

Changing Patterns of Social Mobility: Some Trends over Time

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a position against a language, as it were, these liberals have, in manner of speaking, legitimised a discourse which is retrogressive and dangerous.

That is not all. The defeat of the PIP has underlined that political quarrels cannot and

should not be fought in the courts of law. We, as a people, have been increasingly looking upon 'judicial activism' as an inherently liberating force. That it need not be so should have been obvious. The judiciary does not make a revolution. It is not

its job to do so. It maintains order of sorts. If that order has to be changed, the field of action is and would naturally be somewhere else. Perhaps the liberal dilemma consists in not being able to decide where that field happens to be or should be located. [19]

Commentary

Changing Patterns of Social Mobility

Some Trends over Time

How successful have state sponsored efforts been at redressing the issue of caste-based inequality in India? This paper analyses the impact of such efforts by probing trends in social mobility and exploring the relationship between caste and occupation. The primary focus is to explore what, if anything, has changed and have such changes made India a more fluid and mobile society than before.

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Introduction

Ever since India gained independence, one of the leading priorities of the country has been to redress caste-based social inequalities. The most obvious manifestation of this goal has been the implementation of occupational and educational reservation policies, initially, as set out in the Constitution, for dalits and adivasis, and more recently, thanks to the Mandal Commission, for other backward classes (OBCs). However, these policies represent just the tip of the political iceberg in terms of the social movements, political parties and prominent figures that have dedicated time, effort and energy to the upliftment of the backward and downtrodden. This paper seeks to assess the success, or otherwise, that these efforts have had in making India a more fluid and mobile society. In doing so we ask three questions: how mobile is Indian society? Has it become more mobile over the last 25 years? And

has the relationship between caste and occupation changed? In answering these questions, our primary focus is to explore what, if anything, has changed. We do not therefore address the determinants of occupational destiny, but instead just concentrate on the trends in social mobility.

Data and Methods

The Surveys

To explore the Indian experience of social mobility we use the cumulated files for the National Election Studies (NES) of 1971 and 1996. These surveys were conducted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS). The surveys adhere to strict sampling methods of probability proportionate to size, and are nationally representative of the electorate as a whole. The 1971 survey was conducted in 320 sampling points in 80 parliamentary constituencies across India. The total sample size was 3,800 and the response rate was 73 per cent. The 1996 survey was conducted in 432 sampling

points in 108 parliamentary constituencies across India, excluding Jammu and Kashmir, with a total sample size of 9,614 and a response rate of 64 per cent.

For reasons of continuity only male respondents have been included in the analysis. (Full occupational details were not collected for all women in the 1971 survey.) The time span covered by our surveys stretches from the father's generation of our 1971 sample (circa independence) to the respondents in 1996. The timing of these two surveys thus gives our study a more or less representative picture of post-independence Indian society.

The Measure of Class in India

For the general purposes of this paper we have constructed a fourfold class schema. This is a collapsed version of the eightfold classification that we used in our paper on class mobility in 1996 [Kumar et al 2002]. We have decided to use the fourfold schema rather than the more detailed eightfold classification for two reasons. First, the sample size of the 1971 survey is considerably smaller than that of the 1996 survey, and hence use of the more detailed classification would lead to some very sparse cells in the 1971 mobility table. Second, the 1971 survey did not obtain sufficient information on divisions within the business class or the agricultural class to replicate the 1996 distinctions. We feel that the loss of information that this entails is compensated by the ability it gives us to make comparisons between our surveys, and so examine the changes that have occurred over time.

The classification that we use to analyse changes over time therefore takes the following form:

– *Salarial*: executives, professionals, white collar employees and class IV employees;

– *Business*: large-scale and small-scale businessmen, together with small store owners and roadside businesses;

– *Manual Labour*: Skilled and semi-skilled workers such as mechanics, electricians, tailors, weavers and carpenters and craftsmen and rickshaw-pullers, and unskilled manual workers (excluding those in the agricultural sector) such as construction workers, chowkidars and sweepers;

– *Agriculturalists*: owner-cultivators and tenant-cultivators, dairy and poultry farmers, labourers and landless labourers, sharecroppers and fisherman, shepherds.

