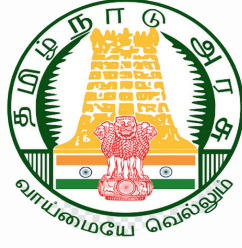


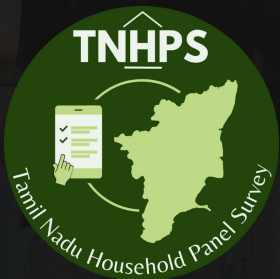
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Studies



# Salem



Tamil Nadu Household Panel Survey  
**Pre-Baseline District Report 2018-19**





**Tamil Nadu Household Panel Survey (TNHPS)**  
**Pre-Baseline Survey (PBS) District Report 2018-19**

***Salem District***

**February 2024**

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## Summary of PBS Findings

### *Demographic Indicators*

- Salem had a sample size of 8,616 households, of which 55 percent of households was from rural areas and 45 percent of households was from urban areas.
- The district had a huge demographic dividend with almost half the population at about 47.37 percent aged between 17 and 45 years.
- The MBC social group was the largest in the district, constituting around 43 percent of the total households in the district.

### *Education*

- The literacy rate in the district had increased from 72.86 percent (Census 2011) to 80.76 percent in 2018. Salem was ranked twenty third among the then 32 districts in terms of this indicator.
- Both rural and urban literacy rates recorded an increase between 2011 and 2018, though the rural literacy rate was still 10.95 percent lower than the urban literacy rate in 2018. The gender gap in literacy rate was much higher in rural areas at 16.60 percent than in urban areas at 9.14 percent in 2018.
- While more than 90 percent of the specified General category population in the district had received formal education, only around 60 percent of the ST population had done so.

### *Employment*

- The percentage of employed population in the district at 53.83 percent was higher than the state estimate of 50.10 percent, while the share of unemployed population at 3.41 percent was slightly lower compared to the state's 3.50 percent. The rest (42.74 percent) were not in the labour force.
- The percentage of population that was employed was higher in rural parts of the district than in urban areas.
- While 73.24 percent of the male population aged 14 and above was employed, the female work participation in the district was 35.08 percent.
- Around 62.34 percent of the female population aged 14 and above were not in the labour force, and among these, majority of them (74.17 percent) were associated with attending to domestic duties as homemakers.

- While self-employment in non-agriculture was predominant in urban areas, casual labour in agriculture was most common in rural areas of Salem district.
- More than half the ST population in the district were casual labourers in agriculture. Interestingly, maximum percentage of the SC and DNC population were engaged in salaried work in the private sector.

### *Land Ownership and Assets*

- Salem district was ranked thirteenth in the state in terms of agricultural land ownership. A higher percentage of ST and DNC category households owned agricultural land in the district compared to the other social groups.
- A majority of the households—about 54.61 percent—that owned agricultural land in the district depended on rain-fed agriculture alone.
- Around 92.24 percent of the agricultural land-owning households in the district belonged to marginal or small farmer categories with less than two hectares.
- The percentage of households owning at least one household asset in Salem district was 89.24 percent which was slightly lower than the state estimate of 90.72 percent. Ownership of such assets was least among ST households, where around 16 percent of them did not even own a mobile phone.
- The percentage of households possessing priority ration cards in the district was 52.08 percent which was much lower compared to the state level estimate of 71.14 percent.

### *Household Income*

- The mean annual household income of Salem district was 9.69 percent lesser (₹1,28,923) than the state PBS estimate of ₹1,42,752; in the urban areas, it was ₹1,60,940 and in rural areas it was ₹93,128. The district was ranked eleventh out of 32 districts with respect to this parameter.
- The mean income from salaried work (₹1,85,702) was the highest, while that from allied agricultural activities was the lowest (₹26,062).
- The Gini coefficient measuring income inequality across households in the district (0.511) was lower than the state PBS estimate (0.563).



## *Housing*

- Salem district was ranked twenty first among all the districts of Tamil Nadu in terms of percentage of households living in their own house.
- Out of the households that lived in an own house in the district, 13.05 percent of houses were built under a government scheme. SC and ST households had a higher percentage of houses built under a government scheme in the district compared to other social groups.
- Around 60 percent of the households in the district were living in pucca houses, which was lower than the state level estimate of 63.42 percent.

## *Drinking Water, Electricity, and Cooking Fuel*

- The primary source of drinking water for the households in the district was piped water into the dwelling at 43.68 percent. This source was most used in rural as well as urban areas of the district.
- The district witnessed an increase in electrification in both rural and urban areas between 2011-18, with the rate of growth being higher in rural areas.
- Although the use of LPG as the primary cooking fuel had increased in the district from 48.86 percent in 2011 to 83.22 percent in 2018, firewood was still being used by more than 14 percent of the households.
- While more than 90 percent of General and DNC category households used LPG as the primary cooking fuel, more than 20 percent of SC and ST households were still using firewood as the primary cooking fuel in the district.

## *Sanitation*

- The percentage of households with latrine within house premises had increased from 34.95 percent in 2011 (Census 2011) to 61.52 percent in 2018 in the district. Salem was ranked twenty third among the 32 districts in the state in terms of this parameter.
- While more than 95 percent of the General category households had a latrine within the house premises, less than half the ST, MBC and DNC population did so.
- The percentage of total households in the district practicing open defecation had declined from 53.88 percent in 2011 (Census, 2011) to 31.54 percent in 2018.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Profile of Salem District

Salem district in Tamil Nadu was formed in the year 1956. It is in the Western region of the State, with Dharmapuri in the north, Viluppuram in the east, Perambalur and Namakkal in the south, and Erode and borders of Karnataka in the west.

According to Census (2011), Salem had a total population of 34.82 lakhs, accounting for approximately 4.83 percent of Tamil Nadu's population, which was 7.21 crores. The district comprised 9.16 lakh households, with 50.95 percent residing in urban areas and 49.05 percent residing in rural areas. The male population was 51.16 percent, and the female population was 48.84 percent. Salem demonstrated a child-sex ratio of 916.42, which is lower compared to the state average of 943.27. Within the social groups, 16.67 percent of the population belonged to the Scheduled Castes, while 3.43 percent belonged to the Scheduled Tribes. The literacy rate in Salem district stood at 72.86 percent, which is lower than the state's average of 80.09 percent. The male literacy rate was reported to be 80.24 percent, while the female literacy rate was reported to be 65.15 percent, highlighting the need for more investment in women's education. These figures indicate that there is a potential to improve educational opportunities, especially amongst the females in the district.

In the fiscal year 2018-19, Salem's Net District Domestic Product (NDDP) was ₹57,57,076 lakhs, which was ninth highest among districts. However, the district's per capita NDDP was recorded at 1,49,526 ranking it nineteenth among districts. The per capita NDDP of the district was significantly below the Tamil Nadu average of ₹1,83,884 (Department of Economics and Statistics, 2023). In terms of sectoral distribution, the primary sector accounts for 8% of domestic income, the secondary sector for around 34%, and the tertiary (service) sector for about 58% (Department of Economics and Statistics, 2017).

According to the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission (2017a), Salem ranked sixth in the Gender Inequality Index with a score of 0.058, indicating that the district has relatively lower levels of gender inequality. It ranked seventeenth in terms of the Human Development Index with a score of 0.669, indicating a moderate level of overall development in the district. It ranked seventeenth in terms of the Multidimensional Poverty Index with a score of 0.53, indicating that a significant portion of the district's population face multiple deprivations in various aspects of life, however the extent of multidimensional poverty is moderate when compared to the other districts. However, in terms of the Child Development Index, the district ranked twenty seventh with a score of 0.539, highlighting the need to improve health, nutrition, and education of children.

Overall, Salem is one of the developing districts of Tamil Nadu with moderate levels of per capita income and moderate levels of overall economic development.

### *1.2 About the TNHPS and Pre-Baseline Survey (PBS)*

The Tamil Nadu Household Panel Survey (TNHPS) has been designed as a longitudinal survey, beginning with a Pre-Baseline Survey or the PBS—an extensive household listing activity—followed by a Baseline Survey (Wave 1) and subsequent periodic surveys (Wave 2, Wave 3 etc.). The TNHPS aims to analyse the patterns of change in various socio-economic indicators, including households' income, occupational structures and living conditions.

The PBS collected data on a comprehensive set of socio-economic indicators for the period 2018-19 with the results providing district-level estimates for these indicators and informing the sampling design and the associated sampling frame for the first wave of the TNHPS. In the absence of Census 2021, the PBS estimates act as a valid benchmark for the Government of Tamil Nadu in terms of socio-economic development since 2011. The PBS surveyed around 2,12,282 households in the erstwhile 32 districts of Tamil Nadu across 1,476 Primary Sampling Units—684 rural PSUs and 792 urban PSUs.

This report analyses data from the PBS for the Salem district and presents the findings. Wherever possible, the report compares the district PBS estimates with the most recent census data of Salem (Census, 2011) and the state PBS estimates (TNHPS-PBS, 2021) to assess the socio-economic development of Salem district. The sample size for the district was 8,616 households, among which 4,728 households were from rural areas and 3,888 households were from urban areas. The blocks covered during the survey were: Attur, Idappady, Omalur, Panamarathupatti, Pethanaickenpalayam, Salem, Sankari, Thalaivasal, Tharamangalam, Valapady, Veerapandi, and Yercaud.



## 2. Survey Response

For the Pre-Baseline Survey (PBS) 2018-19, a total of 9,683 households in Salem district were selected using a multi-stage stratified sampling design<sup>1</sup>. The final sample size for PBS was 8,616 households, of which 55 percent of households was from rural areas and 45 percent of households was from urban areas of the district. The area-wise distribution of total sample as well as the survey response is given in Table 2.1.

*Table 2.1 Distribution of Sample Households – Response-wise*

Response of Households	Area Type					
	Rural		Urban		Salem	
	Number of HHs	Percentage	Number of HHs	Percentage	Number of HHs	Percentage
Response	4,728	90.14	3,888	87.61	8,616	88.98
Non-Response	184	3.51	289	6.51	473	4.88
Non-sample	333	6.35	261	5.88	594	6.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,245</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,438</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9,683</b>	<b>100</b>

Salem district had a lower response rate—willingness of households to participate in the TNHPS-PBS—of 88.98 percent compared to the state response rate of 96.5 percent. Around 4.88 percent of households was not willing to participate in the survey. About 6.13 percent of the selected samples was removed as they were not considered as households as per the definition used in the PBS<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Detailed explanation of the Sampling Methodology available in the TNHPS-PBS State Report (see TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> A household is defined as a group of persons normally living together and taking food from a common kitchen. The category called non-sample consisted of institutions, houses of NRIs and other buildings where there was no kitchen.

