households in Kerala reveals key insights into their living conditions and socio-economic challenges.

The analysis of the socio-demographic and economic conditions of the scheduled caste households in Kerala reveals several key findings. Firstly, regarding location, a slightly higher representation of rural households is observed, with 53.3 per cent of the surveyed households are situated in rural areas out of the total 377 households. This finding is crucial as it sheds light on the socio-economic dynamics and infrastructure disparities between rural and urban communities, potentially impacting the social mobility. The gender distribution among the household heads shows a significant imbalance, with 92.6 per cent of households being led by males and only 7.4 per cent by females. This imbalance reflects broader societal patterns and may influence decision-making processes and resource allocation within these households. The categorization of households based on their perceived socio-economic status reveals that a majority (63.9%) belong to the low family status category, while 32.4 per cent fall into the middle category, and only 3.7 per cent into the high category. This distribution indicates that a significant proportion of the surveyed households face socio-economic challenges, which could impact their opportunities for social mobility.

The study reveals the distribution of family sizes among the scheduled caste households in Kerala. It shows that 21.0 per cent of households have 4 members, 29.4 per cent have 5 members, and 29.2 per cent have 6 members. These findings provide insights into the typical family sizes within the scheduled caste community, which remains important for understanding the household dynamics and resource needs.

The household status of the scheduled caste households in Kerala, focusing on house ownership, home condition, and the number of rooms, indicates that 87.0 per cent of the households own their homes, while 13.0 per cent stay in rented homes. Regarding home condition, 5.3 per cent of the homes are in good condition, 53.8 percent have liveable homes, and 40.8 per cent have dilapidated homes. In terms of rooms, 8.9% have 1 room, 48.3% have 2 rooms, 36.9 per cent have 3 rooms, 4.8 per cent have 4 rooms, and 1.1 per cent have 5 rooms. These findings provide valuable insights into the living conditions and infrastructure of the scheduled caste households in Kerala, which are crucial for understanding their socio-economic status and quality of life.

Regarding "Staying in Ancestral Home," 83.3 per cent of the respondents, study found that they reside in their ancestral homes, while 16.7 per cent reside in other homes. It reveals that a strong attachment to family traditions or cultural values are associated with ancestral property, as significant majority have chosen to stay in their ancestral homes."Type of Ration Card Holdings" reveals that 77.5 per cent of the respondents hold a Yellow AYY ration card, 18.8 per cent have a Pink BPL card, and 3.7 percent possess a Blue APL card. The dominance of Yellow AYY category indicates that a higher proportion of respondents are eligible for government welfare schemes or subsidies aimed at economically weaker sections. The lower percentages for APL cards suggest that only a smaller proportion of respondents falls below the poverty line.

The descriptive statistics on four variables among scheduled caste households in Kerala provide insights into their landholding, income, consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items. Firstly, the data on landholdings (in acres) shows a minimum of 0.00 acres, a maximum of 0.50 acres, a mean of 0.0685 acres, and a standard deviation of 0.06314. It indicates that majority of the respondents possess very small landholdings. Secondly, regarding monthly income, the data reveals a minimum of 15,000.00 and a maximum of 60,00.00, with a mean income of 23180.371 and a standard deviation of 6005.258. This wide range of incomes and relatively high standard deviation suggest considerable variability in income levels among the respondents. Thirdly, for monthly consumption expenditure, the statistics show a

minimum of 3,500.00 and a maximum of 30,000.00, with a mean value of 16,090.185and a standard deviation of 4,071.586. It indicates that respondents spend a significant portion of their income on consumption on average, with notable variability in spending patterns. Lastly, the data on expenditure on food items indicates a minimum expenditure of 2,000.00, a maximum of 8,000.00, a mean of 3,637.931, and a standard deviation of 879.626. It reveals that respondents spend a considerable amount on food items on average, with notable variability in spending habits.

The examination was done on employment status of household members belonging to the scheduled castes, including the head/father, mother, sons, and daughters, for assessing their economic stability and workforce participation, study found interesting results. The majority of the household heads/fathers are engaged in daily wage labour, indicating significant reliance on this form of work for income generation. Self-employment is the next most common category, with a smaller percentage employed in the Gulf, in private companies, or retired. The unemployment rate among fathers is notable. A large proportion of mothers are engaged in daily wage labour, with a significant number involved in self-employment. Only a smaller percentage of them work in private companies or are retired. The unemployment rate among mothers is also notable.

A significant number of sons are engaged in daily wage labour and self-employment. A smaller percentage of them work in the Gulf countries, in private companies, or hold government jobs. The unemployment rate among sons remains relatively low. Daughters are found actively involved in daily wage labour and self-employment, with a small percentage working in the Gulf region, in private companies, or holding government jobs. The unemployment rate among daughters is found to be moderate.

These findings show the diverse employment patterns within scheduled caste households, with a significant proportion of them engaged in daily wage labour and self-employment. The survey data also highlights gender disparities in employment, while sons are more likely to be employed in private companies and government jobs compared to daughters.

The income profile of the scheduled caste families, focusing on the monthly earnings of household members including the father, mother, sons, and daughters found that fathers in scheduled caste households have a diverse range of monthly incomes, from ₹1,000.00 to ₹20,000.00, with a mean income of ₹5,652.52. It indicates that income level among fathers varies, with a significant standard deviation suggesting notable variability in earnings. Mothers also exhibit a wide range of monthly incomes, varying from ₹1,000.00 to ₹60,000.00, with an average income of ₹4,461.54. It was reported that some mothers earn modest incomes, while others earn relatively higher amounts, with considerable variability in earnings. Sons have broader range of monthly incomes, ranging from ₹2,000.00 to ₹60,000.00, with a mean income of ₹8,302.39. Itreveals that income levels among sons varies, with significant variability in earnings. Daughters' monthly incomes vary from ₹1,000.00 to ₹19,000.00, with a mean income of ₹4,917.77. Some daughters earn relatively low incomes, while others earn higher amounts, with some variability in earnings. These statistics offer a nuanced understanding of income distribution among family members within the scheduled caste households. It highlights the differences in income levels and variability in earnings among fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters.

Regarding the educational status of members within the scheduled caste households, study found that a big number of fathers have completed education up to grade 10 (47.7%), followed by grade 9 (24.4%) and grade 11 (11.1%). Only a small percentage of fathers have completed education beyond grade 12, indicating that higher education levels remain less common among them. Among surveyed mothers, the largest proportion (46.7%) have achieved 10thgrade of education, while 19.1% have completed 9thgrade of education. This suggests that a significant number of mothers have attained higher levels of education, which could have positive implications for their families' socio-economic conditions. For sons, the highest percentage have completed education up to grade 12 (35.0%) which indicates that a significant proportion have completed secondary education. This trend remains positive for their future prospects and socio-economic mobility. Similarly, a considerable proportion of daughters have completed education up to grade 12 (36.3%), indicating a positive trend towards educational attainment among female members of the scheduled caste households. This trend is important for gender equality and empowerment within these

communities. The study reveals that while a significant proportion of individuals within the scheduled caste households have attained secondary education, higher education levels remain less common, particularly among fathers. It was also found that efforts to improve access to higher education and promote educational attainment among all members of scheduled caste households could contribute to their socio-economic development and reduce educational disparities.

The study found that the mean years of education of the fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters within the scheduled caste households, offering insights into their educational attainment levels. Fathers have completed approximately 9.95 years of education on an average which indicates that they generally complete education up to the secondary level. Mothers have a slightly higher mean value of approximately 10.34 years, suggesting education beyond the secondary level, possibly up to the higher secondary or diploma level. Sons exhibit even higher mean of approximately 11.97 years, indicating education beyond the secondary level, possibly up to the undergraduate level or higher. Similarly, daughters have the highest mean value of approximately 12.43 years which reveals education among them goes well beyond the secondary level. It suggests that a positive trend towards higher educational attainment among sons and daughters within the scheduled caste households, potentially leading to improved socio-economic outcomes and empowerment within these marginalised communities.

