

The Struggle for Employment: A Study of Scheduled Caste Job Seekers in India's Evolving Job Market (2010-2022)

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Abstract

This paper examines the evolving employment landscape in India, focusing on both national and international perspectives. It highlights the persistent mismatch between population growth and employment expansion, despite significant developmental efforts. The analysis of Employment Exchange data from 2010 to 2022 reveals fluctuating registration and placement trends for Scheduled Caste (SC) jobseekers, with a steady increase in the live register but consistently low placement rates. Additionally, literature reviews explore the dynamics of organized sector employment, the impact of globalization, and regional disparities. Key findings underscore the need for targeted employment interventions and the role of effective economic policies in addressing persistent barriers faced by marginalized communities. The data also emphasizes the importance of international cooperation and strategic policy implementation to enhance job opportunities and promote equitable economic growth.

Keywords: Employment landscape, Population growth, Scheduled Caste Jobseekers, Globalization impact, Economic policies

I. Introduction

In recent decades, employment has emerged as a focal point in the development strategies of both national governments and international organizations. In developed countries, where unemployment rates have persisted and even increased, there is a renewed emphasis on job creation as a key economic goal. Meanwhile, in developing nations, productive employment is viewed as a critical pathway for poverty alleviation. The forces of globalization have introduced distinct trends in labor markets across both developed and developing nations, sparking debates about the effects of international trade and investment flows on employment. Developed countries are increasingly concerned about job relocation due to

outsourcing and capital shifts to developing economies, leading to fears of job displacement. On the other hand, developing countries are grappling with the challenges of job losses in protected sectors due to international competition and the rising number of workers in suboptimal conditions. Addressing these global challenges requires international cooperation, which the International Labour Organization (ILO) sought to address with the Global Employment Agenda (GEA) introduced in 2003. Aligned with the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the target of halving poverty by 2015, the GEA underscores the importance of employment in combating poverty and social exclusion. It calls on governments, employers, workers' organizations, the

private sector, and civil society to prioritize freely chosen productive employment in their economic and social policies. The GEA aims to make employment a central element of economic and social policies, promoting the broader objective of Decent Work. Decent Work, one of the seven pillars of the GEA, emphasizes productivity, equity, and the quality of work. The Agenda outlines ten core elements, including trade and investment promotion, sustainable development, macroeconomic policy integration, decent employment, and entrepreneurship promotion, all of which are interconnected to mainstream employment as a developmental goal (Papola, 2007).

In this paper examines Employment Exchange data for Scheduled Caste (SC) jobseekers in India from 2010 to 2022. It reveals fluctuating registration trends, consistently low placement rates, and a steady increase in the live register, indicating ongoing employment challenges. The analysis also highlights the limited success of educated SC jobseekers in securing employment and a decline in job opportunities across SCs, STs, and OBCs. These findings underscore the persistent barriers faced by marginalized communities in accessing employment through these exchanges.

II. Literature Reviews

This literature explores the employment dynamics in India, highlighting the persistent gap between population growth and employment expansion despite ongoing efforts and developmental policies. Sudhakar et al. (2012) provide an analysis of organized sector employment trends from 1998 to

2010, revealing significant shifts in male and female employment that challenge traditional assumptions. Further, the interplay between population growth, labor force dynamics, and employment generation is examined through key indicators such as Labor Force Rate, Employment Rate, Unemployment Rate, and GDP Growth. Mohanty et al. (2023) use data from various sources, including the Economic Outlook and CEIC databases, to show a positive trend in post-reform employment, though COVID-19 disruptions are noted. The review advocates for a balanced approach, emphasizing rural sector development and leveraging the current crisis to align with India's Azadi Ki Amrit Mahotsav goals. An analysis of Himachal Pradesh's unemployment data (GOI, 2017) reveals disparities among social groups, with Scheduled Castes and Tribes experiencing notable imbalances, especially in urban areas. Gender disparities further complicate the issue. Rajawat (2003) highlights fundamental concerns regarding Scheduled Caste employment, noting regional variations and the inefficacy of reservation quotas, which fail to address the root issues and perpetuate unemployment. Thorat and Sabharwal (2006) explore non-farm employment trends among Scheduled Castes in rural areas from the 1980s to the 1990s, identifying higher participation in specific age groups and the impact of limited education on employment outcomes. The study underscores the relationship between education, employment, and economic outcomes. Additionally, Kumar and Sahu (2013) analyze NSSO panel data to explore skills and education trends among India's workforce, emphasizing the need for

effective economic policies. Aswathy and Manoj (2024) examine the social mobility of Scheduled Castes in Palakkad District, Kerala, highlighting ongoing challenges and the need for ICT adoption to improve their social and economic status.

