AN ADVANCED MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF INDIA'S CENSUS 2027: ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS, BEHAVIOURAL DYNAMICS, GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS, POLITICAL ECONOMY, SOCIAL EQUITY AND EVIDENCE-BASED PUBLIC POLICY, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TAMIL NADU

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Abstract

India's Census 2027 offers an important opportunity to update demographic and household information after the 2011 Census and strengthen public planning. This article assesses the census's potential economic, financial, behavioural, governance, political and social implications, with special reference to Tamil Nadu. It uses a descriptive and analytical approach based on secondary sources, including Census 2011, government reports, the National Family Health Survey, labour statistics and state-level publications. The analysis considers how updated data on population, households, migration, employment, education, housing and social groups could inform fiscal planning, infrastructure investment, welfare delivery and regional development. For Tamil Nadu, the findings may be especially relevant to population ageing, urban growth, changing workforce needs and rural–urban disparities.

The article also examines possible implications for social equity, political representation and fiscal federalism, while noting that census figures alone do not determine resource transfers or representation; these depend on constitutional provisions and allocation rules. Digital enumeration may improve processing and monitoring, but its effectiveness will depend on complete coverage, public participation, data quality and strong privacy safeguards. The study concludes that census data can support more responsive and inclusive policy when combined with other reliable statistics and translated into measurable public action. It recommends accessible data publication, district-level planning, independent evaluation and targeted outreach to underserved groups. Census 2027 can strengthen evidence-based governance in Tamil Nadu and India, but equitable outcomes require accountable institutions and effective implementation. The research focuses on immediate and swiftly shifting challenges that are growing in importance in today's globally connected environment, underlining their relevance in the contemporary world.

Keywords: **India's Census 2027, Public Planning, National Family Health Survey, Constitutional Provisions, Fiscal Federalism, Public Participation and District-Level Planning.**

The theme of the article

A population census is one of the most important sources of information for public planning. It helps governments understand how many people live in different places, their age and household characteristics, and their access to education, housing and basic services. These details support decisions on public spending, infrastructure, welfare programmes and employment planning. India's Census 2027 is especially significant because the last completed census was conducted in 2011. The new census is expected to provide updated information after a long interval and will use digital methods for data collection and monitoring. This article examines the economic, financial, behavioural, administrative, political and social implications of Census 2027, with special reference to Tamil Nadu. Census data can help identify changing patterns of urbanisation, migration, ageing and household structure. In Tamil Nadu, these changes have important implications for jobs, education, healthcare, housing and social protection. More detailed information may also help reveal inequalities between rural and urban areas and among different social groups.

The study uses secondary information from census publications, government reports, surveys and relevant statistical sources. It considers how reliable population data may support better resource allocation and evidence-based policymaking. It also recognises that census figures alone cannot ensure fair outcomes: effective implementation, transparent institutions, privacy safeguards and regular evaluation are essential. By assessing both the opportunities and limitations of Census 2027, this article aims to show how its findings can support inclusive development, stronger governance and more responsive public services in Tamil Nadu and across India.

Statement of the problem

India's last completed population census was conducted in 2011. Since then, changes in population size and age structure, urbanisation, migration, household composition and access to essential services have increased the need for reliable, up-to-date information. Census 2027 is expected to provide an important basis for understanding these changes and planning public services. However, census data can support effective policy only when they are accurate, inclusive, timely and used appropriately. For Tamil Nadu, these issues are especially significant. The state has experienced low fertility, population ageing, urban growth and movement of people between districts and states. These changes affect the availability of workers, demand for healthcare and social protection, infrastructure requirements and the distribution of public resources. Differences between rural and urban areas, as well as inequalities affecting women, disadvantaged communities and persons with disabilities, also require careful attention.

Census 2027 raises important questions about how updated demographic and household information will influence economic and fiscal planning, public-service delivery, welfare programmes and regional development. It also requires consideration of public awareness, participation, trust and data privacy. In addition, changes in population data may inform discussions on political representation and fiscal federalism, but their effects will depend on constitutional provisions and government decisions, not on census figures alone. The central problem addressed by this study is how Census 2027 can be translated into fair, practical and evidence-based policies for India and Tamil Nadu. Using secondary data and published sources, the study examines its potential economic, behavioural, governance, political and social implications. It also considers the limitations of census data and the need to combine them with other reliable statistics. The aim is to identify how census findings can support equitable resource allocation, effective administration and inclusive development. The study explores pressing and rapidly evolving issues that are becoming ever more critical in our interconnected world, highlighting their significance in the current global context.

Objective of the article

The overall objective of the article is to assess the economic, financial, social and governance implications of India's Census 2027, with special reference to Tamil Nadu. It examines how census data can support resource allocation, public-service planning and welfare delivery. It also considers demographic change, migration, household welfare, social equity and political representation. The article explores how reliable data can strengthen transparency and evidence-based policymaking. Finally, it identifies ways to use census findings to promote inclusive and balanced development in Tamil Nadu and India with the help of secondary sources of information and statistical data pertaining to the theme of the article.

