Where does ascribed privilege get you in?
Structural and net effects of caste and religious belonging in India

Mathieu Ferry
Institut national d'études démographiques, France
Sciences Po, Observatoire Sociologique du Changement, France

Abstract

Socioeconomically advantaged upper castes tend to claim that Indian society is "post-caste," suggesting that individuals from historically marginalized castes and religious groups do not face specific social barriers when attempting to move into white-collar positions. Alleged intergenerational mobility and the emergence of a "new middle class" related to the growth of the private sector is widely used to counter affirmative action initiatives in higher education and public sector recruitment. In this article, I test these claims by examining Brahmin, lower caste Dalit and Muslim patterns of intergenerational class and educational mobility of father-child pairs. I point to the strong role of caste and religion in shaping one's destination, particularly when accessing top occupational positions in the private sector. These results question the meritocratic and casteless claims of the Indian "new middle class" in post-liberalization India, and they call for more encompassing policies reducing origin-based inequality.

Keywords: intergenerational mobility, middle class, merit, caste, religion, affirmative action, India

Corresponding author details:
Mathieu Ferry
Institut National d'études démographiques (Unité de Recherche 08)
9 cours des humanités
CS 50004
93322 Aubervilliers Cedex
France
mathieukferry@gmail.com

Introduction

A "new middle class" identity, allegedly based on merit, has developed in post-liberalized India (Fernandes, 2006). This emerging class category, made up of white-collar private sector job holders, suggests that ascribed privileges deriving from caste and religious identities have waned. Claiming that Indian society is "post-caste," the upper castes also deem existing affirmative action programmes in higher education and public employment obsolete (Subramanian, 2019). Yet, intergenerational class mobility remains remarkably low (Vaid, 2018). Does the promise of the meritocratic opening up of top occupational positions to individual effort—and not inherited ascribed privilege—really hold true?

Indian society presents a structured and encompassing stratification in terms of ascribed categories, resulting from caste membership. This form of ascription is characterized by endogamy—ensuring social closure, hierarchy—allowing for caste ranking, and hereditary occupations—favouring intergenerational class reproduction (Vaid, 2014). Though caste has sometimes been "enclosed in the non-modern realm of religion" (Mosse, 2019), it is deeply associated with socioeconomic inequality, in particular because lower castes remain stuck at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy while upper castes are more likely to hold top positions (Vaid, 2018). Occupational ranking associated with caste status, resources derived from caste networks, and discrimination concur to shape the significance of caste in the market economy (Mosse, 2019). Caste inequality cuts across religious affiliations and the latter are also a specific source of socioeconomic discrimination, particularly for Muslims (Saghal et al., 2021).

To counter privilege resulting from ascribed categories, affirmative action programmes reserve seats with lower admission requirements for marginalized caste groups, to ensure their minimum representation in higher education and public jobs, including in government and state-owned companies.[1] These policies effectively improve the educational attainment and public employment levels among these targeted groups. However, the overall effects remain limited (Cassan, 2019; Lee, 2021). First, public employment represents a low proportion of the total employed workforce (7 percent according to the Indian Human Development Survey). Second, quotas are not necessarily filled, possibly due to indifference on the part of the authorities. Finally, among public employees, lower castes remain over-represented in lower-status jobs (Deshpande, 2013).

The persistence of ascriptive inequalities, partly offset by affirmative action policies, leads us to study how caste and religion persist as forms of privilege in intergenerational mobility. I

[1] These comprise both Public Sector Undertakings and Public Sector Banks.

question the extent to which ascribed privilege corresponds to differences in social origins reproduced over generations, possibly mediated by differences in educational attainment. The role of ascribed privilege in social reproduction would then correspond to compositional effects: ascribed inequality would derive from unequal origins and educational achievements. I also ask whether the ascribed position provokes differentiated effects on educational outcomes when it comes to accessing top positions, thus pointing to discrimination. I dissect this latter mechanism by examining access to the highest positions in the public sector, where affirmative action policies are implemented, versus the private sector where they are not.

Existing empirical studies rarely provide estimates of the intergenerational fate of Brahmins, the highest Hindu caste. Besides, information on parents' class and educational position are rarely available in large-scale surveys in India. Here I use the Indian Human Development Survey, 2011-2012. I compare the privileged caste group, Brahmins, and two disadvantaged and stigmatized caste and religious groups, Dalits, and Muslims. I outline the strong differences in class and educational structure between these groups, which points to the role of ascribed identity in shaping one's destiny. Then, analysing net effects in access to professional occupations, I point to the strong roles of class origin and educational attainment as compositional effects of ascribed status privilege. Further, under the same conditions, Dalits are less likely than Brahmins to reach top occupational positions in the private sector, where they do not benefit from affirmative action policies at the time of recruitment, and where the weight of origin plays a stronger role in the selection process.

Overall, the conversion from a position in an ascription-based hierarchy to a class position fosters social reproduction, especially among the top positions in the private sector, which have become prominent in the post-liberalisation Indian context since the 1990s. While these private sector professional workers correspond to the occupational core of the self-proclaimed "new middle class," these results contribute to questioning the meritocratic discourses portraying this group. The analysis indeed suggests that a strong "glass ceiling" controls access to top positions (Friedman and Laurison, 2019) where aspiring individuals are constantly reminded of both their class origin and ascribed status (Naudet, 2018).

In the following section I first discuss how caste and religious groups occupy different positions in the class structure, while outlining the specific features of the Indian labour structure. I then present the data and the tools used in this analysis before examining intergenerational mobility flows. In the conclusion, I discuss the role of ascribed categories in shaping the class structure and the political actions that could be implemented to tackle it.

Intergenerational mobility in India: a hidden and incomplete picture

Despite economic liberalisation that led to an acceleration in economic growth from the 1990s onwards (Balakrishnan, 2017), the Indian labour structure still shows a sizeable agricultural sector and an enduring large informal economy. The period is associated with rising economic inequalities (Chancel and Piketty, 2017), characterized by persistent poverty deriving from "jobless growth" (Nayyar, 2017), nonetheless accompanied by a growing "new middle class," holding white-collar private sector jobs (Fernandes, 2006). Concomitantly, ascribed categories continue to shape the fate of workers.

Caste and class congruence

As an ascribed category, caste refers to inequalities based on birth and descent. Caste and occupation are traditionally associated since one of the distinctive features of caste is the inheritance of occupations (Vaid, 2014). Though the labour structure has evolved, caste is not a relic of the past or confined to rural areas (Deshpande, 2011). In her work on the congruence between caste and class, Vaid (2012, 2018) notes a strong association between both social dimensions for the upper and lower classes. For instance, she shows that ex-untouchable Dalits are over-represented among the lowest skilled manual labourers such as sweepers. At the other end of the occupational spectrum, the over-representation of high castes has been particularly highlighted among Information Technology workers (Upadhya, 2007), engineers (Krishna, 2014) or senior civil servants (Benbabaali, 2008). Overall, different social mechanisms such as discrimination on the labour market (as a renewed form of untouchability, Deshpande 2011), caste-based social networks (Mosse, 2019) and differences in cultural and economic resources between castes (Deshpande, 2004) may contribute to the continuing association of caste and class.

As the largest religious minority in India, the Muslim community also faces discrimination (Saghal et al., 2021), overall its socioeconomic well-being is lower than that of Hindus (Gayer and Jaffrelot, 2012), and it may even have been intensely marginalized in the past decade (Asher et al., 2020; Jaffrelot and Kalaiyarasan, 2019).[2]

The persistence of caste and class congruence should be read through the prism of the existence of affirmative action programmes in higher education and public sector employment (Thorat and Senapati, 2006), guaranteeing quotas for marginalized caste groups (Deshpande, 2013).

[2] Importantly, caste is not only a category distinguishing Hindus, but also other religious minorities, which are then also socioeconomically segmented along caste lines, see in particular Gautier and Levesque (2020). Given the strong stigma faced by Muslims, and due to data size limitations for religious minorities, I focus here on the fate of caste among Hindus and on the Muslim minority.

The Constitution recognizes three groups that benefit from reservation policies. Since 1950, Scheduled Castes, mainly composed of previously untouchable castes, and Scheduled Tribes, also called Adivasis and comprising indigenous groups, receive preferential treatment in the light of their historical discrimination. The Other Backward Classes, composed of castes that are socially, economically or culturally "backward" (called middle and low castes below) have been included in affirmative action programmes since the 1990s.[3] Notably, these policies do not apply to the private sector even though studies report experiences of caste and religious discrimination in private sector employment, including for post-university job seekers (Thorat and Neuman, 2012).

Low intergenerational mobility

Despite these policies, existing international comparisons show that India is a country with a high level of social reproduction. Compared to a large pool of countries, India ranks as a country with high intergenerational education and income correlation indices (fathers' incomes are highly correlated with their sons' incomes, Narayan et al. 2018). Clark's (2014) project of using surnames to study mobility confirms that India has the lowest occupational mobility level among all studied countries.