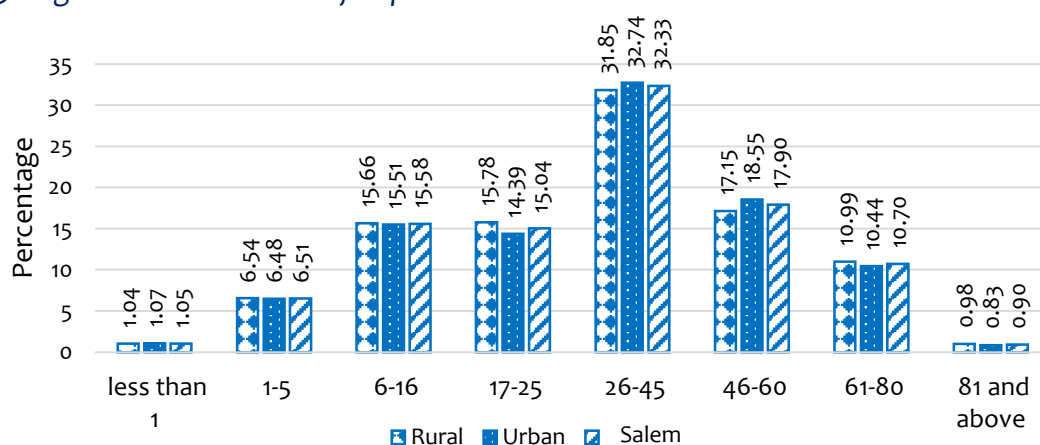
### 3. Key Findings

#### 3.1 Demographic Indicators

As per the PBS estimates, the average household size<sup>3</sup> in the district had reduced from 3.81 in 2011 (Census, 2011) to 3.50 in 2018. Around 50.50 percent of the population in the district were females, and 49.49 percent of the population were males. Around 17.33 percent of the households in the district were headed by females, which was lower than the state estimate of 18.93 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

Chart 3.1 shows the age-wise distribution of the population in Salem district.

*Chart 3.1 Age-wise Distribution of Population*



As per the PBS estimates, almost one third of the population in the district was in the age group of 26 to 45 years. The population—between age 17 to 60 years—in the district was 65.27 percent, which was comparatively higher than the state estimate of 66.00 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

The percentage of currently married population in the district was 71.16 percent in 2018. A higher percentage of males was currently married compared to females. The widowed female population was notably higher than the widowed male population. The widowed population in rural areas was higher than in the urban areas of the district.

The religion-wise distribution of the households in the district as per the PBS estimates shows that 94.50 percent of the households practiced Hinduism, 4.13 percent practiced Islam and 1.18 percent followed Christianity.

<sup>3</sup> Household size is defined as the number of family members currently living in the household during the PBS survey.

Table 3.1 shows the social group-wise distribution of the households in the district.

*Table 3.1 Social Group-wise Distribution of Households*

Social Group	Percentage
SC	20.41
ST	2.05
BC	32.86
MBC	43.19
Denotified Communities (DNC)	0.21
General	0.87
DK/RF	0.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

As per the PBS estimates, the highest percentage of households in Salem district belonged to the MBC category. The percentages of SC and ST households in the district were 20.41 percent and 2.05 percent in 2018, respectively.

### *3.2 Development Indicators*

In this section, we discuss the PBS estimates on various development indicators such as literacy rate and employment status in Salem district.

#### *3.2.1 Education*

The change in literacy rate of Salem district and the state of Tamil Nadu during the period 2011 and 2018 is given in Table 3.2. As per Census 2011, a person aged seven and above who can both read and write with understanding in any language, is treated as literate. In the PBS, literacy rate is measured as those who have formal schooling and those who can read and write a simple sentence.

*Table 3.2 Literacy Rates between Census 2011\* and PBS 2018*

Gender	Rural		Urban		Salem		Tamil Nadu	
	2011	2018	2011	2018	2011	2018	2011	2018
Male	74.57	83.37	85.79	90.46	80.24	87.18	86.77	90.97
Female	56.32	66.77	73.43	81.32	65.15	74.5	73.4	80.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>65.74</b>	<b>74.91</b>	<b>79.67</b>	<b>85.86</b>	<b>72.86</b>	<b>80.76</b>	<b>80.09</b>	<b>85.4</b>

\*The represented trend should be understood under the context that the Census does 100 percent enumeration whereas in the PBS, a sample is surveyed



As per Census 2011, the literacy rate in Salem district at 72.86 percent was lesser than the state estimate of 80.09 percent. The PBS estimates showed that in the year 2018, the literacy rate in Salem district had increased to 80.76 percent, which continued to be lower than the state estimate of 85.40 percent. Nevertheless, the district had registered a 7.9 percent increase in literacy rate in this period while the state had registered a 5.31 percent increase. The difference in literacy rate between the state estimate and Salem district was 7.23 percent in 2011, which had declined to 4.64 percent in 2018. In terms of literacy rate, Salem was ranked twenty third among the then 32 districts in 2018 (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

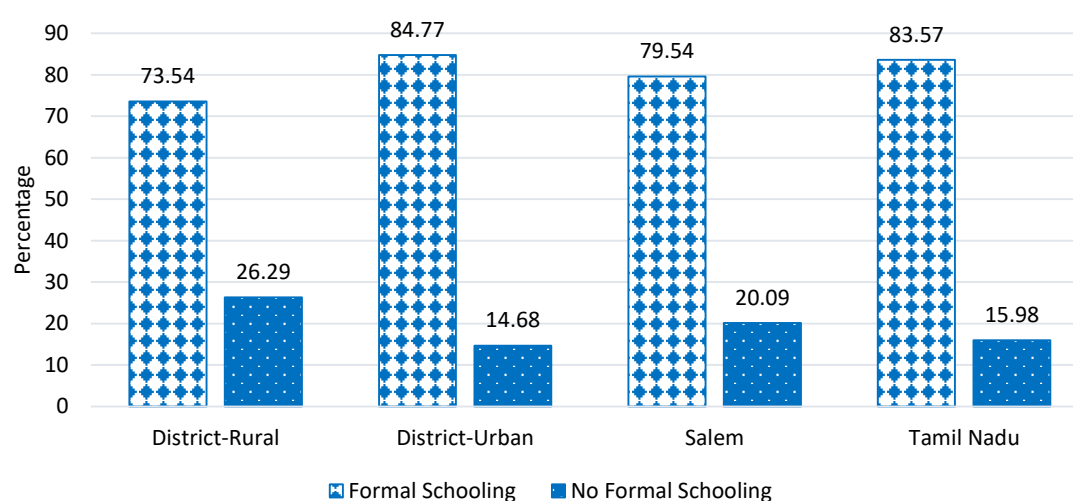
Both male and female literacy rates in Salem district had recorded an increase during the period under consideration, though a wide gender gap still prevailed. The gender gap in literacy rate had declined from 15.09 percent in 2011 to 12.68 percent in 2018, which is still higher than the state gender gap of 10.82 percent in 2018.

Both rural and urban literacy rates recorded an increase between 2011 and 2018, though the rural literacy rate was still 10.95 percent lower than the urban literacy rate in 2018. The gender gap in literacy rate was much higher in rural areas at 16.60 percent than in urban areas at 9.14 percent in 2018.

### 3.2.2 Education Status of Population (Age 7 and above)

In this section, we discuss the education status of the population aged seven and above in Salem district. The area wise education status of population in the district is given in Chart 3.7.

Chart 3.2 Formal Schooling of the Population – Area-wise



\*Others and Don't Know/Refuse to Answer categories are not included in any chart, unless their value is substantially high. Therefore, the total might not add up to 100 percent.

Chart 3.2 shows that almost 80 percent of the specified population in the district had attended formal schooling, which was lower compared to the state estimate. The percentage of population with formal education in urban areas was higher than in rural areas of the district.

*Chart 3.3 Formal Schooling of the Population – Gender-wise*

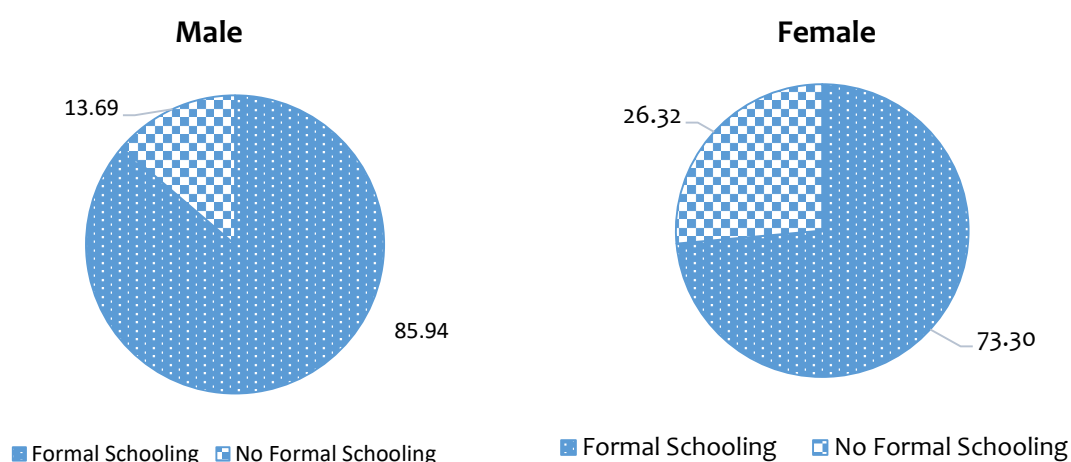


Chart 3.3 shows that the percentage of the population that had acquired formal education in the district was much higher among males compared to females, again denoting a wide gender gap, like in literacy.

A district level analysis of the PBS on education attainment status of various social groups is shown below.

*Table 3.3 Formal Schooling of Population - Social Group-wise Percentages*

Education Status	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Formal Schooling	80.51	60.56	87.75	73.52	74.52	98.31	79.54
No Formal Schooling	19.06	38.85	11.8	26.19	25.48	1.69	20.09
Others and DK/RF	0.43	0.60	0.45	0.28	0.00	0.00	0.37
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.3 shows a wide variation across social groups in attainment of formal schooling. While more than 90 percent of the specified General category population in the district had received formal education, only around 60 percent of the ST population had done so.