As we noted in our paper on the 1996 data, this class schema distinguishes four main groupings: first, the salariat, largely consisting of salaried employees with relatively secure and permanent employment; second, the petty bourgeoisie or business class, consisting of independents who are directly exposed to market forces and are not cushioned by the bureaucratic employment condition of the salariat; third, rank and file manual workers in non-agricultural work; and fourth, agriculture.

Caste and Community

To assess the role that is played by caste and community, we adopt the sixfold classification that has been used in previous research on these datasets [Heath and Yadav 1999, Kumar et al 2002]. The categories that we use are: (i) Hindu upper caste; (ii) Hindu other backward classes; (iii) dalit; (iv) adivasi; (v) Muslim, and other (which includes Christians).

These classifications were constructed by combining variables on the religion and 'reservation status' of respondents. Although this classification lacks detail on specific 'jatis', the central concern of the exercise is to see what effect, if any, the reservation policy as a whole has had on the mobility of different social groups. By constructing our measures into these more general categories that reflect institutional distinctions, we are thus better placed to make qualified statements about the efficacy of the policy.

Results

The paper starts by exploring the changes in India's occupational structure over the period since independence, and examines which sectors have grown and which sectors have contracted. We then turn to look at how these changes have affected the internal social composition of the different social classes. Have they become

more heterogeneous? In the next section we look at the relative chances of men from different class origins of gaining access to particular occupations. We look to see whether these chances have changed over the course of time, and whether India has become a more fluid and mobile society. Finally we look at the relationship between caste and class. Are the changes in patterns of social mobility paralleled by changes in the association between caste and class, and which groups have benefited most from the changes?

The Changing Occupational Structure

Table 1 shows the occupational distribution of male workers in India since 1951 according to the national census. As we can see, the major change that has taken place is the reduction of people involved in cultivation, which has fallen steadily in each census. However, the decrease has by and large been matched by an increase in agricultural labourers. The combined agriculture sector therefore remained fairly

Table 1: Occupation Profiles of Men since Independence

Industrial Category	Year				
	1951*	1961	1971	1981	1991
Cultivation	54	51	46	44	40
Agricultural labour	13	13	21	20	21
Livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantations, orchards and allied activities	-	3	2	2	2
Mining and quarrying	-	-	1	1	1
Manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairs in household industry	12	6	3	3	2
Manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairs in non-household industry	-	6	7	9	9
Construction	-	1	1	2	2
Trade and commerce	6	5	6	7	9
Transport, storage and communications	2	2	3	3	4
Other services	13	12	9	9	11

Notes: * In 1951 the occupational categories were somewhat different than for the other years. Thus figures for 'production' have been entered in the combined manufacturing sector.

Source: Census of India, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981 and 1991.

Table 2: Occupation Profiles of Men and their Fathers in 1971 and 1996 (Column Percentages)

	Father's Class 1971	Respondent's Class 1971	Father's Class 1996	Respondent's Class 1996
Salariat	9.1	11.5	10.9	13.7
Business	9.1	7.8	9.7	12.6
Manual	20.9	18.8	20.0	27.9
Agriculture	60.8	61.9	59.4	45.7
Valid N	1869	2030	4141	4356
Missing data	249	88	724	509

Table 3: Men's Inflow Mobility in 1971 (Column Percentages)

Father's Class	Respondent's Class				Total
	Salariat	Business	Manual	Agriculture	
Salariat	39.7	3.2	8.3	3.0	8.5
Business	16.0	64.5	5.4	0.7	9.0
Manual	10.0	12.3	66.7	10.2	21.3
Agriculture	34.2	20.0	19.7	86.1	61.2
N	219	155	351	1084	1809

Table 4: Men's Inflow Mobility in 1996 (Column Percentages)

Father's Class	Respondent's Class				Total
	Salariat	Business	Manual	Agriculture	
Salariat	38.5	9.0	6.7	2.1	9.1
Business	11.5	50.3	4.4	0.7	9.5
Manual	10.5	12.4	56.9	3.1	20.4
Agriculture	39.5	28.3	32.0	94.1	61.0
N	496	477	1053	1714	3740

constant between 1951 and 1981, fluctuating between 64 per cent and 67 per cent of the total workforce. However, there is evidence to suggest that this sector is on the wane. In 1991 it dropped to its lowest level of 61 per cent.