More specifically, studies on Indian mobility highlight a higher degree of educational mobility than income or occupational mobility (Iversen et al. 2017). Rural mobility is lower than urban mobility and is the site of non-negligible downward mobility, possibly as a result of increased rural-to-urban migration since the 1990s (Vakulabharanam and Motiram, 2016). Still, comparing the decades before (pre-1990) and after (post 2000) liberalization, Asher et al. (2020) demonstrate that intergenerational educational mobility has not increased over time, despite improvements in educational outcomes. In particular, Muslim upward mobility has dropped, while educational attainment has slightly improved for historically disadvantaged caste groups as a result of affirmative action (Cassan, 2019; Lee, 2021).

By and large, many studies concentrating on India suffer from data constraints resulting in a potential selection bias. Their estimates are based on co-residential father-child pairs, given the large share of live-in extended family units (e.g. Azam and Bhatt, 2015 or Hnatkovska, Lahiri, and Paul 2012). This may affect mobility estimates and Emran, Greene, and Shilpi (2017) show that the most commonly used measures are biased downward. The IHDS (used by Iversen et al., 2017), which I take advantage of now, is one of the few publicly available large-scale

[3] Affirmative action policies legally guarantee that 15 per cent of seats are reserved for Scheduled Castes, 7.5 percent for Scheduled Tribes and 27.5 percent for Other Backward Classes at the recruitment phase.

surveys asking retrospective questions about fathers' educational attainment and occupation. Using retrospectively collected information on parental position possibly involves some memory bias, but using these data is more representative of the whole population.

Data and method

Data: a large-scale survey in the Indian subcontinent

Within the IHDS, I look at male household heads or partners (in cases where the head of the household is a woman) for which fathers' educational attainment occupational positions "for most of [their] life"[4] is recorded. For women, I look at women who responded to the women's questionnaire in which a question on parental educational attainment was asked (unfortunately, not occupation). Eligible respondents correspond to ever-married women aged between 15 and 49 years old in the previous survey wave of 2004-2005. In this survey, intergenerational father-son pairs are hence provided for all male household heads (or husband heads) and father-daughter pairs are provided for eligible women. I focus on individuals aged 20 years old and above who are not retired or unfit for work, and who declared not being engaged solely in household work. Female occupational positions are usually poorly recorded in Indian large-scale surveys, underestimating their participation into the labour force (Desai and Joshi, 2019), partly due to the fuzziness between domestic and unpaid economic work (Deshpande and Kabeer, 2019). In the present survey, only 49.5 per cent of women aged 20 years and above declared an occupation (N_{Male}=31,713 and N_{Female}=19,294).

In the survey, occupations are categorized according to the National Classification of Occupations (1968) two-digit scheme based on the International Classification of Occupations (1966). I use the class schema suggested by Iversen, Krishna, and Sen (2017) to code these occupations. Groupings are based on social standing and skills, as inspired by Ganzeboom, De Graaf, and Treiman (1992) and the authors have also attempted to take into account the caste stigma attached to occupations. Professional workers (mainly composed of teachers, owner-managers, executives) are considered upper class. They are followed by clerical workers (this includes shopkeepers). Farmers represent a substantial share of workers: ideally, one would have liked to differentiate them according to the size of their land ownership and tenancy, but it is not possible for the class of origin. Vocational occupations mainly correspond to drivers, salesmen and tailors). In the case of labourers, my classification does not differentiate

[4] Unfortunately, other class markers such as income, material wealth, agricultural land or business ownership are unknown for fathers.

agricultural labourers from construction workers (both classified as labourers), which makes sense given the seasonal permutations between these occupations at the lower level of the class structure (a challenging phenomenon to grasp using residence-based surveys, Thachil 2018). Given the empirical interest in the public-private sector distinction among professional workers in the analysis, it is worth noting that overall 7 per cent of all workers in this study report working in the public sector, a share that rises to 26 per cent among professional workers.[5]

I account for educational attainment by distinguishing non-literate individuals (no schooling or less than a year of school attendance), primary school (grades up to 5 and 8), secondary school (grades up to 10 and 12) and post-secondary achievement (all individuals who have studied further).

Large-scale surveys in India rarely ask respondents about their caste membership (Deshpande and John, 2010). The IHDS asked the household head to declare his or her caste and whether it corresponds to the Brahmin caste or to an administrative affirmative action category implemented in India.[6] The survey also recorded respondents' religions.

Table 1 presents the proportion of the population of interest for each of the variables used in this study. In the results, I specifically focus on Brahmins (the highest Hindu castes), Dalits (the most marginalized Hindu castes, identified as an affirmative action category: the Scheduled Castes) and Muslims (the largest religious minority).[7] Estimates for other numerically important groups are provided in the appendix.

Method: structural and net effects in intergenerational mobility

Methodologically, I first use Sankey diagrams as presented for instance by Laurison, Dow, and Chernoff (2020). They provide a visually readable picture of both the origin and destination social structure and of the mobility flows. I first compare the picture of class structure and mobility between ascribed groups for men. I also compare these ascribed categories in terms of educational attainment, looking again at origins (father's position) and destination, for both men and women.

Then, I model the probability of accessing a professional occupation with binomial logistic regressions. The response variable is accessing a professional occupation, for which

[5] The public sector share amounts to 13 per cent among clerical workers and 10 per cent among vocational workers. Farmers and labourers never work in the public sector.

[6] These questions concern the household head's caste, which is also largely valid for other household members given the large caste endogamy in the Indian context (Ray et al., 2020). As analysed in Ferry (2019), Hindu individuals routinely self-identify to a caste and to a corresponding category of affirmative action, indicating that questions related to caste are well accepted by respondents (this is not the case among other religious minorities).

[7] Individuals who declared belonging to this religious category are counted as Muslims irrespective of their caste.

educational attainment is supposedly the highest (Vaid, 2014). These models assess the respective weights of caste and religious membership, class origin, educational origin and educational attainment in accessing top occupational positions. I use a step-up strategy from Model 1 to Model 3. Model 4 tests whether educational attainment has differentiated effects between caste and religious groups by adding an interaction term between the two variables. Finally, I extend these models in Model 5 by using a multinomial logistic regression with the same independent variables. In this last model, the response variable differentiates between public and private sector professional occupations. The latter positions can be accessed through affirmative action policies, so this last model provides an indication of whether these policies reduce caste and religious prejudice at the time of job recruitment.

All the models also include control for the residential area, geographical region and age. Models are estimated separately for men and women given the differences in the sample composition and the availability of variables in the respective populations.

[Table 1 about here - Descriptive statistics of sons and daughters aged 20 years and above declaring an occupation]

Note: 4.4 per cent of the male population under analysis are Brahmins. N_{Male}=31,713 and N_{Female}=19,294.

Results

Increasing caste and religious inequality in the class structure resulting from different mobility patterns

The destination class structure shows contrasting differences between Brahmin, Dalit and Muslim men (Figure 1). While 22 per cent of Brahmins are professional workers, this is the case of only 5 per cent of Dalits. Inversely, while less than one tenth of Brahmins are labourers, nearly half of Dalits are. At the top and at the bottom of the caste hierarchy, caste and class congruence is very strong. In terms of the class structure, Muslims stand in-between as 8 per cent of them are professional workers, while 28 per cent are labourers. Possibly, unaccounted for caste differences among Muslims would explain this segmentation.

These contrasts have not waned over generations. On the contrary, structural class differences increase because upper class immobility is higher for Brahmins than for Dalits (and again, Muslims stand in-between), while lower class immobility is higher for Dalits than for Brahmins (here, Muslims are much closer to Dalits). Besides, patterns of upward class mobility are always more frequent for Brahmins than for Dalits and Muslims: e.g. among Brahmins 13 per cent of farmers' sons become professional workers, but in the case of Dalits and Muslims the

figure is lower than 5 per cent. On the contrary, patterns of downward mobility are less frequent among Brahmins than for Dalits and Muslims: e.g. 7 per cent of Brahmin farmers' sons become labourers, whereas the figure for Dalits is 29 per cent and 23 per cent for Muslims.

It should also be noted that farmers' upward mobility to the professional and clerical class is likely to depend on the conversion of land capital into educational capital, where Brahmins are better-off than Dalits. Indeed, among those who remain farmers in the destination class, 24 per cent of Brahmins own more than 5 acres of agricultural land, as against 8 per cent of Dalits and 12 per cent of Muslims. Inversely, only 9 per cent of Brahmins own less than 0.5 acre of land, but 27 per cent of Dalits and 24 per cent of Muslims do.[8] Besides, Brahmins are the most urbanized group: 42 per cent of them reside in urban settings, while this is the case for only 10 per cent of Dalits. On this point, downward social mobility and social reproduction patterns in Muslim lower classes are all the more remarkable as 40 per cent of them reside in urban areas. Finally, it is worth noting that patterns of extreme upward mobility are rare overall, but even less common for Dalits and Muslims: while almost a third of Brahmin labourers' sons are professional or clerical workers, less than one tenth of Dalit labourers' sons, and less than one fifth of Muslim labourers' sons are.