To take this analysis further, Table 3.4 gives detailed information on the current highest level of educational attainment of the population that had received formal education.

*Table 3.4 Highest Formal Educational Attainment of Population - Area-wise Percentages*

Educational Attainment	Area Type		
	Rural	Urban	Salem
Primary (I to V)	24.29	19.27	21.43
Middle School (VI to VIII)	22.72	19.29	20.76
High School (IX to X)	21.85	22.87	22.43
Higher Secondary (XI to XII)	16.01	15.51	15.73
Bachelor's degree	8.04	12.52	10.6
Diploma Degree	3.41	3.69	3.57
Post Graduate Degree	3.44	6.17	5.00
Other Higher Education	0.00	0.04	0.02
Others/DK/RF	0.23	0.64	0.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Around 80.35 percent of the district's population—aged seven and above, with formal education—was either pursuing or had completed primary or secondary schooling. The percentage of population that was either pursuing or had completed tertiary education—such as bachelor's degree, diploma, or post graduate degree and above—was 19.19 percent, which was lower than the state estimate of 20.02 percent. Also, this figure was higher for urban areas than rural areas of the district.

*Table 3.5 Highest Formal Educational Attainment of Population - Gender-wise Percentages*

Educational Attainment	Gender		
	Male	Female	Salem
Primary (I to V)	20.50	22.49	21.43
Middle School (VI to VIII)	21.02	20.47	20.76
High School (IX to X)	23.22	21.54	22.43
Higher Secondary (XI to XII)	13.95	17.76	15.73
Bachelor's degree	10.76	10.42	10.6
Diploma Degree	5.01	1.93	3.57
Post Graduate Degree	5.12	4.85	5.00
Other Higher Education	0.00	0.04	0.02
Others/DK/RF	0.42	0.51	0.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.5 shows that a higher percentage of females at 82.26 percent in the specified population was either pursuing or had completed primary or secondary schooling compared to males at 78.69 percent. In tertiary education, a higher percentage of males was either pursuing or had completed bachelors' or diploma or post-graduate degree compared to females, whereas the case with respect to other higher education was the reverse.

To understand the social group-wise disparity in education attainment in the district, the

PBS estimated the percentage of population under each category across various education levels.

*Table 3.6 Highest Formal Educational Attainment of Population - Social Group-wise Percentages*

Educational Attainment	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Primary (I to V)	19.96	30.54	20.78	22.65	26.59	10.28	21.43
Middle School (VI to VIII)	20.09	24.76	19.39	22.31	28.38	11.75	20.76
High School (IX to X)	22.18	23.87	21.44	23.32	19.79	24.62	22.43
Higher Secondary (XI to XII)	16.31	10.50	16.70	14.83	14.75	13.35	15.73
Bachelor's degree	10.38	3.90	12.15	9.34	4.24	23.86	10.6
Diploma Degree	3.80	3.35	3.51	3.43	6.25	7.17	3.57
Post Graduate Degree	6.71	2.10	5.47	3.74	0.00	8.98	5.00
Other Higher Education	0.05	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02
Others/DK/RF	0.53	0.97	0.51	0.38	0.00	0.00	0.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.6 shows that most of the social groups except the General category in the specified population were either pursuing or had completed only primary or secondary school as their highest attained level of education. The General category population had the highest percentage of population with tertiary education at 40.01 percent. The percentage of the SC population that was either pursuing or had completed tertiary education in the district at 20.94 percent was higher than the corresponding state level estimate of 15.52 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

About 20.09 percent of the population had not received formal education in Salem district (refer Chart 3.2); the PBS investigated the ability of those who could read and write a simple sentence with understanding or functional literacy.

*Table 3.7 Functional Literacy of Population with No Formal Schooling – Area-wise Percentages*

Functional Literacy	Area Type		
	Rural	Urban	Salem
Yes	5.20	7.43	6.07
No	94.63	92.57	93.83
DK/RF	0.17	0.00	0.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.7 shows the literacy status of the population with no formal schooling in the district. Only 6.07 percent of the population without formal schooling had functional literacy. The specified population group in urban areas of the district had a slightly better functional literacy than the rural areas.

*Table 3.8 Functional Literacy of Population with No Formal Schooling - Social Group-wise Percentages*

Functional Literacy	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Yes	5.68	5.76	11.22	4.61	0.00	0.00	6.07
No	94.00	94.24	88.78	95.33	100	100	93.83
DK/RF	0.32	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.8 shows the literacy status of the population with no formal schooling, across various social groups. Functional literacy was low across all social groups. There were only 35 DNC and three General category respondents without formal schooling surveyed in the district, and none of them had functional literacy. To enhance the literacy level of the district, the activity-based learning method was introduced in the continuing education programmes for adult learners (Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission, 2017b). Further improvement in the district literacy programmes could be made for better enhancement of the adult education system in Salem district.

### 3.2.3 Employment Status

This section looks at the employment status of the household members, types of employment that they are engaged in, the unemployment rate at the district level and comparison of these findings with the state PBS estimates. In the PBS, the population aged 14 years and above has been classified as employed, unemployed and not in the labour force<sup>4</sup>.

The employed category—population aged 14 years and above—includes the following:

- (i) People who are self-employed in agriculture,
- (ii) People who are self-employed in allied agricultural activities,
- (iii) People who are self-employed in non-agricultural activities,
- (iv) People who worked as casual labourers in agriculture,
- (v) People who worked as casual labourers in industry,
- (vi) People who worked as casual labourers in the service sector,

<sup>4</sup> Percentage of population employed = (Number of employed persons 14 years and above/Total population of the district 14 years and above) \*100

Percentage of population unemployed = (Number of unemployed persons 14 years and above/Total population of the district 14 years and above) \*100

Percentage of population not in the labour force = (Number of persons 14 years and above not in workforce/Total population of the district 14 years and above) \*100



- (vii) People who worked as casual labourers in other domains,
- (viii) People who worked as salaried employees in the government sector,
- (ix) People who worked as salaried employees in the private sector,
- (x) People who are involved in multiple occupations, and
- (xi) People who are involved in other types of work.

The unemployed category includes those aged 14 years and above, who did not work but were actively seeking and/or available for work.

The not in the labour force category consists of the following:

- (i) People who attended educational institutions,
- (ii) People who attended domestic duties only,
- (iii) Rentiers, pensioners, remittance recipients, etc.,
- (iv) People who are not able to work due to disability and
- (v) Others (including begging, etc.).

*Chart 3.4 Employment Status of Population (Age 14 years and above) – Area-wise*

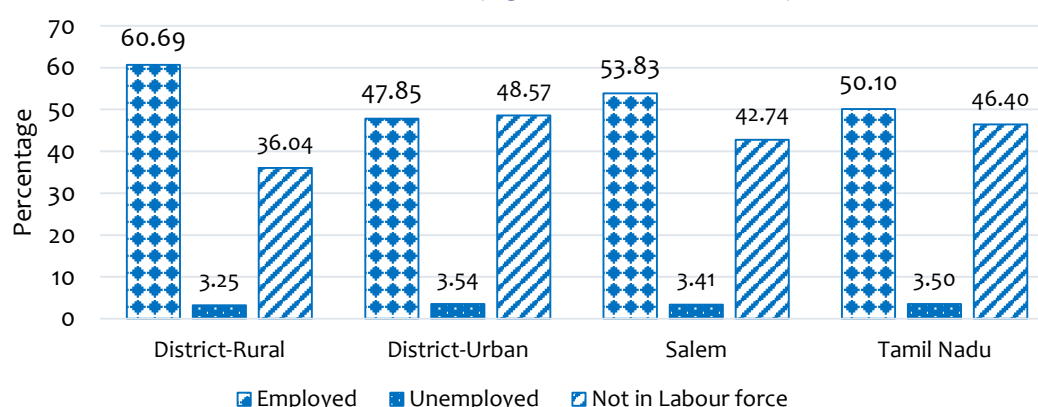


Chart 3.4 shows that the overall percentage of employed population—14 years and above—in the district was higher than the state estimate. The share of unemployed population was lower in the district compared to the state. The percentage of population that was employed was higher in rural parts of the district than the urban. The unemployment status in rural areas of the district at 3.25 percent was lower than the state's rural estimate of 3.6 percent, while the district urban unemployment status at 3.54 percent was higher than the state urban estimate of 3.3 percent. Salem district was ranked eighth among all districts in Tamil Nadu in terms of employed population and ranked eighteenth in terms of the unemployed population.

Chart 3.5 Employment Status of the Population (Age 14 years and above) – Gender-wise



Chart 3.5 shows the gender-wise employment status of the population aged 14 years and above. While almost three quarters of the male population was employed, the female work participation was a little over 35 percent. Decreased female labour force participation has been well documented at the national level (Das et al., 2015; Desai, 2017; Desai & Joshi, 2019). The district female work participation at 35.08 percent was higher than the national average of 23.3 percent in 2017-18 (National Statistical Office, 2019), and the state estimate of 29.96 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). Around 62.34 percent of the female population was not in the workforce, and among these, majority of them at 74.17 percent were associated with attending to domestic duties as homemakers (see Chart 3.7). As per the state PBS estimates, Salem district was ranked ninth in terms of employed female population and ranked ninth in terms of female unemployment.

Table 3.9 Work type of Employed Population – Area-wise Percentages

Work Type	Area Type		
	Rural	Urban	Salem
Self Employed Agriculture	8.86	3.54	6.33
Self Employed Non-Agriculture	12.33	25.7	18.68
Self Employed Allied Agriculture	1.69	0.29	1.02
Casual Labourer Agriculture	25.11	1.58	13.93
Casual Labourer Industry	9.53	20.88	14.92
Casual Labourer Service	15.21	10.61	13.03
Casual Labourer (others)	0.50	0.19	0.35
Salaried Worker Government	4.46	6.85	5.60
Salaried Worker Private	12.65	22.68	17.42
Others	0.07	0.22	0.14
Multiple Occupations	9.51	7.44	8.52
DK/RF	0.09	0.03	0.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The highest percentage of the employed population in the district was self-employed in the non-agricultural sector, followed by salaried workers in the private sector. The greatest proportion of the working population in the state was salaried workers in the private sector at 21.82 percent, as per the state PBS estimates (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). While self-employment in non-agriculture was predominant in urban areas, casual labour in agriculture was most common in rural areas of Salem district.