Table 2 shows the CSDS survey estimates of the class distributions of male respondents and their fathers in 1971 and 25 years later in 1996. Although the occupational classifications are somewhat different from those used by the census, the overall pattern is similar. As in the census, the agricultural sector remained fairly constant for the first three phases of our survey findings, accounting for 60.8 per cent, 61.9 per cent, and 59.4 per cent of the male workforce in the first three columns of Table 2. However, there is a sharp drop between father and son in 1996. In 1996, only 45.7 per cent of the sample were engaged in agricultural activities, representing a 13.7 percentage point inter-generational decrease. The CSDS survey also shows that this large decrease in agriculture has been matched by small expansions of the salariat, business and manual classes.

These changes are likely to generate some corresponding changes in rates of upward and downward mobility. The contraction in the agricultural sector means that there will be an overall increase in the upward mobility of the labour force. As jobs in the agricultural sector become scarcer and jobs in other sectors, such as the salariat and business, become more plentiful, there has to be a net movement of people in order to accommodate the changing proportion of workers being supported in each class.

Inflow Mobility

In the study of social mobility it is helpful to distinguish between inflow and outflow mobility. In the case of inflow mobility we examine the social composition of different occupational classes, and we calculate the column percentages. In contrast, the analysis of outflow mobility is concerned with the destinations of respondents from different class origins, and is based on row percentages.

We begin by looking at the inflow patterns for our samples in 1971 and in 1996. The inflow tables paint a picture of the heterogeneity or homogeneity of each occupational class. This can tell us how diverse a class's members are in their social origins. It thus addresses questions about class formation, the assumption being that a class which is homogeneous in its com-

position will exhibit a more distinct sub-culture of its own. Is an occupational class homogeneous in its composition, or does it include people from a wide variety of social origins?

Tables 3 and 4 show us how many members of each occupational class are what might be termed 'second generation'; that is, how many originated in the same class that they currently occupy. What we find is that in 1971, and again in 1996, the majority of the salariat were first generation, that is newcomers who have been upwardly mobile, with a particularly large number of newcomers from the agriculture sector in both surveys. In contrast, the business and manual classes both show a relatively high proportion of second-generation members (over 50 per cent in both years). However, it is the agricultural sector that has by far the highest proportion of second-generation members. In 1971 the agricultural sector consisted of 86.1 per cent who came from agriculturalist origins, and in 1996 the figure rose to 94.1 per cent. Since agriculture is a declining sector, very few people choose to enter it, and hence the vast bulk of people remaining in agriculture are second generation (or probably much later generation) agriculturalists.

The contraction of the agricultural sector has also meant that many men have had to seek employment in other sectors, thus giving the non-agricultural classes a more heterogeneous profile in 1996 than they had had in 1971. This is reflected by the higher proportion of people from agricultural backgrounds in non-agricultural classes. This increase, although not uniform, is across the board. For example, agriculturalists accounted for 34.2 per cent of those in the salariat in 1971, rising to 39.5 per cent in 1996. It accounted for 20 per cent of those in the business class in 1971, rising to 28.3 per cent in 1996, and it accounted for 19.7 per cent of those in the manual class in 1971, rising to 32 per cent in 1996.

There have been corresponding changes in the amount of self-recruitment in the business and manual classes. Some of the biggest changes occurred in the manual occupations. In 1971, 66.7 per cent of the manual workers were men whose fathers had had the same occupation. This, to some extent, reflected the familial process of acquiring skills. In 1971 relatively few respondents from different family backgrounds, entered these occupations. However, in 1996 the proportion of self-recruitment reduced to 56.9 per cent, with the agriculturalists representing a marked

increase in the percentage of people engaged in the manual class.