Though female class mobility flows cannot be established, existing studies suggest that women experience higher social immobility (Vaid, 2018) so that the weight of caste and religion in shaping their class destiny is even stronger.[9]

[**Figure 1 about here – Class origin and destination by ascribed category among men**]

Note: $N_{Brahmin}$= 1,466, N_{Dalit}= 6,911, N_{Muslim}= 3,641. The numbers to the right of each class origin and destination give the proportion in each flow respective to the number of working male fathers or sons in the origin or destination category. For instance, 0.44 indicates that among Brahmin individuals hailing from professional families, 44 per cent of sons are in the same position. 0.35 (on the right of the destination bar) indicates that among Brahmin male individuals working in professional/clerical positions, 35 percent of their fathers were in the same position.

Educational mobility: opening up to the masses?

Upward mobility is partly driven by educational attainment, particularly when it comes to accessing professional and clerical positions. For this reason, it is worth considering

[8] Figures computed based on IHDS estimates. One concern is that some of the flows of downward mobility from farmers to labourers may stem from the uncorrected effect of labourers counted as such because they have not yet inherited their fathers' agricultural land. Though this effect may be present, downward mobility from farmer to labourer is still lower for Brahmins than for Dalits and Muslims.

[9] From Table 1, a larger share of women than men declaring an occupation are professional workers, but they are concentrated among Brahmins (36 per cent of Brahmin women are professional workers). Besides, a larger share of women are also labourers (Table 1), a category of workers that is more strongly associated with Dalits (59 per cent of Dalit women are labourers).

educational attainment mobility patterns between generations (Figure 2a and 2b). For all groups, educational mobility (in particular, upward mobility) is higher than class mobility.

Strikingly, the structure of educational attainment is very different for Brahmins, Dalits and Muslims. For both men and women, while a third of Brahmin fathers were non-literate, nearly three-fourths of Dalit fathers and about two-thirds of Muslim fathers were. Inversely, about 10 per cent of Brahmin fathers held a post-secondary degree but only 1 per cent of Dalit and Muslim fathers did.

Educational attainment improves between generations, though more dramatically for men than women, as a result women's educational attainment ends up being lower than men's. Besides, the caste and religious contrast for the children's generation remains important, especially for women.[10]

Inequalities in educational attainment derive from lower rates of intergenerational educational improvement for Dalits and Muslims, along with higher rates of educational reproduction for these groups. While there has been an intergenerational improvement in educational attainment for all groups, the share of Brahmin men who remain stuck in non-literate positions over generations is very low compared to Dalit and Muslim men. Further, among all groups the share of women who remain stuck in non-literate positions is higher than for men and higher reproduction rates in non-literate positions are also clearly visible among Dalits and Muslims as compared to Brahmins.

Far from opening up to all individuals, educational mobility thus remains strongly shaped by gender, caste and religious position.

[**Figure 2a about here – Educational attainment origin and destination by ascribed category among men**]

Note: $N_{Brahmin}$= 1,466, N_{Dalit}= 6,911, N_{Muslim}= 3,641.

[**Figure 2b about here – Educational attainment origin and destination by ascribed category among women**]

Note: The figure only shows women who declared an occupation. $N_{Brahmin}$= 786, N_{Dalit}= 4,344, N_{Muslim}= 1,964.

The social origins of professionals

How does ascription shape the odds of acquiring a top occupational position? How can the direct effect of ascription be broken down through social origin and intergenerational mobility?

[10] Breaking down women by employment status (declaring an occupation or not) shows that Brahmins in the labour force have slightly higher educational attainment than non-Brahmins but that Dalits within the labour force have slightly lower educational attainment than non-Dalits (figures not shown here). In all cases, female educational attainment is lower than men's and vast differences exist according to ascribed status.

I model the odds of accessing professional occupations (Table 2a and 2b). The probability of accessing professional occupations is strongly shaped by caste and religious membership (Model 1). Muslims and Dalits have a lower probability than Brahmins of accessing a professional occupation, and the difference is the largest for Dalits, especially among women: they are 23 per cent less likely to become professionals as compared to Brahmin men. Decomposing this effect and adding inherited educational capital as a predictor (Model 2) suggests that part of the ascribed privilege derives from the unequal transmission of educational capital. The introduction of men's class origin in Model 2a shows the stronger effects of not having a professional father on becoming a professional and it substantially reduces the effect associated with men with non-literate fathers. Social origin is hence not only about educational capital but first and foremost about class origin. Finally, introducing educational attainment (Model 3) shows that non-literate men are 26 per cent less likely to become professionals as compared to those holding post-secondary degrees (educational attainment plays a stronger role for women since the penalty associated with not holding a post-secondary degree is higher). Besides, the inclusion of one's educational attainment considerably reduces the penalty associated with the father's educational origins for both men and women, but class origin continues to play a substantial role (Model 3a), suggesting a strong direct effect of class origin on accessing a professional position (Figure 3).[11]

After accounting for social origin and educational attainment, caste and religious belonging have a lower but still significant impact on class destination. The effects of caste and religion identified in Model 1 are hence partly compositional effects related to class origin and educational attainment.

[Table 2a about here – Binomial logistic regression analyses of being a professional worker (Models 1 to 3, male population)]

Note: $^{+}$: p<0.1; *: p<0.05; **: p<0.01; ***: p<0.001. Coefficients are presented along with the standard error in parentheses as in all subsequent models. AME indicates the Average Marginal Effect.

[Table 2b about here – Binomial logistic regression analyses of being a professional worker (Models 1 to 3, female population)]

[Figure 3 about here – Predicted probabilities of accessing a professional occupation according to one's ascribed position and occupational origin (Model 3a, male population)]

Note: Predicted probabilities are computed at the reference modality of the variables taken into account in the model, i.e. for a man whose father had attained a post-secondary level, holding a post-secondary degree, and of

[11] I tested an interaction effect between class origin and ascribed position, but the model did not show significant differences.

average age (47 years old), residing in an urban setting, in a state of central India. 95 per cent confidence shown in this figure and the following ones.

Differentiated returns on educational attainment according to ascribed status

To assess whether educational attainment shows differentiated effects according to caste and religious position, I introduce an interaction term between the ascribed position and educational level (Model 4 in Table 3). Among ascribed categories, only the coefficient for Muslim men is substantial and significant. This coefficient should be read in the light of the reference category of educational attainment (post-secondary degree). Hence, at the highest levels of educational attainment, and after controlling for other social endowments, only Muslim men face a penalty in accessing professional occupations (as illustrated in Figure 4). Then, for both men and women, the interaction coefficients associated with educational attainment and being a Dalit are substantial and significant (but not for Muslims).

[Table 3 about here – Interaction and lower-level coefficients between ascribed position and educational attainment (Model 4, male and female population)]

[Figure 4 – Predicted probabilities of accessing a professional occupation according to one's ascribed position and educational attainment (Model 4, male and female population)]

Note: Predicted probabilities are computed at the reference modality of the variables taken into account in the models, i.e. for an individual whose father had attained a post-secondary level (and was a professional worker, in the model on the male population), and of average age (47 for men, 37 for women), residing in an urban setting, in a state of central India.

The weight of social origins according to the sector of employment

This last model suggests that ascription plays a substantial role when Dalits do not possess the highest educational credentials, but if they do its effects are more limited in contrast to Muslim men who face a penalty even if they hold the highest credentials. The absence of penalty for Dalits may result from affirmative action policies in job recruitment, which efficiently address prejudice based on ascribed group membership.[12] Since these policies are only implemented in public sector employment, I analyse the odds of accessing public, as compared to private, professional occupations in a multinomial regression model (Model 5) using the same covariate as in Model 3 (or 3a for men).

First, computing the predicted probabilities of accessing a public or private sector profession for Brahmins, Dalits and Muslims with the most privileged endowments demonstrates important contrasts based on ascribed status depending on the sector of employment (Figure

[12] If this hypothesis holds true, the difference of probability observed for Muslims then stems from the absence of any affirmative action policy for this category (only certain sections of Muslims are included as Other Backward Classes, and the implementation is more recent).

5). For both men and women, Dalits are more likely to access public rather than private sector professional occupations, while it is the contrary for Brahmins and Muslims. Dalits possibly take advantage of the affirmative action policies in public service, which are non-existent in the private sector. This result possibly suggests the continuing role of categorical discrimination and social and economic advantages related to ascribed categories in class destination. In sectors without affirmative action policies at the time of recruitment, non-privileged groups are less likely to be recruited even though they hail from the same class background and hold the same educational credentials.

[Figure 5 about here – Predicted probabilities of accessing a public or private sector professional occupation according to one's ascribed position (Model 5, male and female population)]

Note: Predicted probabilities are computed at the reference modality of the variables taken into account in the models, i.e. for an individual who held a post-secondary degree, whose father had attained a post-secondary level (and was a professional worker, in the model on the male population), and of average age (47 for men, 37 for women), residing in an urban setting, in a state of central India.