*Table 3.10 Percentage of Employed Population Engaged in Different Types of Livelihood Activities – Social Group-wise Percentages*

Work Type	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Self Employed Agriculture	1.69	24.96	10.4	5.01	13.11	2.31	6.33
Self Employed Non-Agriculture	8.33	4.24	22.58	21.21	6.7	46.62	18.68
Self Employed Allied Agriculture	1.39	1.04	1.23	0.75	0.00	0.00	1.02
Casual Labourer Agriculture	21.4	53.22	8.04	12.32	13.11	0.00	13.93
Casual Labourer Industry	14.20	5.15	11.68	17.98	26.36	0.00	14.92
Casual Labourer Service	14.58	1.32	9.15	15.64	1.17	0.00	13.03
Casual Labourer (others)	0.18	0.10	0.39	0.42	0.87	0.00	0.35
Salaried Worker Government	9.20	3.81	5.75	3.86	11.04	9.53	5.6
Salaried Worker Private	22.65	5.43	20.44	13.39	20.65	39.44	17.42
Others	0.30	0.12	0.19	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.14
Multiple Occupations	6.03	0.61	10.12	9.29	6.99	2.10	8.52
DK/RF	0.05	0.00	0.01	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

More than half the ST population were casual labourers in agriculture—about 53.22 percent—which was higher than the ST population in the state employed in this work type at 41.32 percent. Almost a quarter of the ST population in the district was self-employed in agriculture. Interestingly, maximum percentage of the SC and DNC population was engaged in salaried work in the private sector. Most of the BC, MBC and General category population was self-employed in the non-agricultural sector in the district.

**Chart 3.6 Composition of Population Not in the Labour Force – Area-wise**

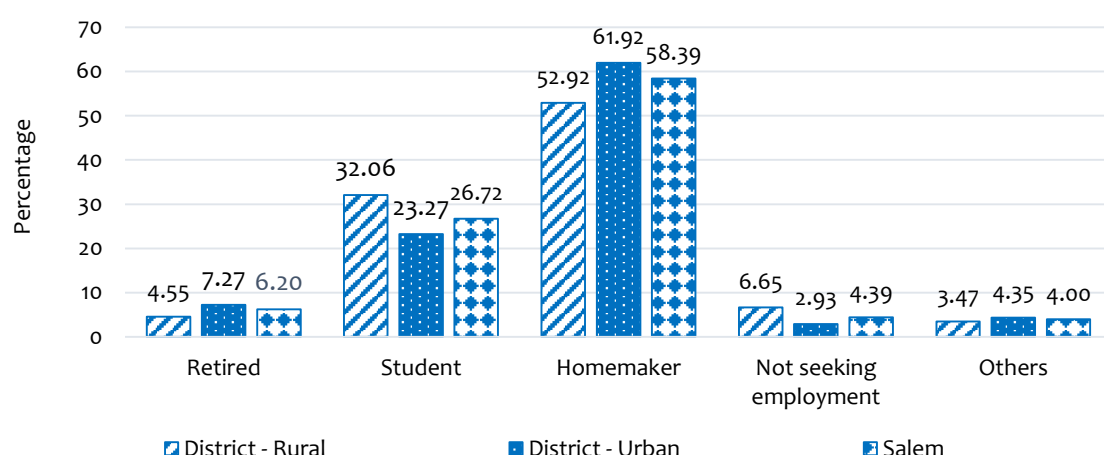
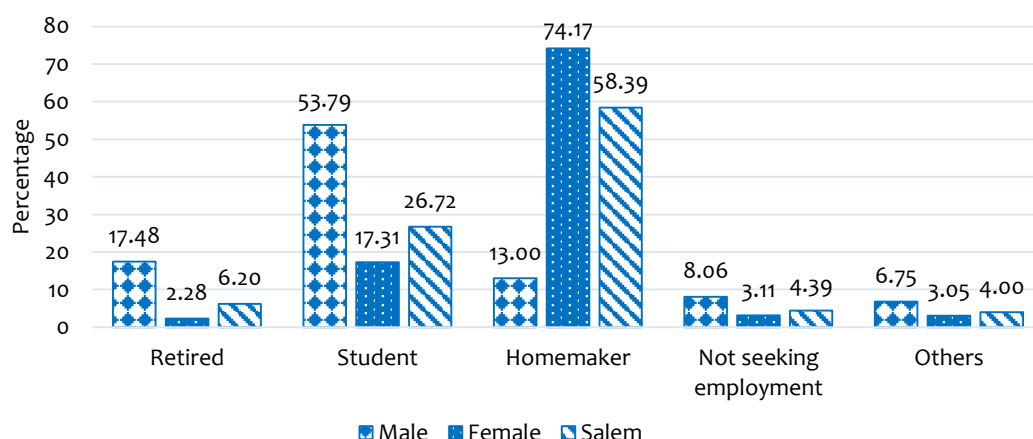


Chart 3.6 shows that similar to the trend at the state level (TNHPS-PBS, 2021), more than half the population that was not in the labour force in the district comprised homemakers involved in unpaid domestic duties of the household, followed by students. The proportions of the population that were not seeking employment or were students were higher in rural areas than urban areas, whereas the percentages of retired people and homemakers were higher in urban areas than rural areas.

**Chart 3.7 Composition of the Population Not in the Labour Force – Gender-wise**



The gender-wise distribution of the population currently not in the labour force is given in Chart 3.7. While Chart 3.3 represents the lower female involvement in formal education, Chart 3.7 shows the staggeringly lower female involvement in higher education compared to men as only 17.31 percent of the female not-in-labour-force population were students. Similar to the state trend, majority of the male not-in-labour-force population were students, whereas a majority of females were homemakers. It must be noted that the study did not capture unpaid domestic labour or any other form of unpaid labour carried out by women.

*Table 3.11 Composition of Population Not in the Labour Force - Social Group-wise Percentages*

Current Status	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Retired	9.15	1.09	7.53	3.58	0.00	12.30	6.20
Student	30.15	37.32	23.88	27.66	10.02	18.68	26.72
Homemaker	49.93	47.92	61.70	59.46	57.05	68.74	58.39
Not seeking employment	5.07	7.25	2.12	6.10	1.77	0.19	4.39
Others	5.42	6.43	4.52	2.83	31.16	0.09	4.00
DK/RF	0.28	0.00	0.25	0.37	0.00	0.00	0.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.11 shows that within all social groups, the percentage of homemakers was the largest category in the district. The ST and SC categories had a higher percentage of not-working population as students compared to the other social groups. Although majority of the employed SC and ST population were casual labourers (see Table 3.10), the not-working population belonging to the student category was high for these two social groups, probably suggesting increasing awareness on the importance of education. There were only 31 DNC respondents in the specified population surveyed in the district and hence their results must be interpreted in this context.

### *3.3 Socio-Economic Indicators*

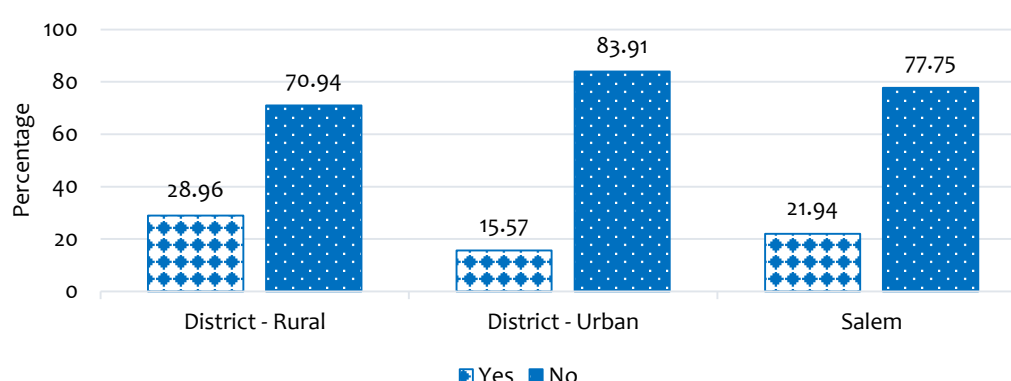
The PBS estimates for various socio-economic indicators of Salem district such as ownership of agricultural land, household assets and income are discussed in this section.

#### *3.3.1 Ownership of Agricultural Land*

The PBS estimates of ownership of agricultural land at the household level in the rural and urban areas of Salem district is given in Chart 3.8. The TNHPS PBS definition of land ownership does not include leased-in land or other forms of holdings. Data were collected on the ownership of agricultural land only. The fourth round of National Family Health Survey (NFHS, 2015-16) was a secondary source of data that followed the same definition for ownership of agricultural land.



**Chart 3.8 Ownership of Agricultural Land**



The percentage of households owning agricultural land in the district was higher than that at the state level at 19.41 percent. The district was ranked thirteenth in the state in terms of agricultural land ownership (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). A similar proportion of rural households in the district owned agricultural land compared to the state rural estimate of 29 percent, while the percentage of urban land ownership was higher than the state urban estimate of 8.61 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

**Table 3.12 Type of Agricultural Land Owned by the Households – Area-wise Percentages**

Type of Agricultural Land	Area Type		
	Rural	Urban	Salem
Only Irrigated Agriculture Land	35.45	37.11	36.06
Only Unirrigated Agriculture Land	58.01	48.81	54.61
Both Irrigated and Unirrigated Agriculture Land	6.29	14.04	9.16
DK/RF	0.25	0.05	0.18
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.12 shows that, as per the PBS estimates, more than half the households that owned agricultural land in Salem district depended on rain-fed irrigation alone. Salem district is predominantly dry due to low rainfall and very limited irrigation potential. Wells, bore wells, dams and tanks are the major sources of irrigation in the district (Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission, 2017b). A higher percentage of urban households owned irrigated agricultural land compared to the rural households in the district. The proportion of households having irrigated agricultural land was lower in the district at 36.06 percent compared to the state PBS estimate at 50.03 percent.

An analysis of the social group-wise ownership of agricultural land by households in Table 3.13 showed that a relatively higher percentage of the ST and DNC households owned agricultural land in the district compared to other social groups. A significant number of

MBC households and BC households also owned agricultural land in the district. Agricultural land ownership was the least among the General category households.

*Table 3.13 Ownership of Agricultural Land – Social Group-wise Percentages*

Agricultural Land Ownership	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Yes	12.51	45.15	22.04	25.52	36.88	9.59	21.94
No	87.21	54.85	77.62	74.14	63.12	90.25	77.75
DK/RF	0.28	0.00	0.34	0.34	0.00	0.16	0.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on the size of agricultural land, the PBS classified the land owned by the households into marginal, small, semi-medium, medium, and large. Of the households that owned agricultural land, the percentage of households under each size category is given in Table 3.14.