III. Methodology

This paper employs a secondary data analysis approach to examine the employment landscape for Scheduled Caste (SC) jobseekers in India. It utilizes quantitative data from Employment Exchanges, analyzing registration, placement rates, and live register trends from 2010 to 2022. Key metrics such as Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) and placement ratios are calculated to assess long-term trends. Additionally, a literature review synthesizes insights from various studies on employment dynamics, regional disparities, and the impact of globalization. The analysis includes a comparative examination of vacancies and placements for SC, ST, and OBC categories, highlighting disparities and inefficiencies. By integrating these methodologies, the paper provides a comprehensive understanding of the

employment challenges faced by SC jobseekers, offering evidence-based recommendations for targeted employment policies and strategic interventions to address barriers faced by marginalized communities.

IV. Objectives of the Study

1. To examine employment trends for Scheduled Caste (SC) jobseekers in India from 2010 to 2022 and identify key barriers affecting their job placement rates.
2. To evaluate the effects of globalization and regional disparities on SC employment opportunities and propose policy improvements to enhance job access for marginalized communities.

V. Employment Trends and Challenges for Scheduled Caste Job Seekers in India (2010-2022)

The table reflects employment data for Scheduled Caste (SC) job seekers in India from 2010 to 2022, highlighting both registration and placement trends.

Table 1: Nationwide Employment Exchange data on jobseekers from the Scheduled Caste category spanning from 2010 to 2022. all India (In thousands)

Years	Registration	Placement	Live Register	Total LR	% of Placement to Registration	% increase in LR of SC over previous year	% of LR of SC to total LR
2010	684.2	32.3	6404.9	38826.9	4.7	1.9	16.5
2011	882.1	29.6	6682.2	40171.6	3.4	4.3	16.6
2012	1275.1	30.9	7166.3	44790.1	2.4	7.2	16
2013	1025.2	31.8	7291.9	46802.5	3.1	1.8	15.6
2014	766.1	22.3	7644.2	48261.1	2.9	4.8	15.8

2015	799.6	26.7	7048.1	43502.7	3.3	-7.8	16.2
2016	615.5	29.2	7135.3	43376.1	4.7	1.2	16.4
2017	437	31.3	7105.8	42444.9	7.2	-0.4	16.7
2018	395	32	6999.4	42122.3	8.1	-1.5	16.6
2019	465.4	24.1	7068.2	42405.1	5.2	1	16.7
2020	335.1	21.3	6995.5	42829.2	6.3	-1	16.3
2021	362	26.2	7031.2	44071.7	5.1	0.5	16
2022	709.9	38.7	7284.2	45717.7	5.5	3.6	15.9
CGAR in Percentage							
2010 to 2022	0.31	1.52	1.08	1.37	1.32	1.42	0.31

(Note: Year-end data)

Source: Government of India. (2023). Employment Exchange Statistics 2023. Ministry of Labour & Employment, Directorate General of Employment. New Delhi: Employment Directorate. Retrieved from www.ncs.gov.in.

Registrations showed variability, peaking at 1275.1 thousand in 2012 but generally declining in subsequent years, with a notable increase again in 2022 at 709.9 thousand. Despite these registration numbers, placements remained consistently low, with only minor improvements over the years, reaching 38.7 thousand in 2022. The percentage of placements relative to registrations remained modest, indicating limited success in securing employment through these exchanges.

The live register, representing the total number of SC job seekers actively looking for jobs, increased from 6404.9 thousand in 2010 to 7284.2 thousand in 2022. However, this growth was not linear, with slight declines in some years, such as 2015 and 2020. Despite the fluctuating numbers, SC job seekers consistently represented about 16% of the total live register of all job seekers, indicating their steady presence in the job market. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) over this period shows that while there was a slight increase in registrations (0.31%)

and placements (1.52%), the overall employment outcomes for SC job seekers remained constrained, with their percentage in the total live register remaining relatively stable. This data underscores the persistent challenges SC job seekers face in securing employment, despite consistent participation in the job market.