The study reveals that fathers have an average age of approximately 64.30 years, indicating an older demographic within this group, with ages ranging from 50 to 87 years. In contrast, mothers have a lower average age of approximately 59.28 years, suggesting a younger average age compared to fathers. Sons, on average, are usually much younger, with an average age of approximately 34.82 years and a wide range from 20 to 44 years. Daughters also have a lower average age of approximately 32.66 years, with a range from 19 to 49 years standing close to sons. These findings highlight the diverse age distribution and generational dynamics within the scheduled caste households, with potential implications for family structure, care giving responsibilities, and socio-economic roles within these communities.

The study found that there exists a significant gap in both technical education and advanced computer skills among the Scheduled Caste (SC) individuals. Only 3.7 per cent of the SC population have received technical education, while 96.3 per cent have not. Regarding computer skills, 35.5 per cent do not possess any of the skills, 59.9 percent do have basic skills, and a meagre 4.5 per cent have acquired advanced skills. These findings suggest the need for targeted interventions in enhancing the education and digital literacy levels of the SC community.

Additionally, the study revealed insights into the educational institutions attended by children from the Scheduled Caste households for primary and secondary education. It was found that a majority (62.9%) of these children studied at government schools which indicates a reliance on public educational institutions within this demographic. A further 30.2 per cent attended aided schools which suggest that a substantial portion benefits from government-supported or partially funded education. Private schools, catering to a more affluent demographic, accounted for only 4.8 per cent of the total children which indicates limited access to private education within the Scheduled Caste community. These findings highlight the importance of government and aided schools in providing primary and secondary education to Scheduled Caste children, suggesting areas for policy focus and improvement.

The study found that there exists a substantial gap in the access to quality educational resources during primary and secondary education among individuals from the Scheduled Caste (SC) households. While 60.7 per cent of respondents reported having some access to such resources, 38.2 per cent indicated a lack of access, indicating disparities in the quality of education received by a significant segment of the SC population. The study also revealed some variability in the perceived quality of resources, with a small percentage of respondents rating their access to education as moderate to high. These findings emphasize importance of ensuring equitable access to quality educational resources for creating a more inclusive and effective education system for SC individuals.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the educational institutions where children from the SC households pursued advanced and specialized courses during their higher education. It was found that a considerable portion (45.4%) among them opted aided

institutions, which are often government-supported or partially funded. Government institutions were also popular choices where 37.1 per cent of the individuals got admission for pursuing higher education. Private institutions, known for higher fees and catering to a more affluent demographic, accounted for admission of 17.5 per cent of the individuals. This distribution indicates a reliance on government and aided institutions for higher education among the SC individuals, emphasizing the importance of accessible and affordable education options in this community.

The study on challenges and discrimination in education among the Scheduled Caste (SC) students provide insights on obstacles and biases they confront within the educational sphere. The SC students encounter various hurdles hindering their educational progress including limited access to quality education and resources and discriminatory practices within educational institutions. This section aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of these issues, emphasizing the need for addressing systemic inequalities within the education system to create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. Among the SC students, a clear majority (62.6%) reported facing challenges in accessing education. These challenges, which consist of financial barriers, lack of infrastructure, and limited availability of educational institutions, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to improve accessibility and inclusivity in education. Furthermore, 51.7 per cent of the SC students reported experiencing discrimination or bias in terms of education. This discrimination may manifest in unequal treatment by teachers or peers, limited opportunities for advancement, or biased curriculum. The prevalence of discrimination underscores the systemic challenges the SC students face within the education system, emphasizing the importance of addressing these issues in ensuring a more equitable learning environment for all students.

The study has found that social networks played a crucial role in guiding and supporting education and employment among Scheduled Caste (SC) students. The study reveals that a substantial majority of the SC students value social networks, with 39.5 per cent considering them very important and an additional 43.0 per cent regarding them as important. This indicates that most of the SC students perceive social networks as crucial for navigating educational and employment hurdles. Conversely, only 17.5

per cent of respondents view social networks as not important in this context. This analysis seeks to understand the perceived importance of social networks among the SC students and their contributions to their educational and employment journeys, shedding light on the support structures crucial for improving outcomes for SC students.

Study also found that community-based initiatives promoting networking are actively participated in by Scheduled Caste (SC) individuals. The results indicate that 51.5% of respondents have engaged in such initiatives, indicating a significant level of involvement within the SC community. These activities likely serve as platforms for networking, resource sharing, and relationship building, particularly beneficial for SC individuals facing social and economic challenges. However, 48.5% of the respondents have not participated in these initiatives, suggesting opportunities for further promotion and expansion of community-based networking activities within the SC community. This examination underscores the importance of community engagement and networking for individuals from the SC community, potentially enhancing their social capital and access to opportunities.

Study shows that discrimination remains a significant challenge for Scheduled Caste (SC) individuals and families, deeply ingrained in societal structures and impacting various aspects of their lives. The study found that a big majority of the SC families (71.9%) have experienced discrimination at some point, indicating the pervasive nature of this issue. This finding underscores complex social dynamics and challenges faced by the SC community, potentially affecting their education, employment, and social interactions. However, 28.1 per cent of SC families reported not experiencing discrimination, suggesting that while prevalent, instances of discrimination may vary among SC families. This data highlights the importance of addressing discrimination and fostering inclusivity in upholding the well-being and dignity of the SC households.

Education and skill development are found critical for the socio-economic empowerment of the SC community, and government policies play a crucial role in facilitating access to quality education and skill-building opportunities. Study found that there exists some satisfaction (47.7%) among the Scheduled Caste (SC) individuals

on government support and policies for education and skills development, while a major portion (52.3%) remains dissatisfied. This mixed sentiment suggests perceived gaps or inadequacies in existing initiatives. Addressing these concerns remains crucial in ensuring government policies for effectively meeting the needs of the SC community, contributing to their educational and socio-economic advancement. It exhibits a mixed sentiment among the SC individuals regarding the effectiveness of government policies and support for education and skills development. The relatively high percentage of dissatisfaction suggests that there may be perceived gaps or inadequacies in the existing government initiatives for the SC community in these areas. It is crucial in addressing these concerns to make sure that government policies are effectively meeting the needs and aspirations of the SC population, ultimately contributing to their educational and socio-economic advancement. This data highlights the importance of continually evaluating and improving government policies in enhancing the educational standards and skill development opportunities for the SC community.

6.2.2 Intra caste differences in socio-economic conditions in Scheduled caste Households

This section aims for addressing the intra caste differences by examining the variations in socio-economic conditions among different SC social groups in Kerala. Using a sample survey conducted in selected regions of Kerala, this section seeks to illuminate the specific socio-economic challenges and disparities faced by different SC subgroups, providing critical insights for targeted interventions and policy formulation.

The study has found significant disparities in home conditions among different Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala. The Mannan/ Perumannan and Kalladi communities have relatively better home conditions, with a higher percentage of "Good" homes. In contrast, the Kuravan/Sidhanar and Kanakkan/Padanna communities have relatively poorer home conditions, with a higher percentage of "Dilapidated" homes. These differences highlight the varying levels of housing infrastructure and living conditions within the SC communities in Kerala. The Pearson Chi-square test indicates significant difference in home conditions among these SC communities, suggesting that factors influencing home conditions vary across these groups, potentially reflecting underlying socio-economic disparities.

The findings of staying at ancestral homes among different Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala reveals significant cultural and social dynamics within these communities. The majority of the SC individuals across various communities prefer to stay at their ancestral homes, indicating a strong cultural tradition, attachment to familial roots, and a desire for preserving their cultural heritage. However, there exists variations among different SC communities, with some showing higher percentages of individuals staying at ancestral homes when compared to others. The Mannan/ Perumannan community stands out with the highest percentage (95.6%) of individuals staying at their ancestral homes, reflecting a strong cultural and familial bond with their ancestral properties. On the other hand, the Paraiyan/ Sambavar community has the lowest percentage (72.7%) of individuals staying at ancestral homes, suggesting a weaker connection to ancestral properties when compared to Mannan/ Perumannan community. The Pearson chi-square test confirms statistically significant difference in the practice of staying at ancestral homes among these SC communities in Kerala. This indicates that factors specific to each SC community influence the decision to stay at ancestral homes, highlighting the cultural diversity and unique practices within these communities. Overall, the practice of staying at ancestral homes plays a significant role in maintaining familial ties, preserving cultural heritage, and shaping the social fabric of the SC communities in Kerala.