*Table 3.14 Size of Agriculture Land Owned by the Households – Area-wise Percentages*

Size of Agricultural Land (in Hectares)	Area Type		
	Rural	Urban	Salem
Marginal (0.01 - 0.99)	73.65	75.66	74.39
Small (1 - 1.99)	19.14	15.61	17.85
Semi Medium (2 - 3.99)	5.59	6.74	6.01
Medium (4 - 9.99)	1.47	1.63	1.53
Large (10 and above)	0.15	0.35	0.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.14 shows that 92.24 percent of the agricultural land-owning households in the district were holding marginal or small agricultural lands—less than two hectares. This figure is higher than the state level estimate of 89.33 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). The shares of semi-medium, medium, and large landholdings were lesser than that of the state—which was 7.64 percent, 2.26 percent and 0.77 percent respectively.

### *3.3.2 Ownership of Agriculture, Allied Agricultural and Fishing Assets*

In this section, we discuss the ownership of agricultural, allied agricultural and fishing assets such as tractor, pump set, dairy animals, poultry birds, mechanized and non-mechanized boats, amongst the households of Salem district.

*Chart 3.9 Ownership of Agriculture, Allied Agricultural and Fishing Assets – Area-wise*

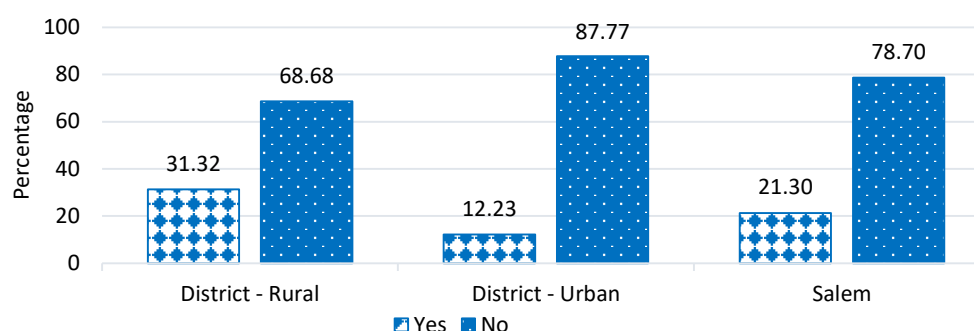
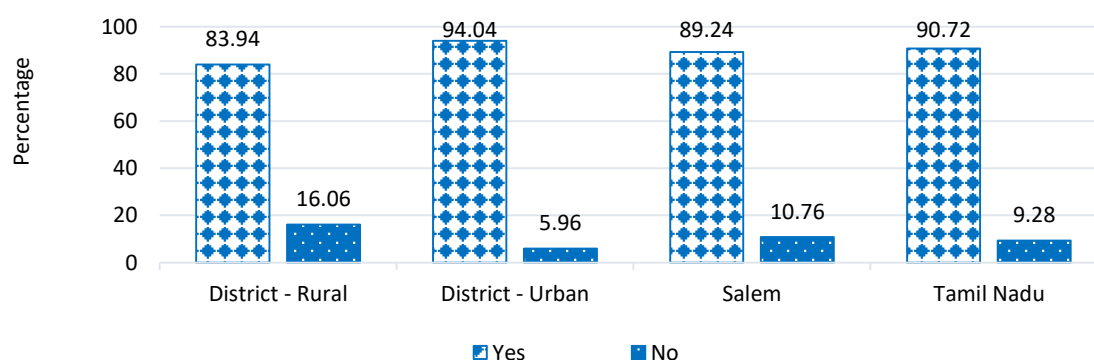


Chart 3.9 shows that 21.30 percent of the households in Salem district owned at least one agricultural, allied agricultural or fishing asset. This estimate was higher than the state PBS estimate of 20.92 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). The ownership of such assets was higher in rural areas than urban areas. The ownership pattern in rural areas was lower than the state rural estimate of 32.69 percent, while the district urban estimate was higher than the state urban estimate of 7.67 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

### *3.3.3 Presence of Household Assets*

Chart 3.10 shows the percentage of households in Salem district that owned at least one household asset. Household assets include Air Conditioner (AC), refrigerator, two-wheeler, four-wheeler, and mobile phones. The state PBS estimates found that the combination of mobile phone and two-wheeler were the predominantly owned assets in rural areas whereas a combination of refrigerator, two-wheeler and mobile phone was largely owned in the urban areas.

*Chart 3.10 Ownership of at least one Household Asset – Area-wise*



The percentage of households owning at least one household asset in Salem district was slightly lower than the state estimate. Within the district, the urban areas had a higher percentage of households owning at least one household asset compared to the rural areas.

The social group-wise ownership of household assets in Salem district is given in Table 3.15.

*Table 3.15 Presence of at least one Household Asset - Social Group-wise Percentages*

Presence of Household Asset	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Yes	88.20	83.99	92.73	87.22	85.06	99.53	89.24
No	11.80	16.01	7.27	12.78	14.94	0.47	10.76
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The PBS estimates showed that while almost all General category households owned at least one household asset, only 83.99 percent of the ST households and 85.06 percent of DNC households in the district owned any such asset. This means that around 16 percent of the ST households did not even own a mobile phone.

### 3.3.4 Possession of Ration Card

Possession of a ration card can be treated as a determinant of socio-economic status at the household level. It plays a vital role in inclusion—or exclusion—of households from the government welfare schemes such as the availability of subsidized items from the Public Distribution System and subsidized LPG connection, for instance. The percentages of households that possessed a ration card in rural and urban areas of Salem district are given in Chart 3.11.

*Chart 3.11 Possession of Ration Card*

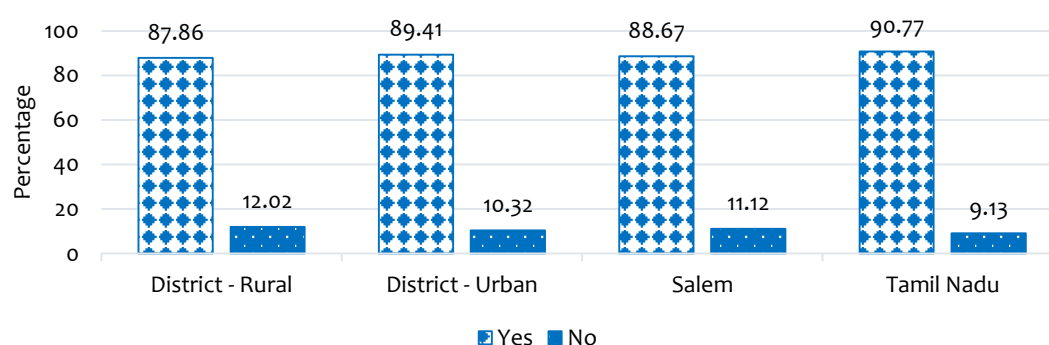


Chart 3.11 shows that the percentage of households that possessed a ration card in the district was lower than the state estimate. Within the district, interestingly, a higher percentage of urban households possessed ration cards compared to the rural households.

*Table 3.16 Possession of Ration Card at the Household Level - Social Group-wise Percentages*

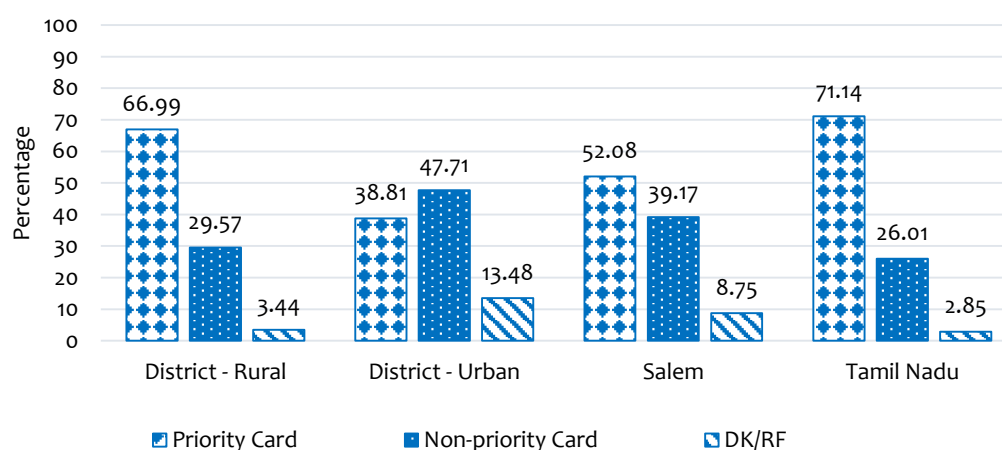
Possession of Ration Card	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Yes	87.26	86.40	89.27	89.07	84.37	98.49	88.67
No	12.40	13.60	10.73	10.62	15.63	1.51	11.12
DK/RF	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

More than 80 percent of households belonging to all social groups possessed ration cards in the district. Possession of ration card was higher among the General category households in the district compared to the state estimate for the General category at 85.21 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). Possession of ration card was least among the DNC households in the district.

### 3.3.5 Type of Ration Card

According to the National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013, ration cards are broadly categorized into Priority Households (PHH) and Non-Priority Households (NPHH). Households with priority ration card are the target group of various social welfare schemes such as Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) among others. The percentages of households possessing priority and non-priority ration cards in rural and urban areas of Salem district are given in Chart 3.12.

*Chart 3.12 Type of Ration Card at the Household Level*



The percentage of households possessing priority ration cards in the district was much lesser compared to the state level estimate. A higher percentage of rural households possessed priority cards than urban households. A large fraction of households, especially in the urban areas, refused to answer this question.



### 3.4 Household Income

#### 3.4.1 Annual Household Income from Various Sources in the year 2017-2018

In this section, we analyze the annual income of households in Salem district from various sources in the financial year 2017-2018. The sources of income include income earned from agriculture, allied agriculture, salaried work, self-employed labour, wage labour and other sources. The category 'other sources' consists of income sources such as pension, remittances, investments, and other mixed categories. Table 3.17 shows the mean income of households that depended on various sources of income in Salem district.