In addition, social origin measured as father's class for men has a stronger effect on accessing private sector in comparison to public sector professional positions (Table 4). Non-professional workers' sons face a penalty of about 9 per cent in terms of access to private sector professional positions, but it is only about 4 per cent when it comes to accessing public sector professional positions. Though the impact of the father's educational achievement is not substantial in either case, it seems that women with non-literate fathers face a stronger penalty in accessing private sector professional positions as compared to public sector jobs. Inversely, educational attainment has a stronger effect on accessing public sector, as compared to private sector professional occupations: e.g. non-literate women are 34 per cent less likely to access a public sector professional position when compared with men with post-secondary degrees but this penalty falls to 9 per cent when it comes to accessing private sector professional occupations. In addition, ascription matters more substantially in access to private sector rather than public sector professional occupations for both men and women. Clearly, the inheritance of privileged endowments is far more important for access to top positions in the private sector. Conversely, despite recurrent criticisms of affirmative action, perceived as non-meritocratic (Subramanian, 2019), the path to accessing top public sector positions seems fairer, in the sense that occupational returns on education are less subject to caste position.

[Table 4 about here – Multinomial logistic regression analysis of being a public-sector or a private-sector professional worker (Model 5, male and female population)]

Discussion

In the Indian context, strong differences in the class structure between caste and religious groups point to the role of ascribed identities in shaping one's class destiny. The strong weight of ascription particularly characterizes access to private sector professional positions, an occupational sector which has grown vastly in post-1990 India, and corresponds to the "new middle class" (Fernandes, 2006). Despite the assertion of merit as a driver to access these positions, social barriers are much stronger when it comes to accessing the top positions in the private rather than the public sector.

Importantly, though class immobility is high there is evidence that the class structure changes over generations, even though the agricultural sector remains a predominant employer. Besides, intergenerational improvements in educational attainment for all caste and religious groups are also clearly identified. But class and educational inequalities remain important between ascribed categories: Dalits and Muslims always fare less well than Brahmins. Overall, this picture of the unequal class structure sheds light on ascription advantages resulting from compositional privileges—class origin and educational achievement—and discriminatory mechanisms when affirmative action is not implemented. It outlines the resources that privileged groups are able to draw upon to ensure the conversion of their position from an ascription-based hierarchy to a class position.

Despite reservation policies for socioeconomically marginalized groups, educational attainment inequalities persist over generations. The limitation of reserved quotas for public higher education and jobs ensures the persistence of major caste inequalities in educational attainment and in the class structure (Thorat et al., 2005). Indeed, public universities and institutes account for an ever-smaller share of students in higher education given the continual expansion of private education (Varghese, 2016). Enforcing reservation policies in private higher education and in the private sector would help reduce class inequalities between castes. But this will not suffice, as a sizeable share of Dalits and Muslims with higher education do not manage to obtain professional positions, highlighting the unequal conversion of degrees into class positions. Education is then a "contradictory resource," promising upward mobility but ultimately reinforcing systems of inequality with a labour structure that does not offer corresponding qualified positions (Jeffrey et al., 2004). In fact, it is possible that the non-conversion of degrees into professional positions in rural areas partly derives from geographical immobility, since the more educated people who migrate tend to outperform non-migrants socioeconomically at their destination (Vakulabharanam and Motiram, 2016).

Besides, higher education also promotes Brahmin supremacy, which renders caste privilege invisible in the name of meritocracy. On the contrary, lower castes benefiting from reservation policies are often regarded as intellectually inferior (Subramanian, 2019). The elimination of students from disadvantaged groups during the course of their higher education curriculum ensures their lower outcomes on the professional market after graduation (Henry and Ferry, 2017). Further, on the one hand, discriminatory processes and biased representations of young graduates belonging to low or Muslim communities constitute barriers to obtaining top positions in the class structure, where recruiters tend to privilege cultural cohesion and homophily (Thorat and Neuman, 2012). On the other hand, when accessing the highest professional occupations, Dalits perceive themselves as the representatives of a "community in struggle" and continue to maintain a strong solidarity with their group of origin (Naudet, 2018), which mirrors their difficulty in integrating the dominant groups. Social justice policies hence need to address the maintenance and renewal of ideologies supporting Brahmin supremacy and caste prejudice.

Meanwhile, the sole focus on the role of education in social mobility may hinder other mechanisms of social and economic inheritance prevailing in India, thus overlooking the structure of advantage bestowed by caste on economic markets (Mosse, 2018). The caste-unequal distribution of economic capital—whether in terms of financial assets (Zacharias and Vakulabharanam, 2011), agricultural land (Himanshu et al., 2016) or business ownership (Deshpande and Sharma, 2016)—is a strong driver of social immobility. The role of caste on the market then also implies the maintenance of social capital, which is sometimes institutionalized in associations. The cultivation of caste cohesion ensures the maintenance of caste as an interest group, for instance among business circles (Ponniah, 2017), permitting opportunity hoarding and thus facilitating class reproduction. At the peak of the economic spectrum, Indian top CEOs and chairmen often hold their positions as heirs to family dynasties and do not require further legitimization by acquiring prestigious credentials, unlike their counterparts in other countries (Naudet et al., 2018). Stronger economic redistribution policies thus need to be implemented.

This study hence sheds light on a strong and persistent "glass ceiling" (Friedman and Laurison, 2019) that limits individuals belonging to the lowest Hindu caste—Dalits, and Muslims, the most stigmatized religious minority in the Indian subcontinent, in comparison to Brahmins. Marginalized categories hence face strong social barriers when they attempt to obtain a top occupational position and this partially, but not only, derives from their class origin. Meanwhile, social closure in terms of ascription persists at the top of the occupational structure.

Discourses on belonging to the “middle class” in post-liberalisation India hence appear as a “hegemonic aspiration” (Fernandes and Heller, 2006) which masks strong persisting class, caste and religious privilege.

Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank Jeanne Ganault, Flavien Ganter, Jules Naudet, Patrick Präg, Olivier Roueff and the participants of the CREST sociology doctoral workshop who have read and commented on previous versions of this manuscript, as well as the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments. I also thank Renuka George for proofreading the paper. Any errors or omissions remain of course my own.

References

Asher S, Novosad P and Rafkin C (2020) *Intergenerational Mobility in India: New Methods and Estimates Across Time, Space, and Communities*. April. Dartmouth University.

Azam M and Bhatt V (2015) Like Father, Like Son? Intergenerational Educational Mobility in India. *Demography* 52(6): 1929–1959.

Balakrishnan P (2017) Markets, Growth and Social Opportunity: India since 1991. *Economic and Political Weekly* 52(2): 49–54.

Benbabaali D (2008) Questioning the Role of the Indian Administrative Service in National Integration. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*. Available at: https://samaj.revues.org/633?lang=fr (accessed 11 August 2016).

Cassan G (2019) Affirmative action, education and gender: Evidence from India. *Journal of Development Economics* 136: 51–70. DOI: 10.1016/j.jdeveco.2018.10.001.

Chancel L and Piketty T (2017) *Indian income inequality, 1922-2014: From British Raj to Billionaire Raj?* 11, WID.world, July. World Wealth and Income Database.

Clark G (2014) *The Son Also Rises: Surnames and the History of Social Mobility*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Desai S and Joshi O (2019) The Paradox of Declining Female Work Participation in an Era of Economic Growth. *The Indian Journal of Labour Economics* 62(1): 55–71.

Deshpande A (2011) *The Grammar of Caste: Economic Discrimination in Contemporary India*. 1 edition. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, USA.

Deshpande A (2013) *Affirmative Action in India: Oxford India Short Introductions*. New Delhi ; Oxford: OUP India.

Deshpande A and Kabeer N (2019) *(In)visibility, care and cultural barriers: the size and shape of women's work in India*. 04/19, Discussion papers series in economics. Haryana, India: Ashoka University.

Deshpande A and Sharma S (2016) Disadvantage and discrimination in self-employment: caste gaps in earnings in Indian small businesses. *Small Business Economics* 46(2): 325–346.

Deshpande S (2004) *Contemporary India: A Sociological View*. New Delhi: Viking.

Deshpande S and John ME (2010) The Politics of Not Counting Caste. *Economic and Political Weekly* 45(25): 39–42.

Emran MS, Greene W and Shilpi F (2017) When Measure Matters: Coresidency, Truncation Bias, and Intergenerational Mobility in Developing Countries. *Journal of Human Resources*. University of Wisconsin Press. Available at: http://jhr.uwpress.org/content/early/2017/04/18/jhr.53.3.0216-7737R1 (accessed 19 April 2020).

Fernandes L (2006) *India's New Middle Class: Democratic Politics in an Era of Economic Reform*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Fernandes L and Heller P (2006) Hegemonic Aspirations. *Critical Asian Studies* 38(4): 495–522.

Ferry M (2019) *Caste Links: Quantifying social identities using open-ended questions*. 2019–1, OSC papers. Observatoire Sociologique du Changement.

Friedman S and Laurison D (2019) *The Class Ceiling: Why It Pays to Be Privileged*. Bristol, UK ; Chicago, IL: Policy Press.

Ganzeboom HBG, De Graaf PM and Treiman DJ (1992) A standard international socio-economic index of occupational status. *Social Science Research* 21(1): 1–56.

Gautier L and Levesque J (2020) Introduction: Historicizing Sayyid-ness: Social Status and Muslim Identity in South Asia. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 30(3). Cambridge University Press: 383–393.

Gayer L and Jaffrelot C (eds.) (2012) *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. Comparative politics and international studies series. London: Hurst.