The investigation on employment status among household heads in different Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala reveals distinct patterns of economic activity and livelihood sources. Daily wage labour is the most common employment category across most SC communities, indicating a reliance on this type of work for livelihood. Self-employment is also notable in several communities, highlighting entrepreneurial activities within these groups. However, the percentage of household heads employed as Gulf migrants is low across all communities, indicating that migration for work to Gulf countries is not prevalent among these SC communities in Kerala. The Mannan/ Perumannan community stands out with a significant percentage of household heads employed in private companies (13.3%), reflecting a higher level of formal employment within this group. On the other hand, the Panan community has a relatively higher percentage of household heads engaged in self-employment (26.9%), indicating a higher degree of entrepreneurial activities within this community. The Chi-

square test results confirm a statistically significant difference in the employment status of household heads among these SC communities. It suggests that employment patterns vary significantly across different communities which reflect the diversity of economic activities and livelihood sources within the SC population in Kerala.

The study has found significant variations in key household metrics among various Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in Kerala. Average family sizes range from 5.2059 to 5.9667 members per household, with a total average of 5.5279 members. Housing conditions, measured by the average number of rooms per household, varied from 2.0882 to 2.6667, with the overall average of 2.4040 rooms. Landownership also showed some diversity, with average landholdings ranging from 0.0550 to 0.0982 acres per household, averaging at 0.0685 acres. The Kuravan/Sidhanar community recorded the highest average family size, while the Mannan/ Perumannan community register the highest average number of rooms in household and has the largest average landholding size. It reveals the socio-economic diversity among SC communities in Kerala which emphasizes the importance of tailored policies to address their unique needs.

The study estimates significant variations in family income, consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items among different types of the Scheduled Caste (SC) communities in the region. Kanakkan/Padanna had the highest average monthly family income, while Panan had the lowest. Mannan/ Perumannan exhibited the highest average monthly consumption expenditure and expenditure on food items, indicating varying economic capacities and spending patterns among these communities. The ANOVA test results confirmed statistically significant differences in family income, consumption expenditure, and expenditure on food items among different SC communities, underscoring the need for concerted effort for addressing economic disparities and improve the well-being of the SC communities.

The significant variations are observed in the choice of schools (government, aided, and private) for children's education within each type of Scheduled Caste (SC) community in the region. While some communities showed a balanced preference for government and aided schools, others exhibited a stronger inclination towards aided or private institutions. For instance, the Kavara community demonstrated the highest preference for government schools, while the Paraiyan/ Sambavar community showed a

strong preference for aided schools. Conversely, the Pulaya/Cheraman community exhibited the highest preference for private schools. These variations highlight the diverse educational landscapes and preferences within the SC communities, suggesting that factors such as socio-economic status, cultural beliefs, and perceptions about the quality of education influence these choices. The results of Pearson chi-square test confirm a statistically significant association between the type of SC community and the choice of schools for children's education which indicate significant variation across different SC communities in terms of the distribution of children among government, aided, and private schools. This result indicates the importance of understanding community-specific educational preferences to design targeted and effective education policies and programs.

6.2.3 Determinants of consumption expenditure among Scheduled Caste households

The study has made effort to investigate the determinants of consumption expenditure among Scheduled Caste (SC) households, crucial for policymakers aiming to enhance the well-being of marginalized communities. The multiple linear regression model employed in the study considers factors such as income, landholding, household size, family status, employment, and education. The results suggest that income has made significant positive impact on consumption expenditure, highlighting the importance of economic empowerment for improving living standards in SC households. Land ownership also positively influences spending patterns which suggests that policies promoting land ownership among the SC communities could enhance economic conditions. Household size notably affects consumption, emphasizing the challenges being faced by larger households in meeting basic needs. Additionally, family status and employment status of the father impact consumption indicate the role of social and economic factors in consumption behaviour. Interestingly, education level of the father does not significantly affect consumption while the son's education level is positively associated with higher expenditure. It highlights the importance of education for economic well-being in the SC households. The findings underscore the need for targeted policies addressing income generation, land ownership, household support, and education to improve the economic conditions of the SC communities. The model's adjusted R-squared value of 0.453 indicates that

approximately 45.3 percentage of the variation in consumption expenditure among the SC households can be explained by the included variables. It suggests the presence of other influential factors not accounted for in the model.

The study also examined the determinants of food expenditure among Scheduled Caste (SC) households, crucial for understanding and addressing food insecurity among the marginalized communities. The multiple linear regression model used in the analysis considers factors such as income, landholding, household size, family status, and employment and education statuses.

The regression results indicate that income has made a significant positive impact on food expenditure which highlights the importance of economic empowerment for improving food security in the SC households. Landholding, while showing a positive relationship with food expenditure, does not reach statistical significance. It suggests a modest role in influencing food expenditure. Household size significantly influences food expenditure, with larger households spending more on food, underscoring the need for considering household size in food security interventions. Family status does not show a statistically significant impact on food expenditure which suggest that other factors may play a more significant role in determining food consumption patterns.

The employment status of father significantly affects food expenditure, with self-employment leading to higher food expenditure. However, the employment status of the son does not significantly influence food expenditure, indicating the complexity of household dynamics in food consumption decisions. Surprisingly, the education levels of both the father and the son do not significantly influence food expenditure. It implies that other factors such as income, household size, and employment status may have made a stronger influence on food consumption decisions in the SC households. The findings highlight the need for comprehensive approaches to address food security in the SC communities that gives a due consideration to a wide range of socio-economic factors. Policies and programs aimed at increasing income levels, promoting self-employment opportunities, and supporting larger households will be crucial in enhancing food security and nutritional outcomes in the SC households.

6.2.4 Determinants of income earnings of Scheduled Caste households

The analysis of income earnings among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households reveals how income within these communities is determined. Education emerges as a significant factor, particularly for males, with each additional unit of education leading to substantial increase in income. However, for daughters, higher education levels are associated with a decrease in income, possibly due to delayed entry into the workforce or job choices prioritizing factors other than immediate income. It focuses on the importance of educational opportunities, especially for males, in enhancing income levels within the SC households. Employment status also plays a crucial role in income earnings out of which self-employment showing a significant positive impact. Self-employment opportunities contribute positively to household earnings especially for the son and daughter. However, the mother's self-employment status is negatively associated with income, highlighting gender disparities in income generation within the SC households. Addressing these disparities remains essential in promoting gender equality and enhancing women's economic empowerment. Age appears to be influencing income earnings, with older individuals earning more, although the relationship is not statistically significant. Skills especially technical and computer skills, significantly impact income earnings, underscoring the importance of skill development programs for enhancing income among the SC households. Furthermore, residing in urban areas is associated with higher income, reflecting the greater employment opportunities and higher wages available in urban areas. The egression model developed in this regard explains approximately 48 per cent of the variance in monthly household income earnings among the SC households which indicates a moderate-to-good fit of the model to the data. These findings assume relevance for policy and interventions aimed to improve the economic status of the SC households. Efforts in enhancing educational opportunities, promote self-employment, and develop technical and computer skills can be instrumental in increasing income levels and overall socio-economic well-being within the SC communities. Addressing gender disparities in income generation and considering regional disparities in income and employment opportunities are also crucial aspects to be considered for policy formulation.

6.2.5 Intra-caste income and expenditure inequality in scheduled caste households

Intra-caste income and expenditure inequality within Scheduled Caste (SC) households remains a critical issue highlighting the economic disparities within the SC community itself. Despite being a marginalized and vulnerable group in the society, there exists a wide disparity in economic status among SC households. This study aims to address this gap by examining intra-caste economic inequality in terms of both income and expenditure among the SC households, using the Theil Index of Inequality and decomposition analysis for measuring and understanding these inequalities.