*Table 3.17 Mean Annual Household Income from Different Sources in the FY 2017-2018 (INR)*

Source	Rural	Urban	Salem	Tamil Nadu
Agriculture	39,444	40,576	39,826	61,830
Allied Agriculture	26,395	24,474	26,062	38,576
Salaried	145,954	212,160	185,702	229,857
Self Employed	86,556	148,009	126,675	147,403
Wage Labour	44,448	56,640	49,566	47,734
Other Sources	35,808	116,857	84,720	97,646
<b>Income from all Sources</b>	<b>93,128</b>	<b>160,940</b>	<b>128,923</b>	<b>142,752</b>

The mean annual household income of Salem district was 9.69 percent lower than the state estimate of ₹1,42,752. The mean household income was higher among the households with salaried income and lower among the households that depended on allied agricultural activities. The source of income was low due to inconsistent job opportunities from agriculture and tourism (Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission, 2017b). Among the then 32 districts, Salem was ranked eleventh in terms of mean annual household income (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

In rural areas of Salem district, the mean household income was ₹93,128, which was higher than the state rural estimate of ₹92,765 (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). The mean household income was higher among the households that depended on salaried income. Lower mean income was reported among the households that engaged in allied agriculture activities as a source of income.

In urban areas of Salem district, the mean household income was ₹1,60,940, which was lower than the state urban estimate of ₹1,99,629 (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). The mean household income was higher among the households that depended on salaried income. Lower mean income was reported among the households that depended on agriculture.

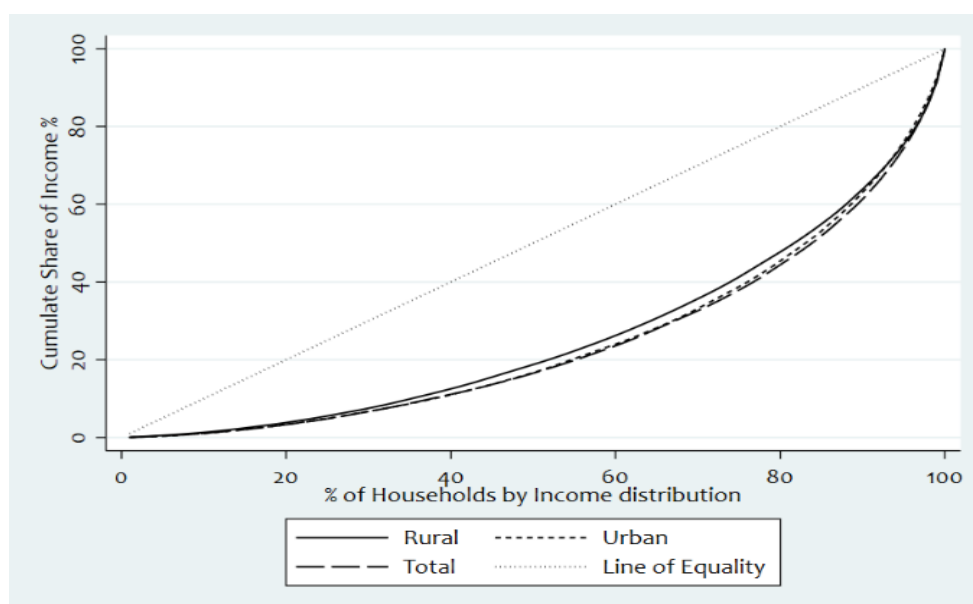
### 3.4.2 Income Inequality in Salem District

The Gini coefficient measures inequality levels in income or wealth where the coefficient value of 0 denotes perfect equality and 1 denotes perfect inequality (across households). The income inequality in Salem district (0.511) was lower than the state estimate (0.563)<sup>5</sup>. Income inequality across households in urban areas of the district was found to be higher than the rural areas.

**Table 3.18 Gini Coefficient of Income Inequality- Area-wise**

Area	Gini coefficient
Rural	0.478
Urban	0.503
Salem	0.511
<b>Tamil Nadu</b>	<b>0.563</b>

**Chart 3.13 Lorenz Curve and Income Inequality**



The Lorenz curve is a graphical representation of inequality in the distribution of income or wealth of households. Chart 3.13 shows that in Salem, the bottom 60 percent of the households held around 25 percent of the total income; the bottom 80 percent of households held around 45 percent of the total income and the top 20 percent of households held around 55 percent of the total income.

<sup>5</sup> Other studies have estimated the Gini coefficient for Tamil Nadu, for instance - Chandrasekhar *et al.* (2021) estimated the Gini coefficient of income inequality for Tamil Nadu as 0.378 in 2018-19 using data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) (2018-19).

### 3.4.3 Households' Expectation of Change in their Income in the Next 5 Years

Besides the present income of the households (in the year 2017-18), the PBS had also investigated the households' expectation of change in income in the next five years. The expectation of a household head on the change in the household's income in the future depends on various factors such as probability of a household member's entry (or exit) to (or from) the labour market, expected possession of financial and non-financial assets and so on. These variables can capture the level of optimism—or pessimism—that each household had about their future economic status.

Table 3.19 shows the area-wise percentage of households expecting an increase, decrease or no change in income in Salem district.

*Table 3.19 Households' Expectation of Change in Income in the Next 5 Years – Area-wise Percentages*

Expectation of Change in Income	Area Type			
	Rural	Urban	Salem	Tamil Nadu
Higher	46.01	74.48	60.95	50.06
Lower	10.40	4.44	7.27	8.17
About the same	42.77	18.42	29.99	31.66
DK/RF	0.82	2.66	1.79	10.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

While a majority of the urban households in the district expected their income to increase in the following five years, the percentage of households expecting a decline in their future income was higher in rural areas compared to urban areas. Almost 30 percent of the households in the district anticipated their future income to remain the same.

*Table 3.20 Households' Expectation of Change in Income in the Next 5 Years - Social Group-wise Percentages*

Expectation of Change in Income	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Higher	65.01	43.01	60.95	60.3	30.06	63.27	60.95
Lower	8.82	0.58	9.67	5.08	0.00	9.59	7.27
About the same	25.43	55.93	26.93	32.85	66.73	23.82	29.99
DK/RF	0.74	0.49	2.46	1.78	3.21	3.31	1.79
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

While more than 60 percent of the SC, General, BC, and MBC households in Salem district expected an increase in their future income, less than half the ST and DNC households expected the same. Close to ten percent of the BC and General category households expected a decline in their future income.

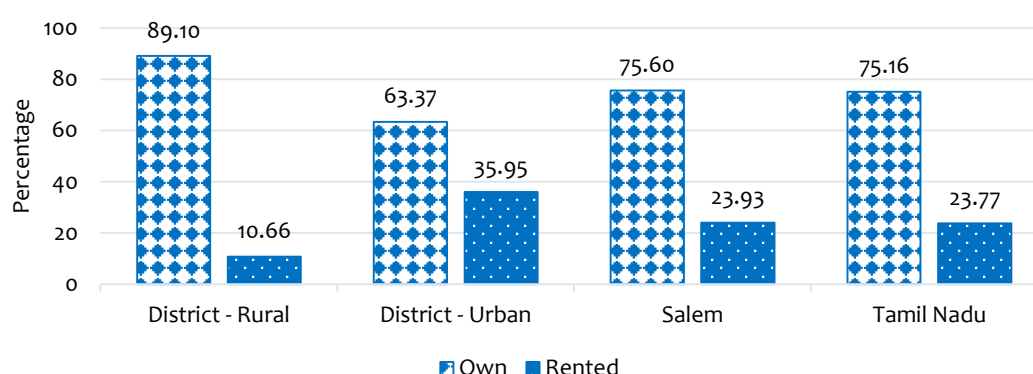
### 3.5 Basic Infrastructure

In this section, we discuss the PBS estimates of variables such as ownership and type of houses, electrification status, drinking water and sanitation.

#### 3.5.1 House Ownership Status

The area-wise percentages of households that live in their own house or stay at a rented house are given in Chart 3.14.

Chart 3.14 Ownership Status of the Households' Dwelling/House – Area-wise



The proportion of households living in their own house in the district was similar to the state level estimate. Salem district was ranked twenty first among the then 32 districts of Tamil Nadu in terms of percentage of households living in their own house (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). While most of the households in rural areas lived in their own house, a relatively large proportion of urban households were relying on rented houses for their stay. Only less than 0.5 percent of households were living in other houses such as relative's house, encroachments etc. This data does not capture the ownership of a house in a different geographical location.

Table 3.21 Ownership Status of the Households' Dwelling/House - Social Group-wise Percentages

Ownership Status	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Own	78.49	90.65	62.45	84.27	81.70	57.82	75.60
Rented	20.14	9.35	37.26	15.53	18.30	42.02	23.93
Others	1.37	0.00	0.29	0.20	0.00	0.16	0.47
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 3.21 shows the social group-wise ownership status of the respondents' house. Majority of the ST and MBC households lived in an own house whereas a relatively lower

percentage of General and BC households did so. The percentage of BC and General category households living in rented houses was higher than the state estimates of BC and General category households – 30.62 percent and 36.40 percent respectively (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

A detailed analysis of ownership of houses showed that out of the 75.60 percent households (see Chart 3.14) that lived in an own house in the district, 13.05 percent of houses was built under a government scheme, which was lower than the state estimate of 14.12 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). The social group-wise analysis of this parameter is given below.

*Table 3.22 House Constructed Under a Government Scheme - Social Group-wise Percentages*

House Constructed under a Government Scheme	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Yes	35.23	28.50	6.63	6.37	7.85	0.00	13.05
No	64.61	71.50	93.37	93.57	92.15	100	86.89
DK/RF	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.22 shows that house-owning SC and ST households had the highest percentage of houses built under a government scheme compared to other social groups in the district. There were only 35 DNC and 51 General category respondents living in an own house surveyed in the district and hence their results must be interpreted in this context.

### 3.5.2 House Type

Based on the material used for wall/roof or the quality of the house, the PBS classifies a house as kutccha, pucca or semi-pucca. The percentage of houses that come under each type are given below.

*Chart 3.15 Type of House – Area-wise*

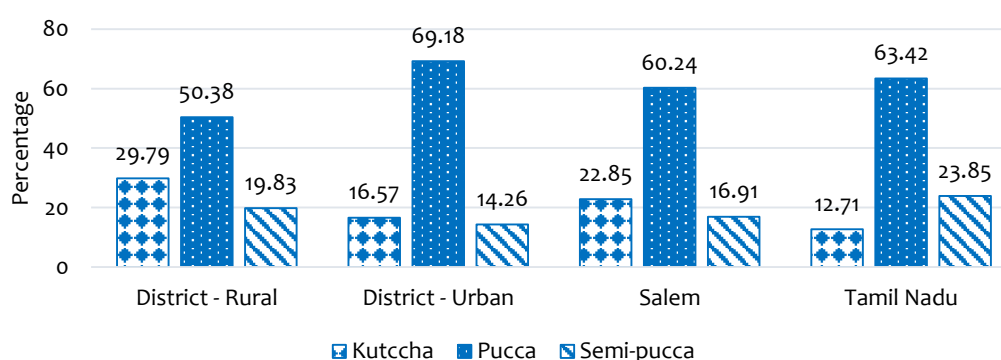


Chart 3.15 shows that a majority of households in Salem district was living in pucca houses.