Henry O and Ferry M (2017) When Cracking the JEE is not Enough. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal* (15). Available at: https://samaj.revues.org/4291 (accessed 19 August 2017).

Himanshu, Jha P and Rodgers G (eds.) (2016) *The Changing Village in India: Insights from Longitudinal Research*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Hnatkovska V, Lahiri A and Paul S (2012) Castes and Labor Mobility. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 4(2): 274–307.

Iversen V, Krishna A and Sen K (2017) Rags to Riches? Intergenerational Occupational Mobility in India. *Economic and Political Weekly* 52(44): 107–114.

Jaffrelot C and Kalaiyarasan A (2019) On socio-economic indicators, Muslim youth fare worse than SCs and OBCs. *The Indian Express*, 1 November. New Delhi. Available at: https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/muslim-community-youth-india-marginalisation-6096881/ (accessed 25 November 2020).

Jeffrey C, Jeffery R and Jeffery P (2004) Degrees without Freedom: The Impact of Formal Education on Dalit Young Men in North India. *Development and Change* 35(5): 963–986.

Krishna A (2014) Examining the Structure of Opportunity and Social Mobility in India: Who Becomes an Engineer? *Development and Change* 45(1): 1–28.

Laurison D, Dow D and Chernoff C (2020) Class Mobility and Reproduction for Black and White Adults in the United States: A Visualization. *Socius* 6. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023120960959 (accessed 3 November 2020).

Lee A (2021) Does Affirmative Action Work? Evaluating India's Quota System. *Comparative Political Studies* 54(9). SAGE Publications Inc: 1534–1564. DOI: 10.1177/0010414021989755.

Mosse D (2018) Caste and development: Contemporary perspectives on a structure of discrimination and advantage. *World Development* 110: 422–436.

Mosse D (2019) The Modernity of Caste and the Market Economy. *Modern Asian Studies*.

Narayan A, Van der Weide R, Cojocaru A, et al. (2018) *Fair Progress? Economic Mobility Across Generations Around the World*. Washington, DC: World Bank. Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/10986/28428.

Naudet J (2018) *Stepping into the Elite: Trajectories of Social Achievement in India, France, and the United States* (tran. R George). New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press.

Naudet J, Allorant A and Ferry M (2018) Heirs, corporate aristocrats and 'Meritocrats': the social space of top CEOs and Chairmen in India. *Socio-Economic Review* 16(2): 307–339.

Nayyar D (2017) Economic Liberalisation in India: Then and Now. *Economic and Political Weekly* 52(2): 41–48.

Ponniah U (2017) Reproducing Elite Lives: Women in Aggarwal Family Businesses. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal* (15). Available at: http://journals.openedition.org/samaj/4280 (accessed 1 July 2018).

Ray T, Roy Chaudhuri A and Sahai K (2020) Whose education matters? An analysis of inter caste marriages in India. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 176: 619–633. DOI: 10.1016/j.jebo.2020.02.011.

Saghal N, Evans J, Salazar AM, et al. (2021) *Religion in India: Tolerance and Segregation*. 29 June. Pew Research Center.

Subramanian A (2019) *The Caste of Merit: Engineering Education in India*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Thachil T (2018) Improving Surveys Through Ethnography: Insights from India's Urban Periphery. *Studies in Comparative International Development* 53(3): 281–299.

Thorat S and Neuman KS (eds.) (2012) *Blocked by Caste: Economic Discrimination in Modern India*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Thorat S and Senapati C (2006) *Reservation Policy in India: Dimensions and Issues*. Volume I Number 02, Working Paper Series. New Delhi: Indian Institute of Dalit Studies.

Thorat S, Aryama and Negi P (2005) *Reservation and Private Sector: Quest for Equal Opportunity and Growth*. Rawat Publications [in association with] Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, New Delhi.

Upadhya C (2007) Employment, Exclusion and "Merit" in the Indian IT Industry. *Economic and Political Weekly* 42(20). Economic and Political Weekly: 1863–1868.

Vaid D (2012) The caste-class association in India: An empirical analysis. *Asian Survey* 52(2): 395–422.

Vaid D (2014) Caste in Contemporary India: Flexibility and Persistence. *Annual Review of Sociology* 40(1): 391–410.

Vaid D (2018) *Uneven Odds: Social Mobility in Contemporary India*. First edition. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Vakulabharanam V and Motiram S (2016) Mobility and inequality in neoliberal India. *Contemporary South Asia* 24(3): 257–270.

Varghese NV (2016) Private higher education: The global surge and Indian concerns. In: *India Infrastructure Report 2012*. New Delhi: Routledge India, pp. 183–194.

Zacharias A and Vakulabharanam V (2011) Caste Stratification and Wealth Inequality in India. *World Development* 39(10): 1820–1833.

Author biography:
Mathieu Ferry is a postdoctoral researcher at Institut national d'études démographiques (Ined), France. As a member of the "3GEN" research project, he currently studies the intergenerational transmission of social positions within immigrant and native families in France. His research interests are the interplay between group-based inequalities (caste, religion, ethnicity) and lifestyles, the study of patterns of intergenerational mobility and the sociology of South Asia. He coordinates a monthly seminar on the "Sociology of inequalities in India" at École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS), France.

Tables

Table 1

		Composition of the	
		Male sample (percent)	**Female sample (percent)**
Ascribed category	***Brahmin***	***4.4***	***3.7***
	Forward caste	14.9	13.9
	OBC	36.2	36.9
	Dalit	***22.6***	***23.9***
	Adivasi	8.6	9.1
	Muslim	***11.3***	***10.5***
	Other rel.	2	1.9
Class destination	Professional	8	12.8
	Clerical	14	19.8
	Farmer	29.4	10.4
	Vocational	19.6	18.5
	Labourer	29	38.6
Class origin	Professional	5	
	Clerical	7.5	
	Farmer	41.9	
	Vocational	15	
	Labourer	30.7	
Educational attainment	Post-secondary	8.3	6.5
	Secondary	18	12
	Primary/middle	44.9	35.9
	Non-literate	28.9	45.5
Father's educational attainment	Post-secondary	1.9	3
	Secondary	6.7	10.6
	Primary/middle	29.7	24.7
	Non-literate	61.6	61.7

Table 2a

Male sample		Model 1		Model 2		Model 2a		Model 3		Model 3a	
Variable	**Modality**	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***
	Constant	-0.69*** (0.079)		0.29* (0.113)		0.71*** (0.12)		0.39** (0.117)		0.84*** (0.125)	
Ascribed category (ref=Brahmin)	Dalit	-1.58*** (0.089)	*-0.15*	-1.13*** (0.093)	*-0.09*	-0.95*** (0.096)	*-0.07*	-0.67*** (0.098)	*-0.05*	-0.56*** (0.1)	*-0.04*
	Muslim	-1.2*** (0.093)	*-0.13*	-0.78*** (0.097)	*-0.07*	-0.7*** (0.1)	*-0.06*	-0.23* (0.102)	*-0.04*	-0.2+ (0.104)	*-0.01*
Father's educational attainment (ref=Post-secondary)	Secondary			-0.72*** (0.105)	*-0.1*	-0.39*** (0.11)	*-0.04*	-0.21+ (0.11)	*-0.02*	0.1 (0.115)	*0.01*
	Primary/Middle			-1.15*** (0.096)	*-0.14*	-0.58*** (0.104)	*-0.06*	-0.21* (0.102)	*-0.02*	0.33** (0.111)	*0.02*
	Non-literate			-1.76*** (0.098)	*-0.18*	-1.09*** (0.108)	*-0.09*	-0.45*** (0.107)	*-0.03*	0.19 (0.117)	*0.01*
Father's occupational class (ref=Professional)	Clerical					-1.08*** (0.083)	*-0.12*			-1.16*** (0.088)	*-0.11*
	Farmer					-1.29*** (0.077)	*-0.13*			-1.35*** (0.081)	*-0.12*
	Vocational					-1.21*** (0.078)	*-0.13*			-1.07*** (0.082)	*-0.1*
	Labourers					-1.62*** (0.085)	*-0.15*			-1.44*** (0.088)	*-0.13*
Educational attainment (ref=Post-secondary)	Secondary							-1.21*** (0.061)	*-0.17*	-1.2*** (0.062)	*-0.16*
	Primary/Middle							-2.11*** (0.065)	*-0.23*	-2.12*** (0.067)	*-0.23*
	Non-literate							-2.72*** (0.096)	*-0.26*	-2.69*** (0.098)	*-0.25*
	AIC	16609		16004		15581		14717		14356	
	Log likelihood	-8289		-7983		-7768		-7337		-7152	