The analysis on income inequality within SC households reveals significant disparities among different SC community groups, with certain groups experiencing higher levels of income inequality than the others. It reveals that concerted effort is required for uplifting the most economically disadvantaged SC groups. The decomposition analysis further highlights that a substantial portion of income inequality arises due to differences within the SC community groups, emphasizing the need for targeted policies that address specific economic challenges faced by different SC sub-groups. The group consisting of Kanakkan/Padanna community exhibits relatively high-income inequality when compared to the other SC community groups, as shown by its higher Group Theil index of 0.288671. This means there exists a greater disparity in income distribution within this group, with some members likely earning significantly higher amount than others. The factors contributing to this higher level of inequality within this group are diverse, including differences in educational attainment, employment opportunities, access to resources, and historical socio-economic factors. This higher inequality within the Kanakkan/Padanna community could be due to the variations in occupational patterns. For example, certain households within these communities may have access to higher-paying jobs or entrepreneurial opportunities, leading to higher incomes for some members. On the other hand, other sub-groups are found to be more reliant on low-paying or informal sector jobs, leading to lower incomes. Additionally, factors such as geographical location, social networks, and access to education and training programs also contribute to income disparities within this group. For instance, members residing in urban areas or having access to better educational opportunities may have higher income-earning potential compared to

those in rural areas or with limited access to education. The higher income inequality within the Kanakkan/Padanna community highlights the need for targeted interventions and policies for addressing the specific economic challenges faced by this group.

The examination on expenditure inequality reveals a significant level of expenditure inequality within the Scheduled Caste (SC) communities, as shown by Theil's Index of 0.054946. This suggests how disparities in expenditures are distributed among different SC community groups. The decomposition of expenditure inequality shows that majority of expenditure disparities arise due to differences within the SC community groups (Theil within), rather than between these groups (Theil between). It implies that certain sub-groups within the SC community may be more economically vulnerable or marginalized. It is therefore necessary to intervene for improving their economic status. The inequality within the SC community groups, can be attributed to various factors such as differences in educational attainment, employment opportunities, access to resources, and social welfare schemes. For example, the Pulayan/Cheraman community group's Group Theil index stands at 0.051, showing relatively low expenditure inequality within this group. This could be due to more equitable distribution of resources, higher levels of education and employment, and better access to social welfare programs. In contrast, the Kanakkan/Padanna community group has a higher Group Theil index of 0.059, suggesting greater expenditure inequality within this group. This could be attributed to a few factors including unequal access to education and employment opportunities, limited access to resources, and disparities in social welfare benefits. Similarly, other SC community groups show varying levels of expenditure inequality which reflect the diverse socio-economic conditions within the SC population. Addressing the inequality within SC community groups requires targeted interventions focussing on improving access to education, creating employment opportunities, providing equitable access to resources, and enhancing the effectiveness of social welfare programs.

The study of food expenditure inequality among different Scheduled Caste (SC) community groups reveals different levels of economic disparities. There exists lower food expenditure inequality among some groups including Panan community whose Group Theil index stands at 0.013, which indicates more equitable distribution of food

expenditure within this group. At the same time, groups like Mannan/ Perumannan, show higher food expenditure inequality (Group Theil index of 0.136), suggesting greater economic disparities in food expenditure. The decomposition of food expenditure inequality highlights that the majority of inequality (Theil within) occurs within the SC community groups rather than between them. It indicates that specific sub-groups within the SC population remains more vulnerable to food insecurity and economic hardships. It necessitates tailored policies in addressing these disparities. Policies aimed at improving access to education, creating employment opportunities, and enhancing social welfare programs can help reduce food expenditure inequality and promote economic equity within the SC households.

The analysis of son's income inequality among different Scheduled Caste (SC) community groups reveals significant disparities on economic well-being. Some groups, such as Cheruman and Kalladi, exhibit relatively higher son's income share, while mean son's income remains higher among Panan and Mannan/Perumannan which indicates a more favorable economic situation for sons within these communities. However, these groups also have higher Group Theil indices, suggesting greater income inequality among sons of group members. It shows that while some sons in these communities may have high incomes, others remain significantly disadvantaged, leading to an overall higher level of inequality. On the other hand, groups like Paraiyan/ Sambavar, and Kuravan/ Sidhanar demonstrate lower son's income share and mean son's income, indicating a less favourable economic situation for sons within these communities. However, these groups also exhibit lower Group Theil indices which reflects relatively lower income inequality among sons. It implies a more uniform distribution of income among sons of group members, despite having lower overall income levels. The analysis also reveals inter-caste disparities in son's income, with certain SC community groups consistently exhibiting higher son's income share, mean son's income, and Group Theil indices when compared to others. It highlights the need for targeted interventions in addressing economic disparities and promoting more equitable growth across all the SC communities. Policies aimed at improving access to education, creating employment opportunities, and enhancing social welfare programs can help reduce son's income inequality and uplift the most economically disadvantaged sections of the SC communities.

Intra-caste daughter's income inequality among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households reveals significant disparities across various SC community groups in Kerala. The analysis of income share, population share, mean income, and the Group Theil index for each group highlights distinct economic realities within these marginalised communities. For instance, the Pulayan/Cheraman group, despite having a relatively high income share of 11.8 per cent, exhibits a Group Theil index of 0.076 which indicates a significant income inequality within this group. At the same time, the Kanakkan/ Padanna group has a lower income share of 11.4% but a higher Group Theil index of 0.064, suggesting a different pattern of income distribution. The decomposition of the Theil's index further reveals insights into the sources of income inequality. Theil between (0.001480) indicates the inequality between different SC communities, while Theil within (0.068177) represents the inequality within each SC community. The shared within component (0.088309) suggests that a portion of the inequality is shared among different SC communities, while the different within component (-0.020132) represents the unique portion of inequality within each SC community. This analysis highlights the nuanced nature of income inequality across different SC community groups and underscores the need for targeted interventions for addressing these disparities effectively. Understanding and addressing intra-caste daughter's income inequality are crucial as it can promote economic equity and inclusive growth within the SC communities. By focusing on the specific challenges faced by different SC community groups, policymakers will be able to develop more targeted and effective strategies to uplift the most economically disadvantaged sections of these communities.

The analysis of educational inequality among sons and daughters within the Scheduled Caste (SC) households reveals significant disparities across various SC community groups in Kerala. When considering sons, the Mannan/ Perumannan group shows relatively higher educational inequality (Group Theil of 0.007) despite having moderate education share and mean education level. Conversely, the Pulayan/ Cheraman group, with a similar education share but lower mean education, exhibits lower educational inequality (Group Theil of 0.004). It suggests that while mean education levels are important, the distribution of education within each group plays crucial role in determining educational inequality. For daughters, the

Mannan/Perumannan group also has higher educational inequality (Group Theil of 0.005) despite a moderate mean education level. In contrast, the Paraiyan/ Sambavar group shows lower educational inequality with a lower mean education level (Group Theil of 0.003). It implies that distribution of education within each group, rather than just the mean education level, is a key factor in determining educational inequality among the daughters. The decomposition of Theil's index for both sons and daughters shows that the majority of educational inequality lies within SC community groups rather than between them. It suggests that targeted interventions within each SC community group are necessary to address educational disparities effectively. Additionally, the relatively low inter-group educational inequality indicates that disparities in educational attainment remain more pronounced within the SC communities than between them.

6.2.6 Social mobility among Scheduled Caste Households

Social mobility among the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala remains a crucial area of study, focusing on how individuals move between income, education, and occupational levels across generations. This analysis examines both relative and absolute income mobility, which respectively measure the influence of parents' income or education on their children's outcomes, and whether children's incomes surpass those of their parents. In Kerala, education plays crucial role in determining social mobility, as children of parents with higher education levels tend to achieve higher education and income levels themselves. However, impact of education on mobility will possibly vary. Some studies suggest that education policy affects mobility, while others find limited effects. Understanding social mobility among Scheduled Caste households in Kerala remains vital for policy discussions aim to promote upward mobility and improve economic opportunities for marginalized communities.

The study of upward income mobility (absolute mobility) among the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala shows significant progress and positive intergenerational income progression. Children from these households are found surpassing their parents' income levels which indicates improved economic status over generations. The average income of children exceeds that of fathers by 2649.86 units and that of mothers by 3840.849 units, demonstrating substantial upward income mobility. These findings

suggest that despite historical challenges, there are opportunities for economic advancement within the Scheduled Caste communities in Kerala, leading to improved living standards and access to education and healthcare. Investing in programs supporting the economic empowerment of Scheduled Caste communities, including education, skill development, and employment opportunities, can further accelerate upward income mobility and promote more inclusive and sustainable development outcomes for Kerala.