The general conclusion, then, is that the salariat (at the top) is much more diverse than the agricultural sector (at the bottom), that the agricultural sector has become less diverse over time, while the business and working classes have both become more diverse over time as they have incorporated big inflows from agriculture. There are thus signs of greater intergenerational movement in 1996 than in 1971.

Outflow Mobility

We now turn to outflow mobility. The study of outflow mobility is particularly useful for exploring the question of how

Table 5: Men's Outflow Mobility in 1971
(Row Percentages)

Father's Class	Present Class of Respondent				N
	Salariat	Business	Manual	Agriculture	
Salariat	56.9	3.3	19.0	20.9	153
Business	21.6	61.7	11.7	4.9	162
Manual	5.7	4.9	60.6	28.8	386
Agriculture	6.8	2.8	6.2	84.2	1108
Total	12.1	8.6	19.4	59.9	1809

Table 6: Men's Outflow Mobility in 1996
(Row Percentages)

Father's Class	Present Class of Respondent				N
	Salariat	Business	Manual	Agriculture	
Salariat	56.0	12.6	20.8	10.6	341
Business	16.1	67.6	13.0	3.4	355
Manual	6.8	7.7	78.5	6.9	763
Agriculture	8.6	5.9	14.8	70.7	2281
Total	13.3	12.8	28.2	45.8	3740

Table 7: Summary Indexes of Mobility

	1971	1996
Percentage stable	74.8	70.7
Upwardly mobile	13.9	22.4
Downwardly mobile	11.3	7.0
N	1809	3740

Table 8: Loglinear Models of Trends in Class Fluidity

	Chi ²	Df	P
F, R, Y	3889	24	.000
+ FR	207	15	.000
+ FY, RY, FR	27	9	.000

Notes: F = Father's class; R = Respondent's class; Y = Year.

To fit these models the following SPSS syntax was used:
 loglinear rclass4 (1,4) fclass4 (1,4) year (1,2)
 /print=default estim
 /design=rclass4, fclass4, year
 /design=rclass4, fclass4, year, fclass4 by rclass4
 /design=rclass4, fclass4, year, year by rclass4, year by fclass4, rclass4 by fclass4.

similar the chances are of people from different class origins reaching specific class destinations. For example, how equal are the chances of people from salariat and manual origins of gaining access to the privileged ranks of the salariat?

Looking down the first column in Table 5, we see that men from salariat backgrounds had far superior chances of reaching salariat destinations themselves than did men from any other background: only 5.7 per cent originating from the manual backgrounds compared with 56.9 per cent from the salariat backgrounds ended up in the salariat at the time of the 1971 survey. The chances of a man from salariat origins were thus ten times as good as those of someone from manual origins. This pattern of class inequality was again broadly similar in 1996. Substantial class inequalities in access to the salariat have thus persisted in India over the last quarter century.

Looking down the main diagonal running from top-left to bottom-right, we see the proportions from each origin class who were intergenerationally stable: that is, who followed in their father's footsteps. Both Table 5 and Table 6 show familiar pictures of class inheritance in this respect. In each occupational category, both in 1971 and 1996, the son is more likely to enter his father's occupation than to enter any other specific occupation. This is shown by the fact that the highest cell number in each row always occurs along the diagonal.

The changes over time in outflow, however, are the opposite of those we saw with inflow. Thus the percentage of men from agricultural origins who remained in agriculture has declined over time from 84.2 per cent to 70.7 per cent. This of course once again is due to the contraction of agriculture. Correspondingly there have been increases in the proportions who remained in the expanding classes of business and manual work.

What do these contrasting trends imply for overall rates of mobility and stability? In Table 7 we calculate the proportions of the whole sample who remained in the same class as their father in the two surveys. We can also calculate the proportions who were upwardly and downwardly mobile. For these purposes we treat the four classes as a simple hierarchy, ordered from the salariat at the top down to agriculture at the bottom. Given the internal differentiation within each class, there will in fact be considerable overlap in the standing of these four classes; larger farmers for example should be ranked above unskilled manual workers or self-employed

workers in roadside businesses. However, as explained above, we cannot make sufficiently fine distinctions in the 1971 survey to incorporate these internal differences. Our summary measures must therefore be treated as rough and ready approximations.