Table 2b

Female sample		**Model 1**		**Model 2**		**Model 3**	
Variable	**Modality**	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***
	Constant	-0.17+ (0.091)		0.35** (0.122)		0.85*** (0.131)	
Ascribed category (ref=Brahmin)	Dalit	-1.71*** (0.101)	*-0.23*	-1.26*** (0.105)	*-0.16*	-0.83*** (0.111)	*-0.09*
	Muslim	-1.1*** (0.104)	*-0.17*	-0.69*** (0.108)	*-0.1*	-0.28* (0.114)	*-0.12*
Father's educational attainment (ref=Post-secondary)	Secondary			-0.27* (0.104)	*-0.05*	0.13 (0.111)	*0.01*
	Primary/Middle			-0.77*** (0.101)	*-0.12*	0.06 (0.111)	*0.01*
	Non-literate			-1.51*** (0.103)	*-0.19*	-0.23+ (0.116)	*-0.02*
Educational attainment (ref=Post-secondary)	Secondary					-0.92*** (0.079)	*-0.19*
	Primary/Middle					-1.82*** (0.081)	*-0.31*
	Non-literate					-2.75*** (0.1)	*-0.38*
	AIC	13450		12894		12047	
	Log likelihood	-6709		-6428		-6002	

Table 3

Variable	Modality	Male sample: Model 4 Coef (SE)	Female sample: Model 4 Coef (SE)
	Constant	0.7*** (0.145)	0.4* (0.185)
Ascribed category (ref=Brahmin)	Dalit	0.02 (0.17)	-0.14 (0.261)
	Muslim	-0.57** (0.205)	-0.14 (0.276)
Educational attainment (ref=Post-secondary)	Secondary	-0.84*** (0.167)	-0.62** (0.231)
	Primary/Middle	-2*** (0.212)	-0.96*** (0.216)
	Non-literate	-2.2*** (0.558)	-1.73*** (0.344)
Interaction ascribed cat.*educational attainment	Secondary*Dalit	-0.81*** (0.239)	-0.14 (0.332)
	Secondary*Muslim	0.2 (0.276)	-0.32 (0.356)
	Primary/Middle*Dalit	-0.63* (0.263)	-1.15*** (0.307)
	Primary/Middle*Muslim	0.4 (0.288)	-0.49 (0.32)
	Non-literate*Dalit	-1.25* (0.596)	-1.39*** (0.409)
	Non-literate*Muslim	0.46 (0.597)	-0.37 (0.42)
	AIC	14307	12013
	Log likelihood	-7110	-5967

Table 4

		Male sample: Model 5				Female sample: Model 5			
Reference modality of response variable: Not professional		**Public-sector professional**		**Private-sector professional**		**Public-sector professional**		**Private-sector professional**	
Variable	**Modality**	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***	**Coef (SE)**	***AME***
	Constant	-0.23 (0.18)		0.29* (0.14)		-0.74** (0.23)		0.5*** (0.14)	
Ascribed category (ref=Brahmin)	Dalit	0.35* (0.16)	*0.01*	-0.95*** (0.12)	*-0.05*	0.46* (0.21)	*0.02*	-1.14*** (0.12)	*-0.12*
	Muslim	0.14 (0.18)		-0.42*** (0.12)	*-0.03*	0.2 (0.24)		-0.43*** (0.12)	*-0.05*
Father's educational attainment (ref=Post-secondary)	Secondary	0.06 (0.16)		0.08 (0.14)		0.38* (0.19)	*0.01*	0 (0.12)	
	Primary/Middle	0.2 (0.15)		0.31* (0.13)	*0.01*	0.1 (0.2)		-0.04 (0.12)	
	Non-literate	0.08 (0.17)		0.16 (0.14)		0.15 (0.21)		-0.38** (0.12)	*-0.03*
Father's occupational class (ref=Professional)	Clerical	-1.27*** (0.14)	*-0.03*	-1.09*** (0.1)	*-0.08*				
	Farmer	-1.12*** (0.13)	*-0.03*	-1.46*** (0.09)	*-0.09*				
	Vocational	-1.37*** (0.14)	*-0.03*	-0.99*** (0.09)	*-0.07*				
	Labourers	-1.59*** (0.16)	*-0.04*	-1.38*** (0.1)	*-0.09*				
Educational attainment (ref=Post-secondary)	Secondary	-1.76*** (0.09)	*-0.14*	-0.84*** (0.08)	*-0.05*	-1.53*** (0.13)	*-0.2*	-0.69*** (0.09)	*-0.04*
	Primary/Middle	-4.19*** (0.15)	*-0.18*	-1.36*** (0.08)	*-0.07*	-4.12*** (0.17)	*-0.33*	-1.24*** (0.09)	*-0.09*
	Non-literate	-5.24*** (0.29)	*-0.18*	-1.8*** (0.11)	*-0.09*	-6.82*** (0.33)	*-0.34*	-1.94*** (0.11)	*-0.14*
	AIC	16399				13469			
	Log likelihood	-8149				-6692			