The varying degrees of economic progress across SC communities are revealed in the study on upward income mobility among different subgroups. Some communities show substantial upward income mobility, with children earning significantly more than their fathers on average. For example, the Pulayan/ Cheraman community has a notable income difference of 2976.19 units which indicates a significant improvement in economic status across generations. Similarly, the Panan community demonstrates remarkable upward mobility, with a substantial income difference of 5615.385 units. However, other communities display lower levels of upward income mobility, such as the Kalladi community, which has a modest income difference of 2137.255 units. These findings underscore the importance of targeted interventions in enhancing economic opportunities and promoting upward income mobility among all the Scheduled Caste communities in Kerala, by making sure that economic progress remains equitable and inclusive across the state.

The study on the average income difference between mothers and children across various types of Scheduled Caste (SC) community households in Kerala reveals significant variations in upward income mobility among different SC communities, highlighting both the progress and disparities in economic advancement across generations. The Panan community emerges as a standout, with a notably high-income difference of 6270.231 units, indicating that children in this group, on average, earn substantially more than their mothers. Similarly, the Pulayan/ Cheraman community shows a considerable income difference of 3857.143 units which reflects a strong upward trajectory of income mobility. On the other hand, some communities exhibit lower levels of upward income mobility as well. For example, the Kanakkan/ Padanna community has a relatively modest income difference of 2261.905 units, suggesting a

less pronounced increase in children's income compared to their mothers'. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions in enhancing economic opportunities and promoting upward income mobility among all the SC communities in Kerala. By addressing the specific challenges being faced by different SC subgroups, policymakers can work towards more equitable and inclusive economic development, ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared more equally across society.

Education is found to be a key factor in driving upward mobility among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala that clearly aligns with the worldwide perception. Children in these households are more educated than their fathers as per the study, indicating a positive trend of intergenerational educational progress. It was found that average education difference remains approximately 2 years between fathers and children which suggests a significant degree of upward educational mobility within SC communities. This trend is encouraging as it signifies an improvement in educational attainment across generations, which remains crucial in enhancing socio-economic opportunities and breaking the cycle of poverty within these communities. The findings underline the importance of continued investments in education and skill development programs targeted at SC households in Kerala. By giving access to quality education and learning opportunities, policymakers can further enhance upward mobility and empower SC communities for achieving higher standards of living. Additionally, the findings highlight the need for further research for understanding the specific factors driving this upward mobility and to identify strategies that can sustain and enhance educational progress among SC households in Kerala.

The study indicates a significant degree of upward educational mobility among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala. Children from the SC households are found more educated than their mothers, with an average education difference of approximately 1.9 years. It suggests that children achieve higher levels of education than their mothers which reflects an improvement in educational attainment across generations within the SC communities. The positive trend of upward educational mobility remains crucial in enhancing socio-economic opportunities and breaking the cycle of poverty within SC households in Kerala. It stresses the importance of continued investments in education and skill development programs targeted at the SC

communities. By providing access to quality education, policymakers can further enhance upward mobility and empower SC communities for achieving higher standards of living. Further research is needed to understand the specific factors driving this upward mobility and to identify strategies that can sustain and enhance educational progress among the SC households in Kerala.

The varying degrees of upward educational mobility among different subgroups of Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala were discussed in this study. The Panan community stands out with the highest mean education difference of 2.346154 years which indicates that children in this group attain significantly more education than their fathers. It suggests a substantial improvement in educational attainment across generations within the Panan community. At the same time, Kalladi community demonstrates relatively lower upward educational mobility, with children surpassing their fathers' education levels by an average of 1.843137 years. This lower educational mobility suggests that there may be challenges or barriers hindering greater advancements in education within the Kalladi community, although showing some of progress. These findings stress the importance of understanding the specific factors driving educational mobility within each SC community subgroup to formulate targeted interventions that can further enhance educational opportunities and outcomes across the generations. Additionally, the analysis highlights the existence of inter-caste differences in educational mobility among the SC households in Kerala. These differences suggest that strategies aimed at promoting educational advancement need to be tailored to the specific needs and challenges faced by different SC community subgroups in ensuring equitable access to education and promote socio-economic mobility.

The analysis of mothers' and children's education reveals varying degrees of upward educational mobility among different subgroups of Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala. The Panan community demonstrates the highest mean education difference, with children on average achieving 2.153846 years of more education than their mothers. This suggests a significant improvement in educational attainment across generations within the Panan community. At the same time, the Pulayan/ Cheraman community shows relatively lower upward educational mobility, with children having

more education levels than their mothers with an average of 1.380952 years. While still indicative of progress, this lower educational mobility suggests that there may be challenges or barriers hindering greater advancements in education within the Pulayan/Cheraman community. These findings again stress the importance of understanding the specific factors driving educational mobility within each SC community subgroup to formulate targeted interventions that can further enhance educational opportunities and outcomes across generations. Additionally, the study also found the existence of inter-caste differences in educational mobility among the SC households in Kerala.

The analysis of intergenerational occupational mobility among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala reveals several key findings. First, there exists a significant diversification of occupational choices among the children of daily wage laborers and self-employed individuals. While a majority of fathers engaged in daily wage laborers or self-employed, their children pursued a variety of other occupations, including jobs in private companies, Gulf migration, and government employment. This suggests an upward trend of occupational mobility and a departure from traditional occupations within these subgroups. Second, there is a strong upward mobility trend towards Gulf migration among the children of Gulf migrant fathers. This indicates a significant shift towards higher-paying jobs in the Gulf region which reflects aspirations for economic advancement and improved living standards among these households. Third, there exists a moderate level of continuity in private company jobs, with a sizable proportion of children following their fathers' way. It suggests that certain occupations, particularly in the private sector, may offer stability and opportunities for intergenerational continuity within the SC households in Kerala. Estimated Chi-square test indicates a statistically significant relationship between the fathers' and children's occupations, suggesting some level of intergenerational occupational mobility or continuity within these households. These findings highlight the dynamic nature of occupational mobility among the SC households in Kerala.

The analysis of intergenerational occupational mobility between mothers and children within the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala reveals several important trends. While majority of mothers were found engaged in daily wage work or

self-employment, their children pursued a variety of occupations, indicating a diversification of occupational choices among the younger generation. In particular, there exists a significant trend towards Gulf migration among the children of mothers who were not Gulf migrants themselves, suggesting a strong aspiration for better economic opportunities abroad. Additionally, the Chi-square test employed in the study indicates a statistically significant relationship between the mothers' and children's occupations, indicating the impact of mothers' occupation on the choice of children's occupation. It reveals a pattern of occupational mobility or continuity between mothers and their children within the SC households in Kerala.

6.2.7 Intergenerational Relative Social Mobility among Scheduled Caste Households

Children's socio-economic outcomes possibly depending on socio-economic outcomes of their parents are discussed. Relative mobility captures the persistence or fluidity of socio-economic advantage across generations, where a lower intergenerational elasticity implies a higher mobility and weaker dependence on parents' status. The findings from the intergenerational income regression analysis indicate a moderate degree of income persistence among the SC households. The estimated elasticity of 0.316 for the father–son relationship suggests that about 31.6 percent of income differences among sons can be attributed to the differences in their fathers' income levels, reflecting moderate relative mobility, indicating that structural and policy measures in Kerala—such as educational expansion, social justice programmes, and affirmative action—have reduced, though not fully eliminated, the influence of parents' income on children's economic outcomes. By contrast, the coefficients for father–daughter and mother–child relationships are small, showing that mothers' income makes a weaker direct influence on children's earnings and daughters' income remains less closely tied to parents' income levels.

The study on intergenerational educational mobility reveals a stronger persistence when compared to income mobility. The elasticity between fathers' and sons' education (0.396) and between fathers' and daughters' education (0.286) indicates greater connection between children's educational attainment and parental education. When mothers' education is considered, the relationship is found to be stronger, with coefficients of 0.340 for sons and 0.331 for daughters. These results

reveal that educational achievements remain more closely linked to family background than income outcomes. The results point to a divergence between income and educational mobility among the SC households in Kerala. Income mobility appears to be relatively higher which reflects the occupational diversification, migration, and broader access to non-traditional employment. In contrast, educational mobility remains limited, suggesting that the intergenerational transmission of educational advantages continues to reinforce social hierarchy. The findings highlight the importance of sustained educational interventions and targeted social policies focusing on improving both economic and educational mobility among marginalized communities.