Table 7 shows the summary indices of mobility for men. The first row of Table 7 shows the overall proportion in each survey as a whole who remained in the same class as their fathers. This figure is slightly lower in 1996 than it was in 1971. In 1971, 74.8 per cent of sons followed in their fathers' footsteps whereas in 1996 the figure was 70.7 per cent. Table 7 also shows the trends in upward and downward mobility. As we can see, there has been a net surplus of upward over downward mobility in both surveys, and this surplus has in fact risen from just over 2 percentage points in 1971 to over 15 percentage points in 1996. This pattern is largely driven by the changes in the occupational structure which we described earlier. The contraction of the agricultural sector has forced people into other occupations, and hence has generated an increase in upward mobility as we have defined it here.

Changing Class Fluidity

The changes in the class distributions of the respondents and of their fathers will thus have played a major role in shaping patterns of class mobility. In particular, increasing room at the top has meant that there could simultaneously be constant chances of people from privileged backgrounds remaining in the salariat and also improved chances of people from less

privileged backgrounds gaining access to the salariat.

However, it is also interesting to ask whether the changes in the class structure have been the whole story or whether there has been an increase in interchange, or fluidity, between the classes over and above that which would have been expected from the contraction of agriculture and the expansion of the higher three classes. In a modernising society where recruitment to privileged posts like those in the salariat is based on merit rather than on ascriptive factors such as one's caste or family connections, one would expect to see an increase in interchange between the classes over and above that which the changing occupational structure has generated. That is to say, one would expect society to become more 'open' or 'fluid'. To capture these distinctions sociologists used to make a distinction between 'structural mobility' and 'exchange mobility'. However, rather than directly calculating exchange mobility, it is now customary to use the mathematical technique of loglinear modelling to check whether the changes in patterns of mobility over time could be wholly explained by the expansion and contraction of the various classes.

To check whether the changing size of the various classes can satisfactorily explain the observed patterns of mobility that we have seen in the previous tables, we fit a series of loglinear models. The first model postulates that the three variables of father's class (F), respondent's class (R) and year (Y) are independent of each other. This model gives a very poor fit to the data as shown by the large value for χ^2 . With the addition of the FR term, the second

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model postulates that there is an association between father's and respondent's class. As we can see, this model makes a very substantial improvement in fit; however it is still some way short of adequately describing the data.

The third model then postulates, with the addition of the FY and RY terms, that the class distributions of fathers and sons have changed between 1971 and 1996. This model makes a further improvement in fit, and indicates that the changing class distributions can explain some of the changes in mobility patterns.

However, we should note that this third model, although it gives a pretty close fit to our data, still exhibits some significant deviations from the actual data. This is because the model postulates that the underlying association between father's and son's class is the same in the two years. We can describe it as a 'constant fluidity model'. The failure of this model to provide an acceptable fit to the data tells us that there have been some changes in mobility that cannot be explained solely by the changing shape of the class structure.

The story told by Table 8, then, is that we should tentatively reject the hypothesis that the underlying fluidity in Indian society has remained constant across the two surveys. The discrepancy between the predictions of the model and the observed mobility patterns is greater than could be expected by chance. In other words, there does indeed seem to be some evidence that there has been a change in the openness of Indian society over and above that generated by the contraction of agriculture and the expansion of the other classes. However, we should also note that the discrepancies between the model and the actual data are pretty small. In other words, the change in fluidity has not been very dramatic; the basic story is one of continuity rather than change.

To check on the scale and nature of the discrepancies between the model and the data we show in Table 9 the residuals from our third model.

A residual between plus or minus 1.96 standard deviation can be said to fall within the normal range that would be expected from sampling error (at the 0.5 level of statistical significance). However, the further the value exceeds this figure, the greater the significance of the discrepancy between the observed and the predicted number of observations in the particular cell of the table.