The district estimates on households living in pucca houses was lower than the state estimate. The percentage of urban households living in pucca houses in the district was higher than rural households, but lower than the state urban estimate of 75.22 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

### 3.5.3 Primary Drinking Water Source

In this section, we discuss on the PBS findings on primary source of drinking water of the households in Salem district. The primary sources<sup>6</sup> of water are: bottled water, piped water into dwelling, piped water to yard or plot, public tap or standpipe, and tube well or borehole. Other water sources include protected well, unprotected well, rainwater collection and surface water (tank/pond/river/dam).

Chart 3.16 Primary Source of Drinking Water of Households

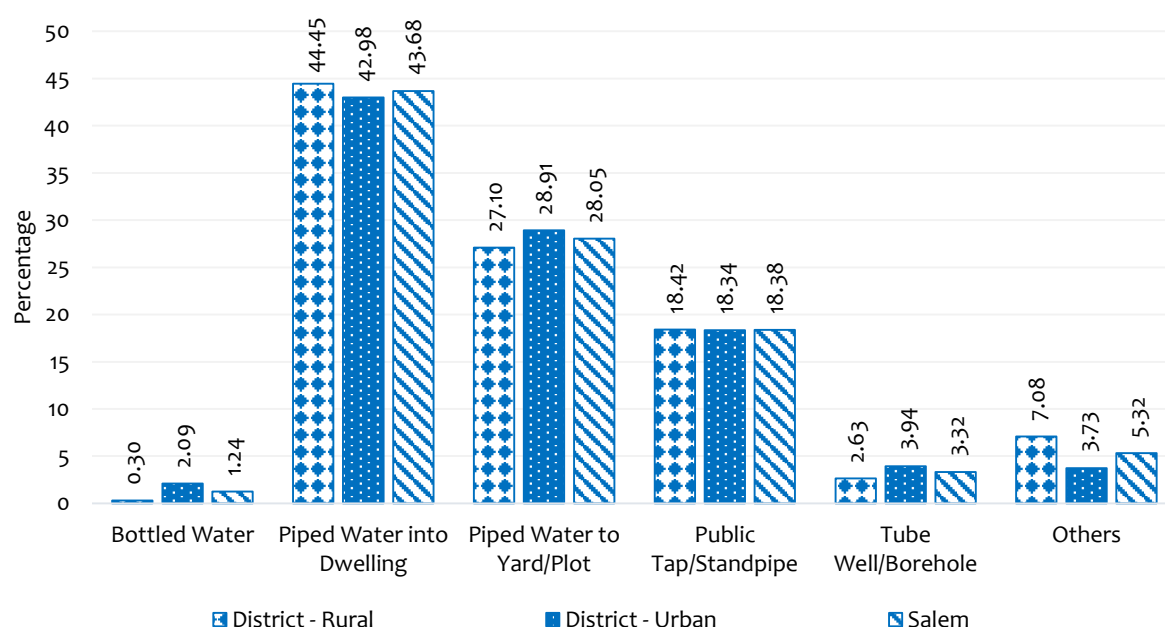


Chart 3.16 shows that 43.68 percent of households in Salem district was using piped water into dwelling as their primary source of drinking water, which is higher than the state estimate of 32.04 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). While the state estimates showed that piped water into the dwelling in urban areas at 37.02 percent and public tap/standpipe in rural areas at 44.51 percent were the primary water sources of households (TNHPS-PBS, 2021), in Salem district, piped water into dwelling was predominantly used both in urban and rural households.

<sup>6</sup> Primary source - Water that is availed for the greater part of the year

### 3.5.4 Electricity

Tamil Nadu had witnessed mass electrification drive during the last decade. A comparison of households with an electricity connection between Census (2011) and the state PBS estimates in 2018 (TNHPS-PBS, 2021) showed that the state was close to achieving complete electrification in case of urban areas. The electrification status had improved in rural areas as well.

*Chart 3.17 Comparison of Households with Electricity between Census (2011) and PBS 2018*

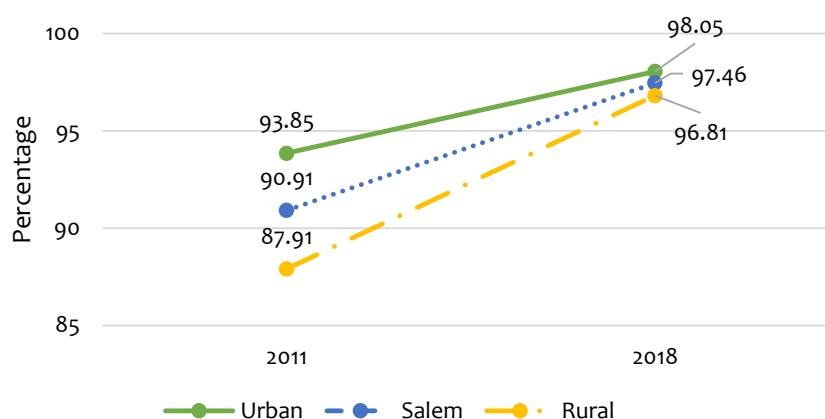


Chart 3.17 shows mass electrification had happened in both rural and urban areas of Salem district during the period 2011-18, with the rate of growth of electrification being higher in rural areas. Salem district was ranked sixteenth among the then 32 districts in terms of electrification as per the state PBS estimates, though there was no significant difference in electrification between the district at 97.46 percent and the state estimate of 97.6 percent (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

### 3.5.5 Primary Cooking Fuel

A comparison of Census (2011) and the PBS estimates on the main fuel<sup>7</sup> used for cooking by the households in the district is given in Chart 3.18.

<sup>7</sup> Main Fuel: Fuel that is used for the greater part of the year

Chart 3.18 Comparison of Primary Cooking Fuel – District and State

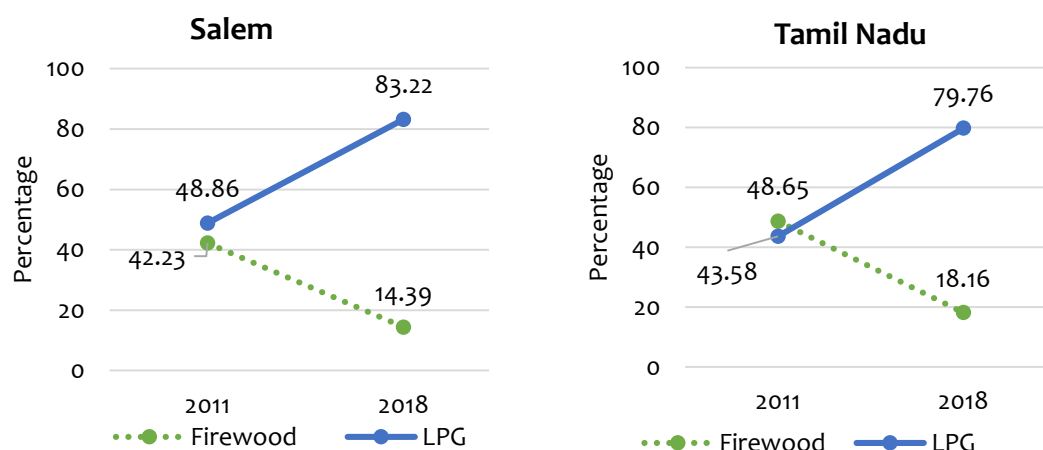


Chart 3.18 shows that, although the use of LPG as the primary cooking fuel in Salem district had increased tremendously from 2011 to 2018, firewood was still used by more than 14 percent of the households in the district. Compared to other districts of Tamil Nadu, Salem district was ranked thirteenth in terms of LPG use and twentieth in terms of firewood use as the primary cooking fuel (TNHPS-PBS, 2021).

Chart 3.19 Comparison of Primary Cooking Fuel – Rural and Urban

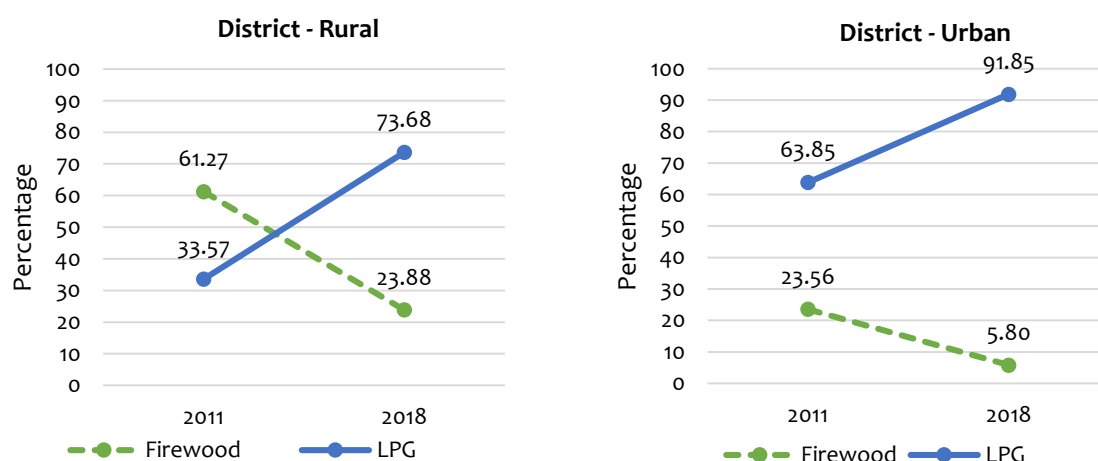


Chart 3.19 shows that the predominant fuel in rural areas of the district had changed drastically from firewood to LPG in the period 2011-18. LPG uptake had increased further in urban areas, and that of firewood had dropped to just over five percent during the same period.