6.2.8 The impact of educational upward mobility (EUM) and Intergenerational psychological distance (IPD)on income upward mobility of Scheduled Caste Households in Kerala

This section of the study focused on analysing the impact of Educational Upward Mobility (EUM) and Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on Income Upward Mobility (IUM) among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala. These components are defined as follows:

Income Upward Mobility (IUM): It measures the difference between the income levels of parents and their children, measuring the extent to which children achieve higher incomes than their parents. IUM remains a crucial indicator of economic mobility influenced by factors like education, occupation, and social capital.

Educational Upward Mobility (EUM): EUM signifies the difference between the education levels of parents and their children, indicating the extent to which children attain a higher level of education than their parents. It is considered as key driver of socio-economic advancement, leading to better job opportunities and higher income.

Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD): IPD represents the age differences between parents and their children, measuring the generational gap in life experiences, values, and perspectives. It influences various life aspects, including educational and career choices, thereby impacting income mobility.

Examining the impact of EUM and IPD on IUM among the SC households in Kerala assumes greater relevance due to historical social and economic marginalization faced by this community. The study can provide insights on addressing economic disparities and improving social mobility within the SC community. Additionally, Kerala's high levels of education and human development offer a unique context to study income mobility dynamics, providing valuable lessons for other regions dealing with similar issues. The study can also highlight the role of education as a tool for economic empowerment within the marginalized communities and influence of generational differences on income mobility. By exploring whether increasing children's education levels leads to higher incomes than their parents, this study aims to understand the potential of education in increasing income levels, particularly among the marginalized SC households. The study can determine the extent to which education and intergenerational psychological distance contribute to the upward mobility of the SC households in Kerala.

Estimated statistics on upward mobility variables and intergenerational psychological distance within the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala produced following results.

***1. Income Upward Mobility*:** The mean income upward mobility from fathers to children is 2649.867 which indicates that children tend to have higher incomes than their fathers. However, this upward mobility remains significantly varying, as shown by the standard deviation of 4132.056, with values ranging from -1800 to 56000. It suggests that a wide range of income outcomes among children when compared to their fathers. The mean income upward mobility from mothers to children is 3840.849, which shows higher upward mobility than fathers, indicating that, children tend to have higher incomes than their mothers. The standard deviation of 5008.092 indicates even greater variability in income upward mobility when compared to fathers, with values ranging from -56000 to 56000. This wider range suggests more diverse income outcomes among children when compared to their mothers.

***2. Education Upward Mobility*:** The mean education upward mobility from fathers to children is 2.0212, indicating that, on average, children tend to attain higher

levels of education than their fathers. The standard deviation of 1.148167 indicates some form of variability in education upward mobility, with values ranging from -1 to 8. This variability suggests differing educational achievements among children when compared to their fathers. The mean education upward mobility from mothers to children is 1.6366, indicating that children tend to attain higher levels of education than their mothers. The standard deviation of 0.965417 indicates variability in education upward mobility, with values ranging from -1 to 6. This variability suggests differing educational achievements among children when compared to their mothers.

***3. Intergenerational Psychological Distance*:** The mean intergenerational psychological distance between fathers and children is -29.480 which indicates that children are younger than their fathers. The standard deviation of 15.9917 indicates variability in psychological distance, with values ranging from -49 to 265. This variability suggests differing generational gaps in terms of life experiences, values, and perspectives among fathers and children. The mean intergenerational psychological distance between mothers and children is -24.458 which indicates that children are younger than their mothers. The standard deviation of 15.71891 indicates variability in psychological distance, with values ranging from -38 to 268. This variability shows differing generational gaps in terms of life experiences, values, and perspectives among mothers and children belonging to the scheduled caste communities.

The empirical investigation of the study on the impact of Educational Upward Mobility (EUM) on Income Upward Mobility (IUM) among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, by employing multiple linear regression models based on the effects of EUM based on both father's and mother's education levels on the income mobility of their children. The study also considers role of factors such as gender of the household head, types of SC community, and panchayat in controlling for potential confounding variables. The results indicate a significant positive relationship between parents' educational advancement and the income mobility of their children. Specifically, for every one-unit increase in fathers' educational upward mobility, there is a 0.237 unit increase in income upward mobility for their children. Similarly, for

mothers' educational upward mobility, there exists a 0.073 unit increase in income upward mobility for their children. These findings suggest that both fathers' and mothers' educational achievements have played a crucial role in determining the income mobility of SC children in Kerala.

Furthermore, when both parents' educational advancement is taken together, fathers' education has made a stronger impact on income upward mobility when compared to mothers' education. It accentuates the impact of fathers' educational attainment on influencing the economic prospects of their children within the SC households. The inclusion of control variables in the regression models ensures that the estimated effects of educational upward mobility are robust and not biased by other factors. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.375 indicates that the independent variables in the model explain 37.5 per cent of the variance in income upward mobility among the SC households in Kerala. It reveals a moderate-to-strong explanatory power of the model, indicating that the included variables are relevant for understanding income mobility within this population.

The impact of Educational Upward Mobility (EUM) on Income Upward Mobility (IUM) among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala was studied that focuses on the calculation of income upward mobility using mother's income. The study utilizes survey data and employs multiple linear regression models for estimating the effects of EUM based on mother's education on income mobility of their children, while controlling for factors such as the gender of the household head, types of SC community, and panchayat. The regression results reveal that a significant positive exists relationship between mothers' educational advancement and the income mobility of their children. The estimated results show that for every one-unit increase in mothers' educational upward mobility, there will be a 0.030 unit increase in income upward mobility for their children. These findings suggest that mothers' educational progress have played a crucial role on determining the income mobility of SC children in Kerala. When both parents' educational advancement is taken into consideration, educational upward mobility based on father is found to have made a stronger impact on the income upward mobility when compared to mothers' educational upward mobility. It highlights the importance of fathers' education on influencing the economic

prospects of their children within the SC households. The inclusion of control variables in the regression models ensures that the estimated effects of educational upward mobility are robust and not biased by other factors specific to the household or community. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.375 indicates that the independent variables in the model explain 37.5 per cent of the variance in income upward mobility among the SC households in Kerala which reveals a moderate-to-strong explanatory power of the model.

These findings have several implications for policy and practice. Firstly, they highlight the importance of investing in education as a means for promoting economic mobility among the marginalized communities. Policies aimed at improving access to education and enhancing educational outcomes among the SC children can have significant positive impacts on their future income prospects. Secondly, the results underscore the need for gender-sensitive interventions, recognizing the differential impacts of fathers' and mothers' education on income mobility. Finally, the study emphasizes the importance of considering local context and community-specific factors in designing interventions for promoting economic advancement among the SC households in Kerala.

The impact of Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on Income Upward Mobility (IUM) among Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala was analysed in the study that focuses on the age difference between parents and children. IPD is seen as a crucial factor shaping income mobility, reflecting not just chronological gaps but also socio-cultural and psychological distances within the families. Understanding IPD provides insights into how these dynamics influence economic prospects, particularly in marginalized communities like SCs. The research is significant for its potential to inform policies and interventions that can address economic disparities and promote equitable development. The study has found negative relationship between IPD and income mobility. Models incorporating IPD based on father's and mother's ages show that a greater age difference between parents and children is associated with lower income mobility for the children in the SC communities. It suggests that closer generational proximity could lead to better economic outcomes for the SC households in Kerala. Additionally, the study analyses

the moderating effect of educational upward mobility (EUM) on the relationship between IPD and income mobility. The interaction terms between IPD and EUM indicate that the impact of IPD on income mobility depends on educational factors with emphasize on the importance of education in overcoming the barriers posed by IPD. Control variables such as gender of the household head, types of SC community, and panchayat are included for ensuring the robustness of the results. These variables help account for other factors that may influence income mobility, such as gender dynamics within the household and community-specific effects. The models exhibit a moderate-to-strong explanatory power, with the included variables explaining between 34.5 per cent to 37.5 per cent of the variance in income upward mobility among the SC households in Kerala.