Figures

Figure 1

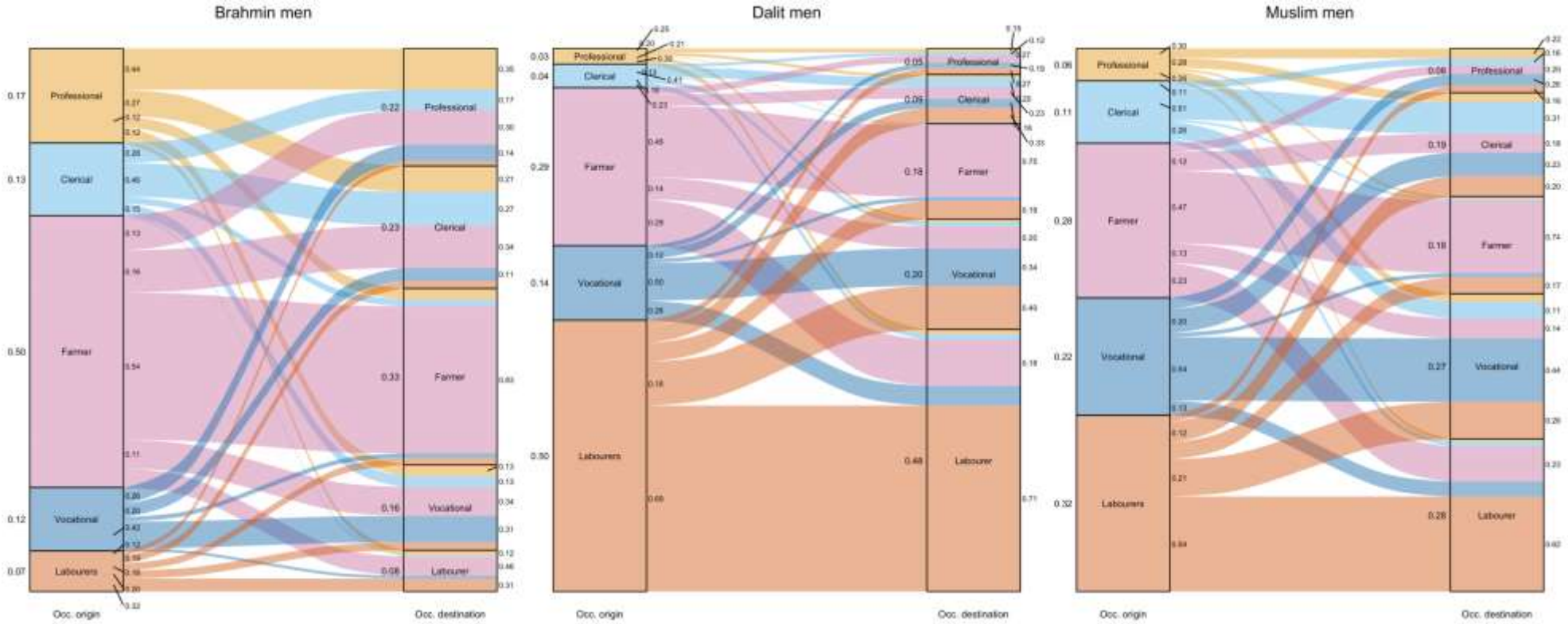


Figure 2a

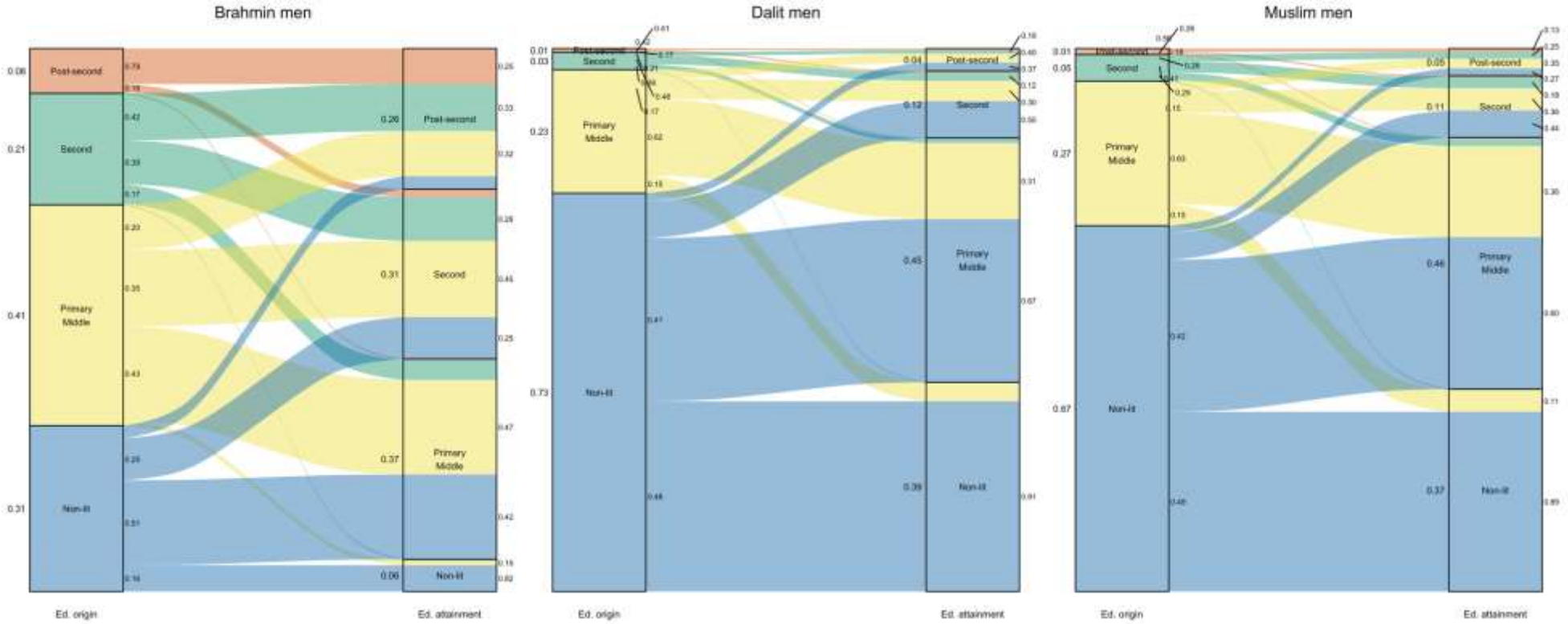

Brahmin men
Dalit men
Muslim men
Post-second
Second
Primary Middle
Non-lit
Ed. origin
Ed. attainment

Figure 2b

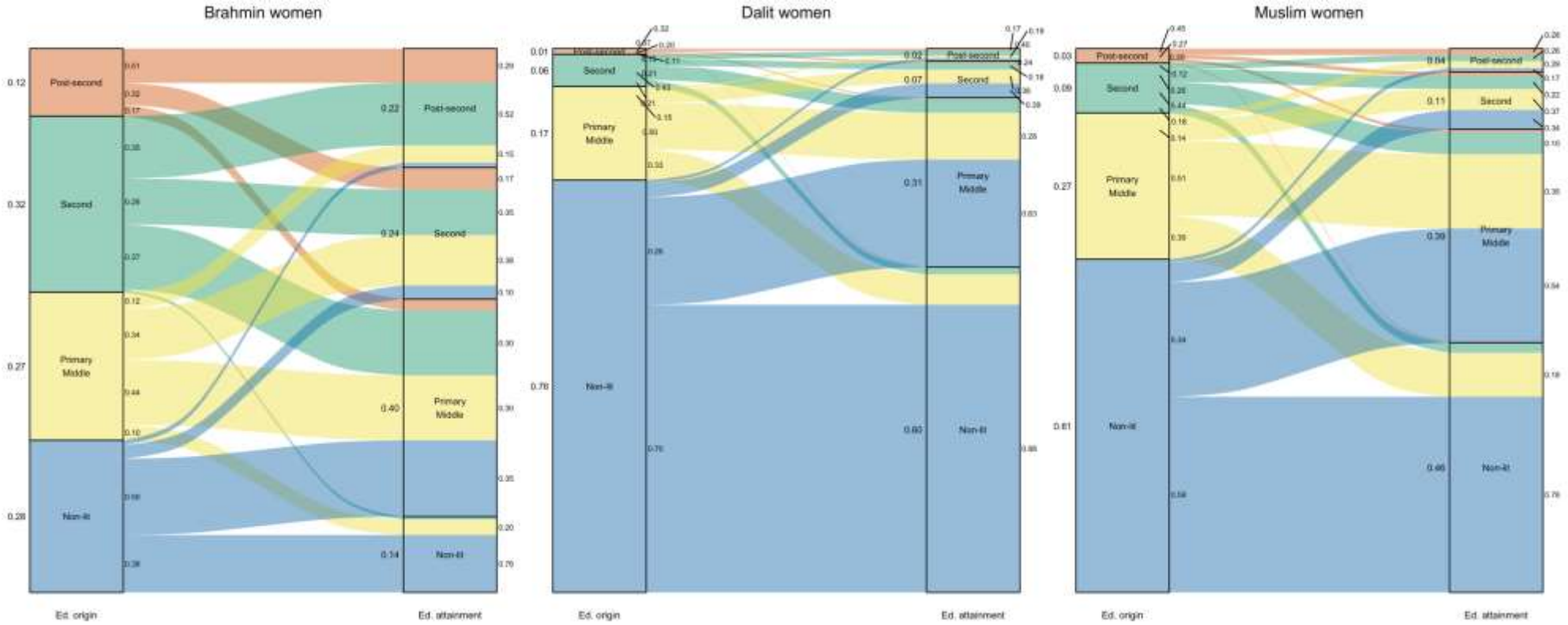

Brahmin women
Post-second
Second
Primary Middle
Non-lit
0.12
0.32
0.27
0.28
0.22
0.24
0.40
0.14
Ed. origin
Ed. attainment
Dalit women
0.01
0.06
0.17
0.76
0.02
0.07
0.31
0.60
Ed. origin
Ed. attainment
Muslim women
0.03
0.09
0.27
0.61
0.04
0.11
0.39
0.46
Ed. origin
Ed. attainment

Figure 3

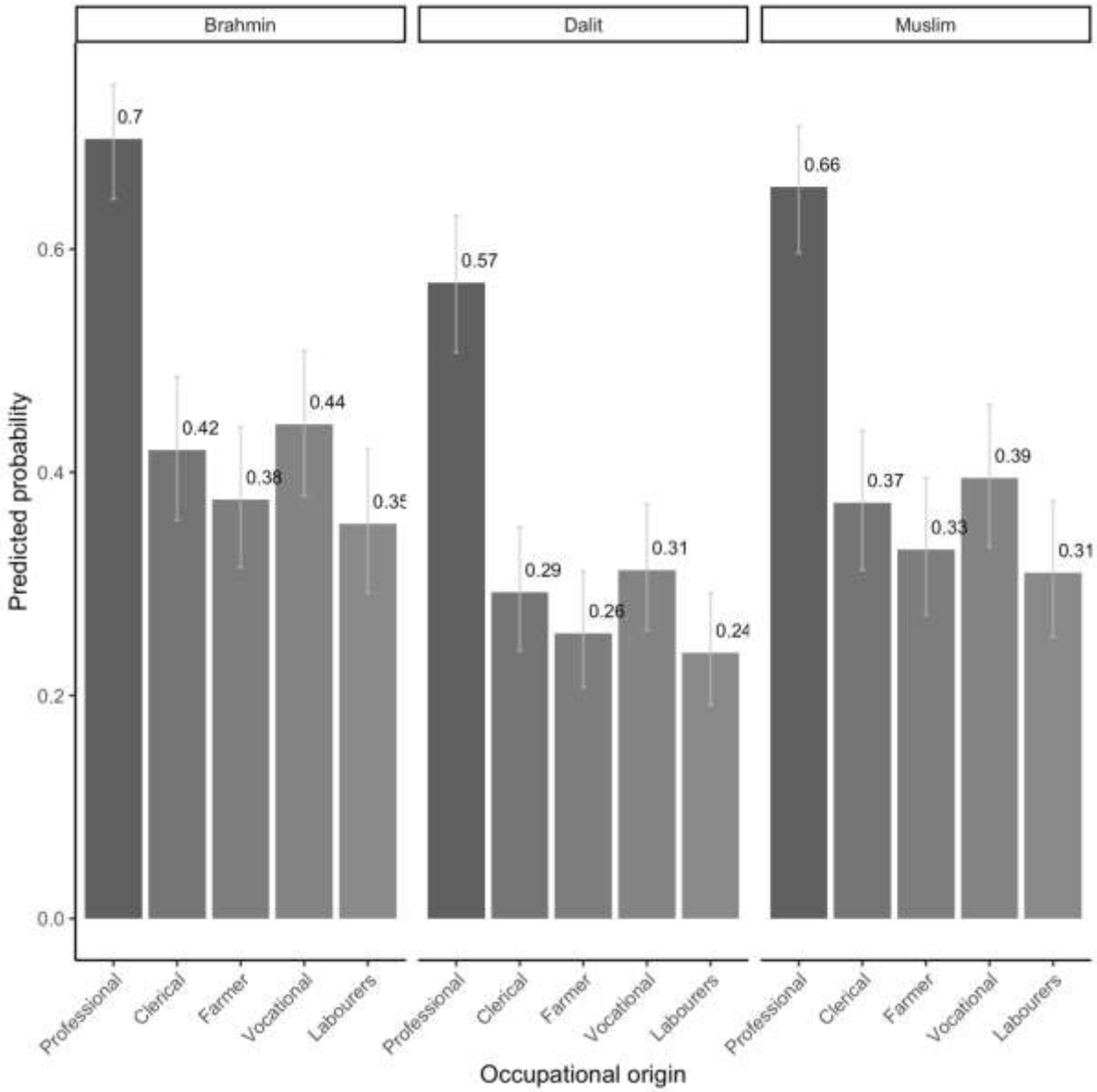

Brahmin
Dalit
Muslim
Predicted probability
0.0
0.2
0.4
0.6
0.7
0.42
0.38
0.44
0.57
0.29
0.26
0.31
0.66
0.37
0.33
0.39
0.31
Professional
Clerical
Farmer
Vocational
Labourers
Occupational origin