*Table 3.23 Primary Cooking Fuel used in Household - Social Group-wise Percentages*

Primary Cooking Fuel	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Firewood	21.05	20.93	8.39	15.74	6.41	2.89	14.39
Kerosene	3.20	0.56	1.64	0.92	0.00	2.94	1.64
LPG	75.36	78.51	89.11	82.45	93.59	93.69	83.22
Others	0.40	0.00	0.68	0.72	0.00	0.47	0.62
DK/RF	0.00	0.00	0.19	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

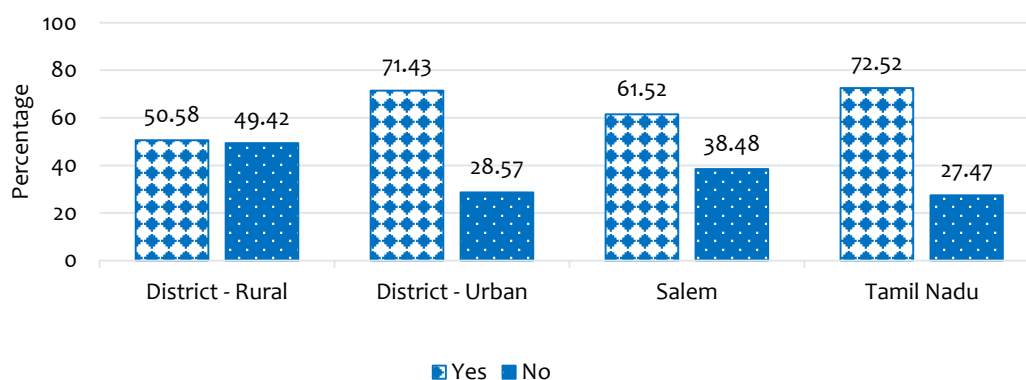
\*Others Include Electricity, Gobar Gas, Solar Energy, etc.

Table 3.23 shows that more than 90 percent of General and DNC category households used LPG as the primary cooking fuel. A considerably higher percentage of SC (75.36 percent) and BC (89.11 percent) households was using LPG as primary cooking fuel compared to the state estimates of 70.00 percent and 85.9 percent respectively (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). However, more than 20 percent of SC and ST households were still using firewood as the primary cooking fuel in the district.

### 3.5.6 Sanitation

The PBS estimates on households with and without latrine in the district is given in Chart 3.20.

*Chart 3.20 Presence of Latrine within the Premises of the Household*



The percentage of households with latrine within house premises had increased from 34.95 percent in 2011 (Census 2011) to 61.52 percent in 2018. Salem district was positioned twenty third in the state among the 32 districts in terms of this indicator (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). The percentage of households equipped with latrine facilities in the district was lower than the state level estimate. A greater percentage of urban households were equipped with latrine facilities compared to rural households. It is pertinent to note that 38.48 percent of the rural households did not have access to a latrine within their house premises.

*Table 3.24 Presence of Latrine within the premises of the Household - Social Group-wise Percentages*

Latrine within House Premises	Social Group						
	SC	ST	BC	MBC	DNC	General	Salem
Yes	56.67	44.57	80.91	49.07	51.39	96.64	61.52
No	43.33	55.43	19.09	50.93	48.61	3.36	38.48
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.24 shows the wide disparity in presence of latrine within the premises of the household across various social groups. More than 95 percent of the General category households had a latrine within the house premises, less than half the ST, MBC and DNC population did so. The percentages of ST and MBC households with latrine access within the house premises in the district were considerably lower than their respective state level estimates - which was 56.0 percent, 67.5 percent and 65.2 percent respectively (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). Only a little over half the DNC and SC households had latrine facilities within the house premises.

*Chart 3.21 Presence of Latrine in the Premises of Different Types of Houses – Area-wise*

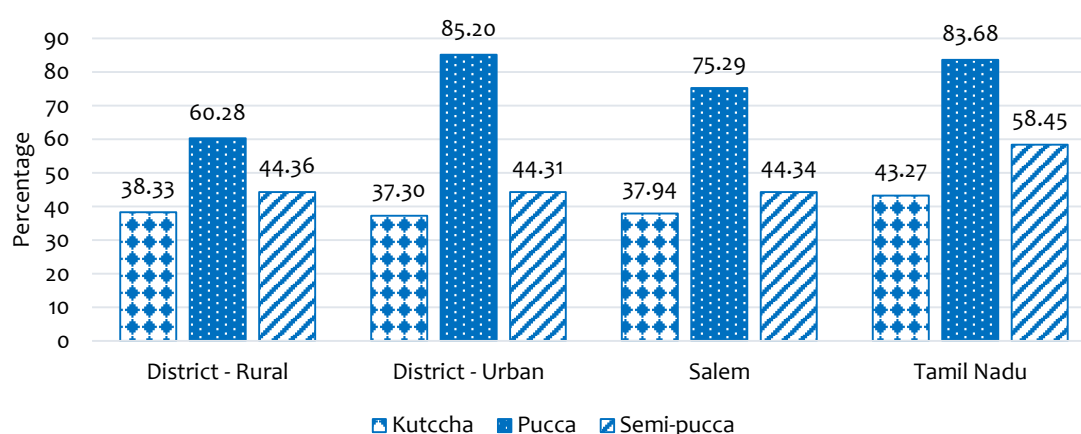


Chart 3.21 shows that the percentage of pucca houses with latrine facilities was higher than for semi-pucca and kutcha houses in the district. The percentages of latrine facilities in kutcha, pucca and semi-pucca houses in the district were lower than their respective state estimates. A higher percentage of pucca houses in urban areas in the district had latrine facilities than rural areas, but interestingly, the percentage of kutcha and semi-pucca houses with a latrine was slightly higher in rural areas than in urban areas of the district.

The percentage of total households in the district practicing open defecation had declined from 53.88 percent in 2011 (Census, 2011) to 31.54 percent in 2018 (TNHPS-PBS, 2021). The alternative practices of defecation followed by 38.48 percent of the district's households (see Chart 3.20) that did not have a latrine within the premises of the house is shown in Chart 3.22.

Chart 3.22 Alternate Practices of Defecation by the Households without Latrine

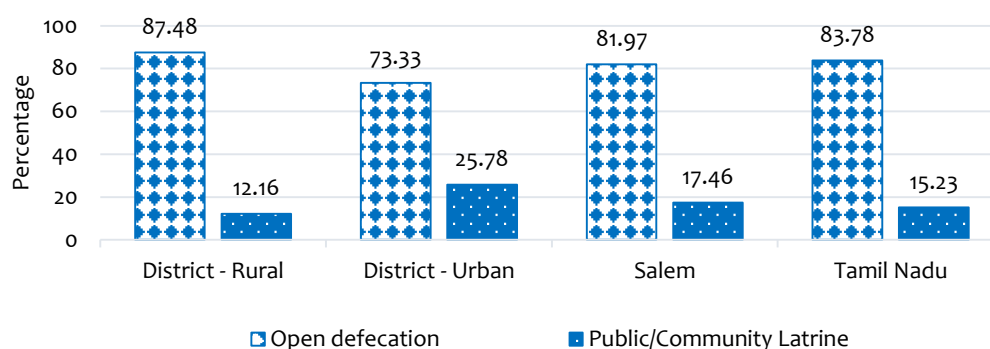


Chart 3.22 shows that more than 80 percent of households without latrine within the house premises in the district were practicing open defecation, which was slightly lower than the state level estimate. The practice of open defecation by these households was higher in rural areas compared to urban areas of the district. As per the state PBS report, Salem district was ranked eighth in terms of the percentage of total households practicing open defecation.

## 4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The Pre-Baseline Survey of Salem district was conducted from a sample of 8,616 households in the district who were willing to participate in the survey. The survey focused on five major indicators: i) demographic indicators, ii) development indicators, iii) socio-economic indicators, iv) household income and v) basic infrastructure.

The district achieved a series of favourable estimates such as the high Female labour force participation which surpassed the state estimates. Salem is ranked eleventh out of 32 districts in terms of average household income, indicating relative economic prosperity. The Gini coefficient, a measure of income inequality, is lower than the state estimate, highlighting a more equitable distribution of income. Additionally, the district outperforms the state estimates in providing piped water to households as a drinking water source.

However, more serious challenges persist. Salem district is ranked twenty-third in literacy rates among Tamil Nadu districts, indicating room for improvement. Additionally, a significant gender gap in literacy rates and formal schooling attainment is observed, with rural areas experiencing a more pronounced gap. Despite a favourable female workforce participation rate, an analysis of non-working females over the age of 14 in Salem district indicates a significant proportion engaged in homemaking. In contrast, a considerable portion of males in the same demographic are pursuing education as students. Despite improvements in female formal education, the gender disparity persists, with female workforce participation significantly trailing behind males. Addressing this phenomenon, coupled with the high prevalence of females engaged as homemakers, is imperative for closing the gender gap in the Salem district.

A distinct social group-specific pattern emerged in the type of work undertaken, with the ST population predominantly engaged as casual labourers in the agricultural sector, often receiving lower wages. Furthermore, more social group-wise disparities are also evident in education attainment in Salem, with a lower prevalence of formal education among ST households compared to other social groups. Targeted policies focusing on females and marginalised groups are crucial to achieving a more balanced and equitable distribution of education and employment in the district.

The social disparities persist in household-level amenities as well wherein approximately 24 percent of rural households and over 20 percent of SC and ST households in Salem district persist in using firewood as their primary cooking fuel. The absence of latrines is high among ST, MBC, and DNC households in the district, emphasizing the necessity for social group-specific strategies to promote latrine adoption within homes. To address the



disparities in latrine access, targeted policies should be formulated, especially considering the social group-specific variations. Such measures are crucial for ensuring equitable access to improved cooking facilities and sanitation infrastructure in the Salem district.

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**A collaborative project between  
Department of Economics and Statistics &  
Madras Institute of Development Studies**

The Tamil Nadu Household Panel Survey (TNHPS) is designed as a longitudinal survey where a set of sample households in Tamil Nadu will be surveyed at specific intervals to analyse the change in their socio-economic conditions over time. The TNHPS aims to analyse how individuals, families, communities, and society are transforming in Tamil Nadu. Understanding this transformation is important for informed policy-making and for society in today's modern world where open links with other states and countries lead to enormous movement of people, ideas, technology, capital, and goods and services. The Pre-Baseline Survey (PBS) elicited information from 2,12,282 households across different districts of Tamil Nadu on a comprehensive set of socio-economic indicators. This serves as the sampling frame for the Baseline Survey (BLS) of subsequent rounds of comprehensive surveys of 7,45,653 individuals in the state.

Based on the information collected during the PBS 2018-19, this report provides a baseline on key socio-economic and demographic indicators of the district along with brief notes on the methods and processes followed in collecting, processing and analysis of data. As the first state-level initiative for collecting comprehensive household panel data through digital data collection methods, TNHPS emerges as an important source of information for evidence-based policymaking in the state.



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