The impact of Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on Income Upward Mobility (IUM) among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala was discussed in the study that focuses on the age difference between parents and children. The findings, as presented in Table 5.64, highlight the negative relationship between IPD and income mobility. Models examining IPD based on both father's and mother's ages reveal that a larger age gap between parents and children is associated with lower income mobility for the children. The results highlight the importance of considering not just the chronological gap but also the socio-cultural and psychological distances between generations in understanding income mobility dynamics within households. The study further reveals that the relationship between IPD and income mobility is found to be moderated by parents' Educational Upward Mobility (EUM). The inclusion of interaction terms between IPD and EUM shows that the impact of IPD on income mobility depends on parents' educational achievements. This suggests that educational advancement can mitigate the negative effects of IPD on income mobility, emphasizing the role of education in promoting economic mobility among the SC households in Kerala. Control variables such as the gender of the household head, types of the SC community, and panchayat are included in the models to ensure the robustness of the results. These variables help account for other factors that may influence income mobility, such as gender dynamics within the household and community-specific effects. The models exhibit a moderate-to-high explanatory power, with the included variables explaining between 36.6 per cent to 37.4 per cent of the variance in income

upward mobility among the SC households in Kerala. Implications of these findings are significant for policymakers and practitioners seeking to promote economic mobility among the SC communities. Addressing the challenges posed by IPD and its interaction with educational factors can lead to more targeted interventions aimed at enhancing income mobility. Policies focusing on improving educational outcomes and reducing generational gaps within families can play a crucial role in advancing economic opportunities for the SC households in Kerala. The current study contributes to a deeper understanding of the impacting income mobility among marginalized communities, like Scheduled caste providing framework for designing effective interventions and policies.

6.3 Focus Group Discussions

While the quantitative analysis offered systematic evidence of socio-economic patterns and mobility among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households in Kerala, the qualitative exploration through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) provided an in-depth view of lived realities, perceptions, and aspirations within these communities. The FGDs conducted across diverse regional and social contexts complemented the survey findings by uncovering the subjective dimensions of mobility—how individuals experience, interpret, and negotiate social and economic change. The discussions of the FGDs suggest that participants widely recognized a process of upward mobility, though unevenly distributed across the households. Most respondents noted that their children had achieved higher levels of education and entered more diversified occupations when compared to their parents. While the older generation was largely engaged in agricultural or manual labour, the younger generation had widely accessed salaried employment, technical jobs, and higher education opportunities. However, this mobility was perceived as conditional upon initial household assets—families with land, stable income, or better housing could support more consistent advancement than those without such foundations.

Education emerged as the most powerful driver of upward mobility, reinforcing the quantitative finding that educational attainment significantly contributes to income improvement. Parents consider education as a form of social security and long-term investment, while younger participants view it as a means of empowerment and

confidence-building. Nonetheless, participants have expressed dissatisfaction over structural barriers such as underemployment, job–qualification mismatches, and persistent caste-based discrimination. These constraints indicate that education alone does not guarantee economic upliftment unless supported by structural reforms that ensure equitable access to quality employment.

The FGDs also illuminated the intergenerational psychological distance (IPD) between parents and children as an important factor driving aspiration and motivation. Older participants valued stability and government employment, whereas the younger generation aspired for professional, entrepreneurial, and global careers. This difference in expectations, while sometimes creating tension within households, also functioned as a catalyst for ambition and progress. The findings thus affirm that IPD fosters a desire for upward movement, driving the younger generation for seeking higher income and social recognition.

Participants identified a set of enduring barriers restricting the translation of education into sustainable income mobility. It includes absence of productive assets such as land or property, discrimination in labour markets, saturation of government jobs, and growing dependence on migration as an alternative strategy for advancement. Despite these challenges remaining prevalent, the FGDs highlighted that education has yielded broader social transformations, including enhanced self-respect, awareness about rights, and reduced dependence on caste-based occupations.

6.4 Policy Recommendations

This study, through comprehensive analysis of various socio-economic and mobility dynamics, offers a set of key recommendations holding significant implications for policymakers at both the central and state levels, as well as other stakeholders involved in policy formulation.

1. ***Tailored Socio-Economic Development Programs***: Develop targeted socio-economic development programs that can address the specific needs and challenges of different scheduled caste (SC) communities. These programs should consider the varying levels of housing infrastructure, employment patterns, and economic activities among different communities. By tailoring

interventions to the unique socio-economic characteristics of each SC community, policymakers can ensure that resources are allocated effectively for addressing the most pressing issues. For instances, (1) Implement programs to improve housing infrastructure among the SC communities, focusing on providing basic amenities such as sanitation facilities, clean drinking water, and electricity. This can include initiatives for upgrading existing housing units and building new houses in collaboration with local self-government authorities and community organizations. (2) Launch skill development and employment training programs tailored to the specific needs and interests of the different SC communities. It consists of vocational training in trades that are in demand locally, such as construction, agriculture, tourism, and healthcare. (3) Support entrepreneurship development among the SC youth and adults by providing training, mentorship, and access to finance. This can help individuals in the SC communities to start their own businesses and generate sustainable income opportunities.(4) Identify and promote traditional economic activities that are unique to each of the SC community, such as handicrafts, handloom weaving, and traditional agricultural practices. It is crucial to provide support for modernizing these activities and accessing new markets.

2. ***Enhancing Access to Education***: It is crucial to improve access to quality education for children in the SC communities by addressing the disparities in educational infrastructure and resources. This can be achieved by expanding the availability of government and government-aided schools in areas where SC populations are high and providing additional support for children from disadvantaged backgrounds to access private schools. Additionally, efforts should be made to enhance the quality of education in government and aided schools for ensuring all children receive a high-quality education regardless of their socio-economic background.

3. ***Promoting Entrepreneurship and Livelihood Diversification***: Support entrepreneurship and livelihood diversification among the SC households for reducing the reliance on daily wage labour and creating more sustainable income-generating opportunities. This can be done through providing access to

microfinance, training programs, and market linkages for small-scale entrepreneurs. Additionally, efforts should be made to promote sustainable livelihood practices that remain resilient to economic shocks and environmental challenges.

4. ***Income Generation and Economic Empowerment***: Implement policies and programs focussing on enhancing income generation opportunities for the SC households. This can include skills training programs, microfinance initiatives, and support for small-scale entrepreneurship. The SC households can improve their consumption levels and overall well-being once the level of household income increased.

5. ***Education and Human Capital Development***: Promoting education, especially among younger generations, remains crucial as it positively influences consumption expenditure. Focus should be made on improving access to quality education and reducing dropout rates among the SC children. Additionally, provide adult education and skill development programs for enhancing the earning potential of the SC individuals. Investing in education can lead to higher incomes and improved consumption patterns among the SC households over long term.

6. ***Skill Development and Vocational Training***: Implement skill development programs and vocational training initiatives targeting the SC individuals, with a focus on technical and computer skills. These programs can enhance the employability of the SC individuals, particularly males, and contribute to higher income earnings. Additionally, programs should be designed to be inclusive and address gender disparities, ensuring that both males and females have access to skill development opportunities aligning with their career aspirations and income goals.

7. ***Targeted Economic Empowerment Programs***: Targeted economic empowerment programs are to be implemented that aims to address income and expenditure disparities within the SC communities. These programs should focus on enhancing income-generating opportunities, providing access to resources such as land and capital, and improving financial literacy among the

SC households. By targeting the most economically disadvantaged groups within the SC community, these programs can help reduce intra-caste economic inequality and improve overall economic well-being.

8. ***Strengthening Social Welfare Programs***: Strengthen social welfare programs targeting the SC households for ensuring more equitable distribution of resources and benefits. These programs should be designed to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized groups within the SC community, providing them with adequate support for meeting their basic needs. Additionally, efforts should be made to enhance the effectiveness of these programs through better targeting, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms. By strengthening social welfare programs, policymakers can help in reducing economic disparities and improving the overall well-being of the SC households.