As Table 9 shows, most of the residuals are less than 1.96 and we cannot therefore

reject the hypothesis that the discrepancies between observed and expected frequencies are due to chance. However, there are a few cases where we do have significant residuals. Thus in the bottom right-hand corner of the table we see a residual of +2.89. This means that there were more respondents in this particular cell of the table in 1996 than we would have expected given the changes in the size of the classes. We can also see that there were fewer respondents from agricultural backgrounds reaching the salariat in 1996 than would have been expected. Thus, although there was a considerable outflow from agriculture into other social classes as we saw in Table 6, this was actually less than would have been expected given the contraction of agriculture over this period.

The other notable feature of the residuals is that there were fewer-than-expected men from manual origins moving into agriculture and more-than-expected moving into the salariat. What this suggests is that men from manual origins were better able to take advantage of the new opportunities that were emerging than were men from agricultural origins.

The overall story, however, seems to be one more of continuity rather than of change. Most of the changes in patterns of mobility between 1971 and 1996 can be explained by the changing shape of the class structure and there was no general tendency for the class system to become more fluid between 1971 and 1996.

Does Caste Explain the Lack of Fluidity in India?

One possible explanation for this lack of fluidity is that occupational destiny is closely tied to men's caste or community. In the next section we turn to the relationship between community and occupation. What is the relationship between these two variables, and has this relationship changed over the last 25 years?

Tables 12 and 13 show the occupational distributions of men from each of the six community groupings. In both years the overall patterns are rather similar. Thus, as might be expected, men from the upper castes are the ones most likely to be found in the salariat and the least likely to be found in the manual working class. Similarly, in both years the adivasis are the group that is most likely to be found in the agricultural sector, no doubt reflecting their largely rural location. Another consistent pattern is for dalits to be the group that is most highly concentrated in manual

work, while in both years Muslims are found to have relatively high proportions in business and relatively low proportions in agriculture.

Table 9: Residuals from the Constant Social Fluidity Model

Father's Class	Respondent's Class			
	Salariat	Business	Manual	Agricultural
Salariat	0.29	2.13	-1.86	-0.06
Business	0.37	-1.05	-0.07	1.44
Manual	2.05	0.96	1.65	-3.98
Agricultural	-2.08	-1.21	-0.45	2.89

Chi² 26.81 (df 9).

Table 10: Community and Class, 1971 (Row Percentages)

Comm-unity	Respondent's Class				
	Salariat	Business	Manual	Agriculture	N
Upper	20.7	12.3	8.7	58.3	575
OBC	6.2	5.8	23.7	64.3	641
Dalit	5.0	4.4	28.0	62.6	321
Adivasi	2.7	0.7	14.1	82.6	149
Muslim	14.6	11.4	19.7	54.3	254
Other	16.7	6.1	18.2	59.1	66
All	11.3	7.8	18.7	62.2	2006

Table 11: Community and Class, 1996 (Row Percentages)

Comm-unity	Respondent's Class				
	Salariat	Business	Manual	Agriculture	N
Upper	24.5	20.4	15.8	39.3	1089
OBC	9.5	10.1	28.0	52.3	1490
Dalit	10.9	5.3	41.2	42.6	809
Adivasi	6.9	4.1	24.1	64.9	390
Muslim	10.7	22.4	34.7	32.2	438
Other	19.5	13.6	33.1	33.9	118
All	13.7	12.6	27.8	45.8	4334

Table 12: Loglinear Models of Trends in the Association between Class and Community

	Chi ²	Df	P
C, R, Y	861	38	.000
+ CR	236	23	.000
+ CY, RY, CR	32	15	.000

Note: C = Community; R = Respondent's class; Y = Year.

Table 13: Residuals from the Constant Association Model

Comm-unity	Respondent's Class			
	Salariat	Business	Manual	Agricultural
Hindu upper	-0.80	-0.39	1.91	-0.53
Hindu OBC	0.78	-0.35	-3.74	2.91
Dalit	2.16	-1.30	0.15	-0.86
Adivasi	1.06	1.13	0.08	-1.01
Muslim	-2.48	1.10	2.24	-1.14
Other	-0.17	0.54	0.99	-1.05

Although Tables 10 and 11 show large class differences according to the respondent's community, these differences are not nearly so big as the ones that we observed relating to father's class. Recall that men from salariat class origins had almost 10 times as good a chance of reaching the salariat themselves as did men from manual origins. However, in the case of community, men from the upper castes are not nearly so advantaged in comparison with the scheduled castes or scheduled tribes. Thus in 1971 men from upper castes had four times as good a chance as men from the scheduled castes of reaching the salariat.

