
Subject: Maratha & Mahar caste codes (NFHS 1, 1992-93, India)

Posted by [ambudon](#) on Sat, 11 Mar 2017 04:09:09 GMT

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Dear All,

I was going through the caste codes (the pdf file), and noticed that the two prominent castes in Maharashtra - Maratha and Mahar are not mentioned in this list, while 1931 census had mentioned and enumerated these castes.

Why are they not mentioned in NFHS 1992-93 codes? Am i missing something? Any lead would be helpful.

Thank you so much for your time and help,
Ambrish

Subject: Re: Maratha & Mahar caste codes (NFHS 1, 1992-93, India)

Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Wed, 15 Mar 2017 12:44:47 GMT

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Following is a response from Senior DHS Specialist, Fred Arnold:

Both of those castes were included in the NFHS-1 caste list, which came directly from the 1931 Census. You have to look in List III (Showing Sub-divisions and Synonyms Included in List I). Code 1968 is Maratha, code 1969 is Maratha Sudha, and code 2307 is Mahar.

Subject: Re: Maratha & Mahar caste codes (NFHS 1, 1992-93, India)

Posted by [ambudon](#) on Wed, 15 Mar 2017 12:52:43 GMT

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Dear Fred,

First of all, thank you for your reply.

But there seems to be something missing.

I am using "sh035" as the variable for caste. When I tab this variable for the state of Maharashtra, I find that none of the households have the code 1968/1969 or for that matter 21 (under which 1968 and 1969 are listed). Similarly, none of the households have code 2307.

This is surprising for the reason that Marathas constitute a significant fraction of Maharashtra's population. The often used India Development Survey (IHDS), implemented by Univ. of Maryland, shows that Maratha households constitute more than 25% of the surveyed households.

I am just wondering what's going on. So sorry for bothering, and thanks once again for all the

help.

Subject: Re: Maratha & Mahar caste codes (NFHS 1, 1992-93, India)

Posted by [fredarnold](#) on Wed, 15 Mar 2017 20:36:45 GMT

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It's very difficult to try to figure out what happened in the coding of castes 25 years ago at the time of NFHS-1. The coding of castes was done in the central office, and all the office coders had the entire list of 1931 Census caste codes that they used to code the caste names. My guess is that because Marathas and Mahars were on List III (which was not used very often), they may have missed those codes since they would have been difficult to find. Many of those cases probably went into the "Other caste" code, which includes 19% of all cases. Another possibility is that many of the Maratha cases were recorded as Kunbis. In NFHS-1, 32% of the cases were coded as Kunbis. Historically, in parts of Maharashtra (particularly in Pune District), Kunbi and Maratha were synonymous, and there was a caste complex known as Maratha-Kunbi. In Pune, Marathas were one class of Kunbis. Mahars mostly followed Dr. Ambedkar in converting to Buddhism, so you may want to look at the Buddhist/neo-Buddhist religious category to see what castes they reported. I don't think we can go any further with this, but you may want to contact Guilhem Cassan at the University of Namur, who has done a lot of work with the NFHS-1 caste data to see if he has any additional thoughts.

Subject: Re: Maratha & Mahar caste codes (NFHS 1, 1992-93, India)

Posted by [ambudon](#) on Thu, 16 Mar 2017 11:23:09 GMT

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Dear Fred,

Thank you so much. My own sense is that Marathas are clubbed with 'Kunbi'. Interestingly, in NFHS 2 and 3, the raw caste names are provided, which is not the case with NFHS 1.

Nevertheless, thank you once again. And I will get in touch with the person you mentioned in the email.