Based on the examination of social mobility among the Scheduled Caste households in Kerala, particularly focusing on the impact of Educational Upward Mobility (EUM) and Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD) on Income Upward Mobility (IUM), the study suggesting the following recommendations:

9. ***Enhancing Educational Opportunities***: Given the significant impact of parents' educational attainment on the income mobility of their children, there exists a need to enhance educational opportunities for both parents and children in the SC households. This could include improving access to quality education, providing scholarships and financial assistance, and implementing policies incentivizing educational advancement.
10. ***Addressing Intergenerational Psychological Distance***: In order to mitigate the negative effects of IPD on income mobility, interventions should focus on reducing the generational gap in terms of life experiences, values, and perspectives. It involves promoting intergenerational dialogue and understanding, fostering closer relationships between parents and children, and creating opportunities for shared experiences.
11. ***Tailored Support for Different SC Subgroups***: Given the varying levels of upward mobility among different SC communities, interventions should be devised to address the specific needs and challenges faced by each subgroup. It

involves targeted skill development programs, entrepreneurship opportunities, and community-based initiatives aimed to enhance equal economic opportunities and promote upward mobility.

6.5 Conclusion

This research provides a comprehensive analysis of the socio-economic conditions, intra-caste disparities, and social mobility dynamics among the Scheduled Caste (SC) households belonging to diverse sub-community groups in Kerala. The research reveals a significant variation in the socio-economic status of the SC households, highlighting the need for targeted interventions in addressing these disparities. Intra-caste disparities within the SC community are also evident, particularly in areas such as home conditions, employment status, and income levels. Education emerges as a crucial factor influencing social mobility, with higher education levels increasing the likelihood of upward income mobility. The study also underscores the importance of considering psychological factors, such as Intergenerational Psychological Distance (IPD), in understanding income upward mobility. Overall, the findings provide valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to promote the socio-economic development of SC households in Kerala, emphasizing the importance of tailored interventions in addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by this vulnerable community.

6.6 Future Scope of the Research

One important limitation of the study is that it only examines the socio-economic issues, inequalities, and social mobility of the Scheduled Caste households in the state of Kerala. The original plan was to conduct a comprehensive study exclusively on the Scheduled Caste households, incorporating all major social issues, including an intra-group comparison of socio-economic issues, inequality, and mobility. Therefore, the study was limited to addressing these issues within the Scheduled Caste households. However, it is essential to examine the extent of socio-economic inequality and social mobility, among other dimensions, compared to the rest of the population, including the general category, Other Backward Classes, and Scheduled Tribes. Such studies would provide further insights into the gaps between Scheduled Castes and other groups in Kerala. These types of studies assume greater policy relevance. Therefore, the future

scope of the research lies in conducting an extensive study on inter-caste comparison of socio-economic conditions, inequality, and dynamics of the intergenerational social mobility. By extending research to these areas, more focused policy frameworks can be developed in reducing disparities on socio-economic conditions and social mobility among the people of Kerala.

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Appendices

Intra-Caste Socio-Economic conditions and social Mobility: A Study of Scheduled Castes in Kerala

Demographic Information:

1. District:
    a. Thiruvananthapuram
    b. Palakkad
    c. Malappuram
2. Name of Panchayat/Municipality/Corporation
    a. Chemmaruthy (GP)
    b. Varkkala (M)
    c. Kuzhalmannam (GP)
    d. Shornur (M)
    e. Wandoor (GP)
    f. Nilamboor (M)
3. Location:
    a. Rural
    b. Urban

Demographic Characteristics:

4. Gender of Household Head:
    a. Male
    b. Female
5. To which SCCommunity you belong:
    a. Pulayan/ Cheramar/ Pulaya/ Pulayar/ Cherama/ Cheraman/ Wayanad Pulayan/ WayanadanPulayan,/Matha/ MathaPulayan
    b. Kanakkan/ Padanna/ Padannan
    c. Cheruman
    d. Mannan/ Pathiyan/ Perumannan/ Vannan/ Velan
    e. Paraiyan/ Parayan/ Sambavar/ Sambavan/ Sambava/ Paraya/ Paraiya/ Parayar
    f. Kuravan/ Sidhanar/ Kuravar/ Kurava/ Sidhana
    g. Panan
    h. Kavara
    i. Kalladi
    j. Others

Family Status:

6. Family Status Class: 1. Low 2. Middle 3. High
7. How would you describe your family's economic situation 10 years ago?1. Low 2. Average 3. High
8. Total number of family members:
    a. One
    b. Two
    c. Three
    d. Four
    e. Five
    f. Six
    g. Seven
    h. Eight
    i. Nine
    j. More than Nine
9. Type of ownership of House
    a. Owned
    b. Rented
10. Condition of House
    a. Good
    b. Liveable
    c. Dilapidated
11. Number of Dwelling Rooms in the House
    a. No Exclusive Room
    b. One Room
    c. Two Rooms
    d. Three Rooms
    e. Four Rooms
    f. Five Rooms
    g. Six Rooms and Above
12. Are you staying in ancestral House
    a. Yes
    b. No

Asset Accumulation:

13. Current Landholding, Including Agricultural Land (in cent):

14. Do You Have Any Other Assets, Including Buildings? 1. Yes 2. No

15. Type of Ration Card:

    a. Yellow Card (AAY)

    b. Pink Card (Priority or Below Poverty Line (BPL))

    c. Blue Card (Non-Priority Subsidy or Above Poverty Line (APL))

    d. White Card (Non-Priority)

    e. No Card

Economic Status of Household:

16. Monthly Income of the Households:

17. Monthly Consumption Expenditure of the Households:

18. Monthly Expenditure on Food Items:

Employment Status and Occupations:

19. Type of Employment of Father:

a) Daily Wage Labor

b) Self-Employed

c) Gulf Migrant

d) Private Company

e) Government Job

f) Retired

g) Unemployed

20. Type of Employment of Mother:

a) Daily Wage Labor

b) Self-Employed

c) Gulf Migrant

d) Private Company

e) Government Job

f) Retired

g) Unemployed

21. Employment Status of Working Son:

a) Daily Wage Labor

b) Self-Employed

c) Gulf Migrant

d) Private Company
e) Government Job
f) Retired
g) Unemployed

22. Employment Status of Working Daughter:

a) Daily Wage Labor
b) Self-Employed
c) Gulf Migrant
d) Private Company
e) Government Job
f) Retired
g) Unemployed

Income and Education:

23. Monthly Income from Employment of Father:
24. Monthly Income from Employment of Mother:
25. Monthly Income from Employment of Working Son:
26. Monthly Income from Employment of Working Daughter:
27. Total years of education completed by Father:
28. Total years of education completed by Mother:
29. Total years of education completed by Son:
30. Total years of education completed by Daughter:
31. Are you a Graduate/ Post Graduate/ Professional Degree Holder?
    a. Yes
    b. No
32. Is your Spouse a Graduate/ Post Graduate/ Professional Degree Holder?
    a. Yes
    b. No
33. Is your son a Graduate/ Post Graduate/ Professional Degree Holder?
    a. Yes
    b. No
34. Is your daughter a Graduate/ Post Graduate/ Professional Degree Holder?
    a. Yes
    b. No

Age

35. Current age of Father:
36. Current age of Mother:
37. Current age of Son:
38. Current age of Daughter:
39. Do you have completed technical education or training? 1. Yes 2. No
40. Specify your computer literacy: 1. No skill 2. Basic computer skills 3. Advanced computer skills.

Discrimination:

41. Where did your children study for their primary and secondary level education? 1. Government 2. Aided 3. Private
42. Did they have access to quality educational resources during their primary and secondary education? 1. Yes 2. No
43. Where did your children study for their higher education? 1. Government 2. Aided 3. Private
44. What was the type of syllabus taught by your children at the school level?
    a. State Syllabus
    b. CBSE
    c. ICSE
    d. Others
45. In which Medium your children studied at the School
    a. Malayalam
    b. English
46. Were your children able to pursue advanced or Specialized courses during their higher education? 1.Yes 2. No
47. Did they face any challenges in accessing educational opportunities due to their minority status? 1. Yes 2. No
48. Have your children experienced any instances of discrimination or bias in their career due to your minority status? 1. Yes 2. No
49. Do you and your family feel any kind of discrimination at any time in life? 1. Yes 2. No

Social Networks and Community Initiatives:

50. How important do you think social networks were in providing guidance and support for education and employment? 1. Not important 2. Very important 3. Important

51. Have you actively participated in or benefited from community-based initiatives that promote networking? 1. Yes 2. No

Government Support and Policies:

52. Are you satisfied with the Government's support and policies for education and skills development for the society? 1. Yes 2. No