Turning next to the trends over time, we can see that there have been some across-the-board changes in the chances of all community groupings alike. Thus, all groups (except Muslims) had improved chances of reaching the salariat in 1996. And all groups alike had lower likelihoods of being found in the agricultural sector than they had in 1971. These across-the-board changes reflect the changes in the class structure that we have already described.

However, it is also of great interest to check whether, after taking account of these changes in class structure, there has been any weakening over time of the link between community and class destination or whether any particular groups, such as the scheduled castes or scheduled tribes have managed to make larger-than-expected gains. As in the case of class origins, we might expect that modernisation would lead to a gradually weakening link between ascribed characteristics like caste and community and occupational attainment. To explore this question we once again use loglinear models to see whether the observed changes in Tables 10 and 11 are those would be expected solely on the basis of the structural changes.

To see whether the relationship between our community and class groupings has changed over time, we run a similar set of loglinear models to the ones we used in Table 7. This time, though, rather than including father's class, we include the caste/community variable. We look to see whether the observed patterns in Tables 10 and 11 can satisfactorily be explained by a model that assumes that postulates a changing class distribution but an unchanging underlying association between our two variables.

Once again, a similar pattern emerges to that which was found in Table 8. Our final model gives a very good fit to the data,

with a very small deviation between the predicted and observed frequencies (as measured by the χ^2 statistic), but the deviations are still slightly larger than would have been expected if they were solely due to sampling error. We therefore turn to the residuals in order to see what form these discrepancies have taken.

The largest residuals in Table 13 are those for the OBCs in the manual and agricultural sectors. The large negative residual for OBCs in the manual class means that there were, in 1996, fewer OBCs to be found in manual jobs than would have been expected if the OBC/manual link had remained constant over time. This was almost matched by a correspondingly more OBCs in farming occupations in 1996 than would have been expected if the link between OBC status and farming had stayed constant over time. This could support the widely held view that OBCs have benefited most from the land redistribution policies, although there is little evidence that this has come at the expense of the upper castes.

Elsewhere in the table we find that dalits have improved their chances of entering the salariat more than would have been expected if gains had simply taken an across-the-board form. This seems to offer encouragement to the efficacy of the reservation policy which perhaps we are now beginning to see the effects of. However, this upsurge is not replicated among the tribals, who are still in pretty much the same position, relative to other communities, as they were 25 years ago. Moreover, there also seems to have been some slight relative deterioration in the chances of Muslims reaching the salariat.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it would seem that social mobility in India is neither particularly fluid, as evidenced by the large class inequalities, nor showing great signs of becoming more so. There have been highly important changes in the shape of the Indian class structure, with a contraction of agriculture and growing room at the top. Almost all groups alike have been affected by these changes and the new opportunities for social advancement. In that sense there have undeniably been expanding opportunities in Indian society. However, once we have taken account of the changes in structure, we find that there has been no systematic additional weakening of the links between

father's and son's class positions, or between caste and class. A key aspect of any society is the openness of jobs at the top. In the case of India these jobs are, and have remained, relatively closed. Although there are some signs that sons of manual workers and dalits have improved their chances of gaining access to the salariat at a greater rate than other groups, we find that these gains have been balanced by declines in the chances of men from agricultural backgrounds and of Muslims. Moreover, few of these changes are very large. Overall, both with father/son class mobility and caste/class mobility, the dominant picture is one of continuity rather than change.

However, we should also recognise that there might be methodological explanations for our findings. In particular, the broad classification of the agricultural sector may hide underlying changes that we have not observed. While strict comparability between cases is the only practical way of carrying out studies over time, the limitations of such an approach must be borne in mind. **[EW]**

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