Figure 4

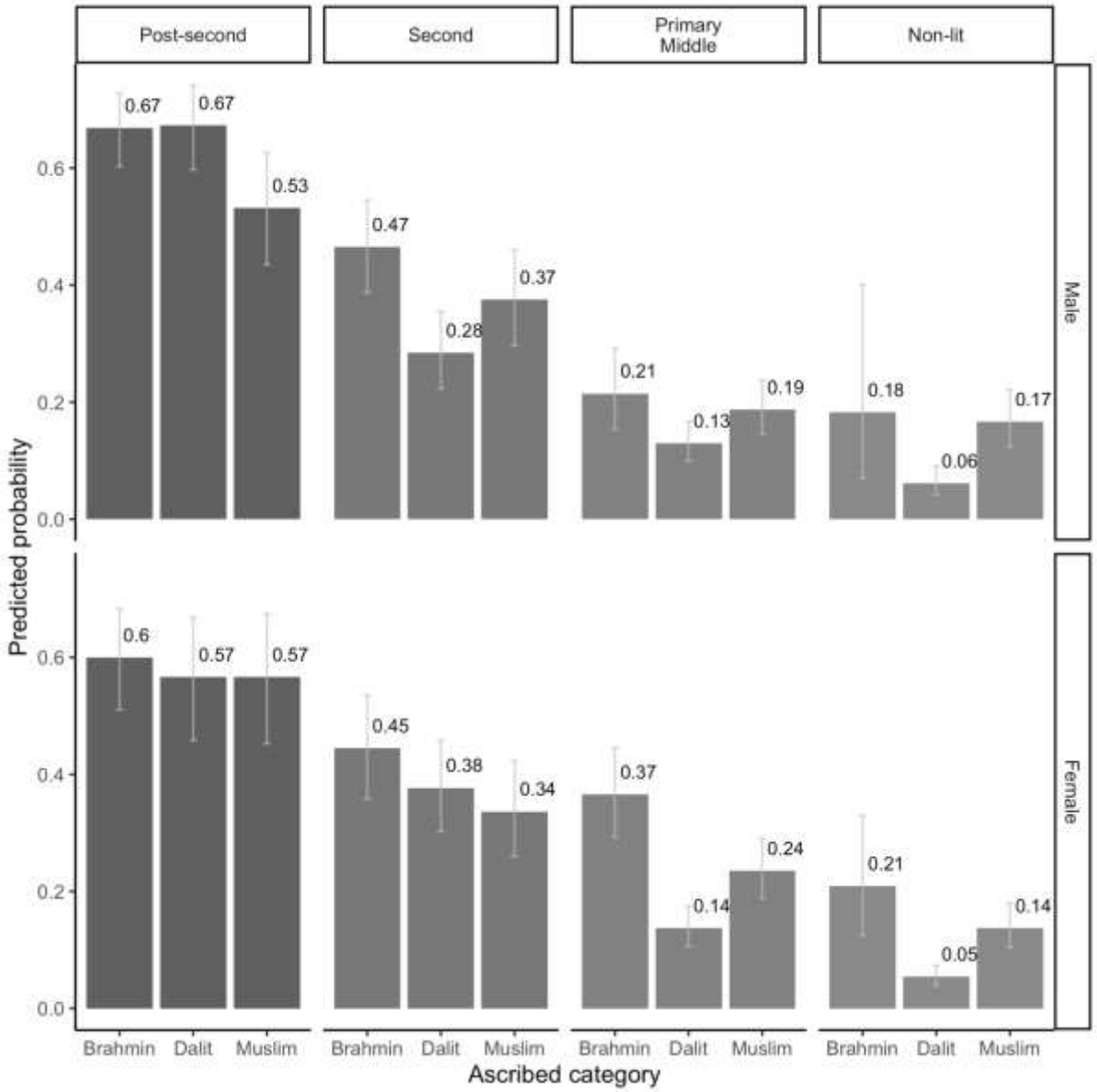
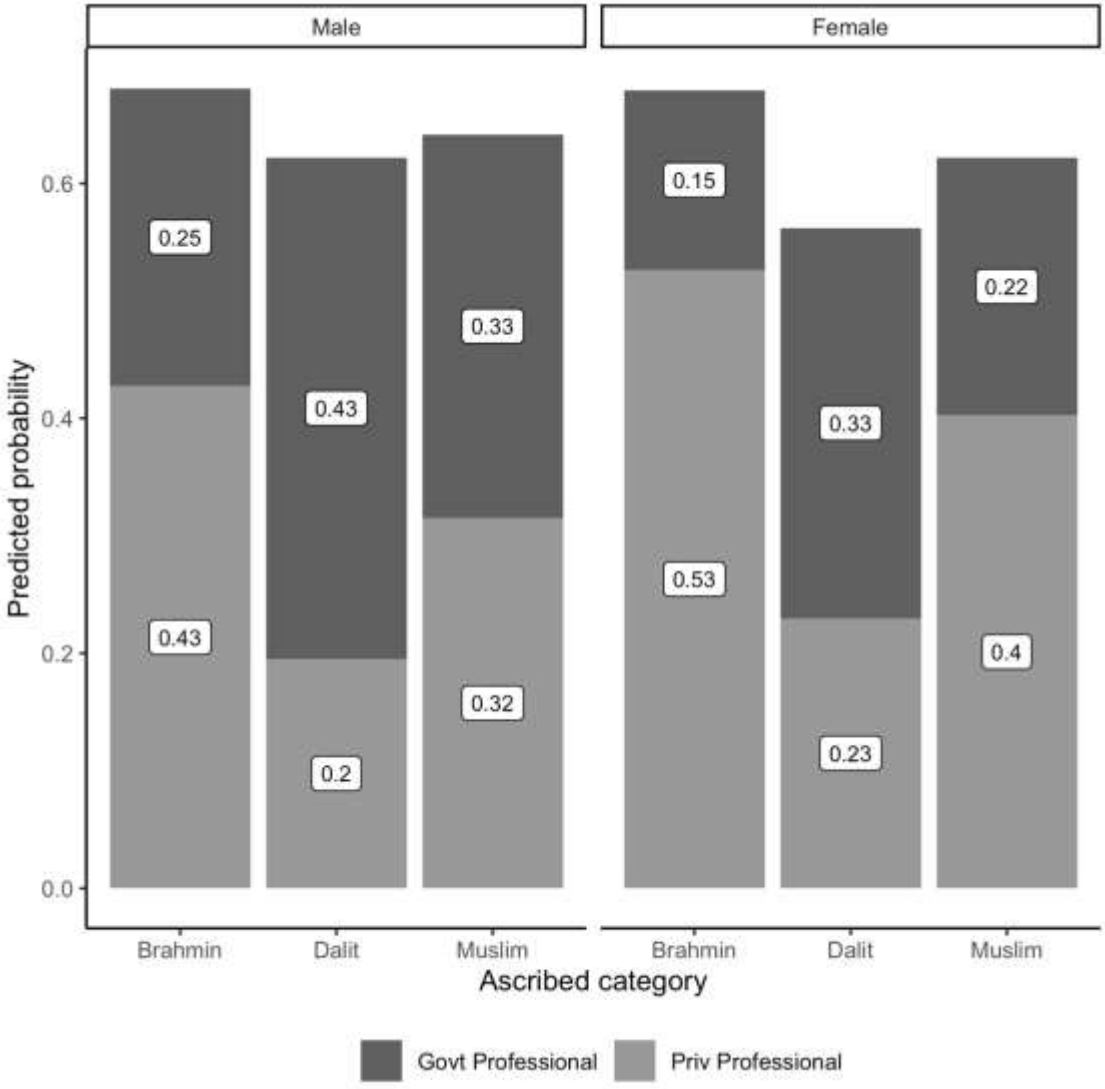

Post-second
Second
Primary Middle
Non-lit
Male
Female
Predicted probability
0.0
0.2
0.4
0.6
0.67
0.67
0.53
0.47
0.28
0.37
0.21
0.13
0.19
0.18
0.06
0.17
0.6
0.57
0.57
0.45
0.38
0.34
0.37
0.14
0.24
0.21
0.05
0.14
Brahmin
Dalit
Muslim
Ascribed category

Figure 5


Male
Female
Predicted probability
0.0
0.2
0.4
0.6
0.25
0.43
0.43
0.2
0.33
0.32
0.15
0.53
0.33
0.23
0.22
0.4
Brahmin
Dalit
Muslim
Brahmin
Dalit
Muslim
Ascribed category
Govt Professional
Priv Professional