VI. Employment Trends for Educated Scheduled Caste Job Seekers in India (2010-2022)

The table presents data on jobseekers from the Scheduled Caste (SC) category who are educated, covering the years 2010 to 2022. It shows that registrations for educated SC jobseekers fluctuated, starting at 620.2 thousand in 2010, peaking at 1010.7 thousand in 2012, and declining in some years before rising again to 681.5 thousand in 2022. Despite these registration numbers, placement rates remained consistently low, with the percentage of placements relative to registrations declining from 5% in 2010 to 4.9% in 2022. The live register (LR) for

educated SC jobseekers also grew from 5036.2 thousand in 2010 to 6337.3 thousand in 2022, with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 1.93%, indicating a steady increase in the number of educated SCs actively seeking employment.

However, the data reveals a significant variation in the percentage of the live register of educated SC jobseekers relative to the total SC live register. This percentage increased from 78.6% in 2010 to

a high of 90.5% in 2013, before fluctuating and settling at 87% in 2022. The table shows that although the proportion of educated SCs in the total SC live register remained high, the placement success rate was low, reflecting the ongoing challenges faced by educated SC jobseekers in securing employment. The overall trends indicate a growing number of educated SC jobseekers, but with limited success in job placements, suggesting a need for more targeted employment interventions for this group.

Table 2: Jobseeker statistics for educated individuals from the Scheduled Caste in Employment Exchanges from 2010 to 2022: all India (in thousand)

Years	Registration	Placement	LR for Educated SC	Total LR for SC	% of placement to registration	% of LR of educated SC to total LR of SC
2010	620.2	30.8	5036.2	6404.9	5	78.6
2011	834.3	22.5	5450	6682.2	2.7	81.6
2012	1010.7	21.8	5917.1	7166.3	2.2	82.6
2013	594	20.6	6600.6	7291.9	3.5	90.5
2014	731.8	15.6	6692.9	7644.2	2.1	87.6
2015	516.4	16.9	6220	7048.1	3.3	88.2
2016	361.7	20.4	6066.6	7134.8	5.6	85
2017	189.1	28	3681.1	7105.8	14.8	51.8
2018	265.1	26.8	3958.7	6999.4	10.1	56.6
2019	318.1	21.6	3081.2	7068.2	6.8	43.6
2020	251.3	19.2	3041.1	6995.2	7.6	43.5
2021	348.2	22.6	6098.5	7031.2	5.7	86.7
2022	681.5	33.3	6337.3	7284.2	4.9	87
CAGR in Percentage						
2010 to 2022	0.79	0.65	1.93	1.08	-0.17	00.85

(Note: Year-end data)

Source: Government of India. (2023). Employment Exchange Statistics 2023. Ministry of Labour & Employment, Directorate General of Employment. New Delhi: Employment Directorate. Retrieved from www.ncs.gov.in

VII. Trends in Job Vacancies and Placements for SC, ST, and OBC Categories through Employment Exchanges (2010-2022)

The table provides an overview of the vacancies earmarked and filled for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC) through Employment Exchanges across India from 2010 to 2022. For the SC category, vacancies notified fluctuated, starting at 18.7 thousand in 2010 and

ending at 18.5 thousand in 2022. The percentage of vacancies filled compared to those notified also varied, peaking at 137.1% in 2019 but generally remaining lower in most other years. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) from 2010 to 2022 shows a slight decline in both vacancies notified (-0.9%) and vacancies filled (-1.5%) for SCs, indicating a downward trend in job opportunities for this group.

Table 3 Vacancies earmarked and filled by Employment Exchanges from 2010 to 2022: Nationwide (in thousands)

Years	Scheduled Caste			Scheduled Tribe			Other Backward Classes		
	vacancies notified	vacancies filled	% of vacancies filled to notified	vacancies notified	vacancies filled	% of vacancies filled to notified	vacancies notified	vacancies filled	% of vacancies filled to notified
2010	18.7	11.2	59.9	19.7	11.4	57.9	21.6	6.3	29.2
2011	18.6	10.7	57.5	21.7	11.5	53	31.6	10.8	34.2
2012	18.8	10.8	57.2	16.8	10.3	61	41.8	15.7	37.6
2013	20.4	10	49	16.6	10.5	63.3	32.9	12.9	39.3
2014	14.7	8.4	57.5	15.9	9	56.2	25.2	5.9	23.5
2015	25.7	7.4	28.9	13.5	5.4	40.1	10.3	5.3	51.9
2016	23.5	14.5	61.9	13.3	10.7	79.9	12.6	7.8	62.1
2017	19	15.2	79.6	21.6	11.3	52.3	14.3	3.8	26.6
2018	7	10	142.9	8.1	9	111.1	6	7	116.7
2019	6.8	9.3	137.1	11.9	11.9	99.9	2.8	2.6	93.4
2020	23.4	9.4	40	5.4	7	129.6	4	3.5	88.5
2021	13.2	12.5	94.7	8.6	8.4	97.7	4.3	3.7	86
2022	18.5	10.7	57.8	8.7	7.6	87.4	4.5	3.4	75.6
CAGR In Percentage									
2010 to 2022	-0.9	-1.5	-0.3	-6.6	-4.1	3.3	-11.5	-4.8	7.9

(Note: Year-end data)

Source: Government of India. (2023). Employment Exchange Statistics 2023. Ministry of Labour & Employment, Directorate General of Employment. New Delhi: Employment Directorate. Retrieved from www.ncs.gov.in

For the ST category, the number of vacancies notified decreased significantly, with a CAGR of -6.6%, reflecting fewer job openings over time. However, the

percentage of vacancies filled compared to those notified saw a slight improvement, with a CAGR of 3.3%, particularly in years like 2016 (79.9%) and 2020 (129.6%). This

suggests that while fewer vacancies were available, the efficiency in filling those vacancies improved over time. The OBC category experienced the most significant decline in vacancies notified, with a CAGR of -11.5%. Despite this, the percentage of vacancies filled to those notified showed a positive CAGR of 7.9%, indicating a better matching of job openings to candidates in this group. However, the overall number of filled vacancies remained low, with notable years like 2018 (116.7%) and 2019 (93.4%) showing better performance.

Overall, the data indicates a general decline in the number of vacancies notified across all categories, with varying success in filling those vacancies. SC and ST categories showed slight improvements in the efficiency of filling vacancies in certain years, while the OBC category showed better matching of job opportunities despite a sharp decline in available vacancies. The trends suggest that while some progress was made in filling available positions, the overall availability of jobs through Employment Exchanges declined over the 12-year period.

VIII. Main finding and Suggestions

The analysis of the employment landscape in India from 2010 to 2022 reveals persistent challenges for Scheduled Caste (SC) jobseekers, who continue to struggle with low placement rates despite significant participation in Employment Exchanges. The data shows that while there has been variability in registration numbers, the percentage of placements relative to registrations has remained consistently low, indicating limited success in securing employment through these channels. Additionally, the live register for SC

jobseekers has steadily increased, reflecting more individuals actively seeking jobs, yet this has not translated into better employment outcomes.

The study also uncovers a troubling decline in job vacancies notified across SC, Scheduled Tribe (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC) categories. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) for both vacancies notified and filled has been negative for these groups, suggesting that job opportunities have been shrinking over time. This trend is particularly concerning for marginalized communities who already face significant barriers in the job market. For educated SC jobseekers, the situation is similarly challenging. Despite an increase in the number of registrations, the placement rates have remained low, highlighting the ongoing difficulties educated SCs face in securing employment. This suggests that simply increasing educational attainment is not sufficient to overcome the structural barriers in the labor market.

To address these issues, there is an urgent need for targeted employment interventions that focus on improving job placement rates for SC, ST, and OBC categories. Policies should be designed to address the specific barriers these groups face, including discrimination, lack of access to quality education, and limited networking opportunities. Additionally, enhanced economic policies are essential to create a more inclusive labor market. This includes providing incentives for employers to hire from marginalized groups and implementing training programs that equip jobseekers with relevant skills. Furthermore, international cooperation and

strategic policy implementation are critical to creating sustainable job opportunities and promoting equitable economic growth. Aligning with global employment agendas and leveraging international partnerships can help address the persistent barriers faced by marginalized communities.

In conclusion, the employment landscape for SC, ST, and OBC jobseekers in India demonstrates significant challenges, with declining job opportunities and persistently low placement rates through Employment Exchanges. Despite some progress in filling available positions, the overall availability of jobs has decreased, particularly for marginalized communities. The challenges faced by educated SC jobseekers further highlight the need for more focused and effective interventions. Addressing these challenges requires targeted employment policies, enhanced economic strategies, and international cooperation to create a more inclusive and equitable job market.

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