Research Methodology of the article

The present article adopts a descriptive and analytical research design based entirely on secondary sources of information to examine the economic, financial, social and governance implications of India's Census 2027, with special reference to Tamil Nadu. The study uses statistical data and relevant information collected from reliable and officially published sources, including the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), NITI Aayog, Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Government of Tamil Nadu, Tamil Nadu Economic Survey, State Budgets, the National Family Health Survey (NFHS), Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) and relevant research publications. The study analyses demographic characteristics, population growth, migration patterns, household composition, employment, income, education, healthcare, gender equality and regional disparities. It also examines the potential implications of census information for public expenditure, financial resource allocation, welfare programmes, fiscal federalism, political

representation and administrative efficiency. Statistical tables, percentages, growth rates, comparative analysis and graphical presentations are used to interpret the available data and identify major economic and social trends.

Furthermore, the study applies a comparative and interpretative approach to assess the relationship between demographic changes and development priorities in Tamil Nadu and India. Particular attention is given to evidence-based policymaking, transparency, social justice and inclusive development. Since Census 2027 data may not yet be available, the article uses the latest available census records and relevant official statistical estimates as a baseline, while discussing the expected policy significance of future census findings. Finally, appropriate policy suggestions are offered to strengthen balanced regional development and improve public-service delivery. The gathered data and information will be systematically examined and interpreted to produce actionable insights, supporting the development of well-informed, evidence-based policies.

Review of Literature

The **Census of India (2011),** provides comprehensive demographic information on population size, age composition, literacy, gender distribution, migration and rural–urban characteristics. The data offer an essential statistical foundation for analysing demographic changes and supporting evidence-based economic and social development planning in India. The **National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), 2019–21**, presents important information on population health, fertility, household living conditions, gender equality and access to healthcare in Tamil Nadu. The findings highlight the importance of demographic and household-level indicators in designing inclusive welfare policies and improving human development outcomes. The **Statistical Handbook of Tamil Nadu (2021–22),** provides comprehensive statistical information on population, agriculture, industries, education, healthcare, employment and infrastructure. These indicators are useful for examining regional economic disparities and strengthening evidence-based resource allocation and development planning across Tamil Nadu. The **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), July 2022–June 2023,** examines employment patterns, labour-force participation and unemployment across different population groups. The report provides an important statistical foundation for understanding labour-market inequalities, occupational changes and the relationship between demographic characteristics and employment opportunities. **NITI Aayog (2025),** Macro and Fiscal Landscape of the State of Tamil Nadu examines the state's economic performance, revenue generation, expenditure patterns, debt position and fiscal sustainability. The report provides valuable insights into the relationship between demographic requirements, financial resources and the long-term development priorities of Tamil Nadu.

The **Government of India (2025),** through its approval of the Census of India 2027, highlights the importance of conducting a comprehensive population enumeration exercise. The initiative provides an opportunity to strengthen demographic information, administrative planning, welfare distribution and evidence-based policymaking through improved census infrastructure. **Yoganandham (2026),** stated that, India Census 2027 and socioeconomic transformation, analyses digital enumeration, caste data integration, welfare redistribution, electoral delimitation and fiscal federalism. The study emphasises the strategic importance of census information in promoting democratic governance, equitable resource distribution and inclusive socioeconomic development. The **Press Information Bureau (2026),** through its information on Census 2027, highlights the digital transformation of India's population enumeration process. The initiative demonstrates the potential of digital data collection to improve administrative efficiency, demographic accuracy and the availability of reliable information for public-policy formulation. **Yoganandham (2026),** stated that Census 2027 as an instrument of national transformation, examines the economic, financial, behavioural and political implications of demographic change. The study highlights the importance of social equity, fiscal sustainability, effective public policies and inclusive development in strengthening India's long-term economic transformation. The **Sixteenth Finance Commission (2025),** through its report for the award period 2026–31, addresses fiscal transfers and financial relations between the Union and State Governments. Its recommendations are relevant to understanding how population-related indicators, fiscal capacity and expenditure requirements influence intergovernmental resource allocation and balanced regional development.

India’s Census 2027: Economic, Financial, Governance and Social Equity Implications with Special Reference to Tamil Nadu

India’s Census 2027 is an important national exercise that can provide essential information for economic planning, financial resource allocation, social development, and effective governance. With special reference to Tamil Nadu, this study examines the multidimensional effects of census data on economic growth, public expenditure, behavioural patterns, political representation, social equity, and evidence-based policymaking. The Census is particularly significant because reliable population data help governments identify the needs of different communities and distribute public resources more effectively. According to the Census of India 2011, India’s population was approximately 1.21 billion, while Tamil Nadu’s population was 72.15 million. Tamil Nadu accounted for about 5.96% of India’s population. The state’s literacy rate was 80.09%, compared with the national average of 74.04%. These figures provide an important historical baseline for examining changes in population size, literacy, urbanisation,

estimates of the population in 2027. The details of the Statistical Profile and Multidimensional Impact of Census 2027 in India and Tamil Nadu are stated in table – 1.

Table – 1

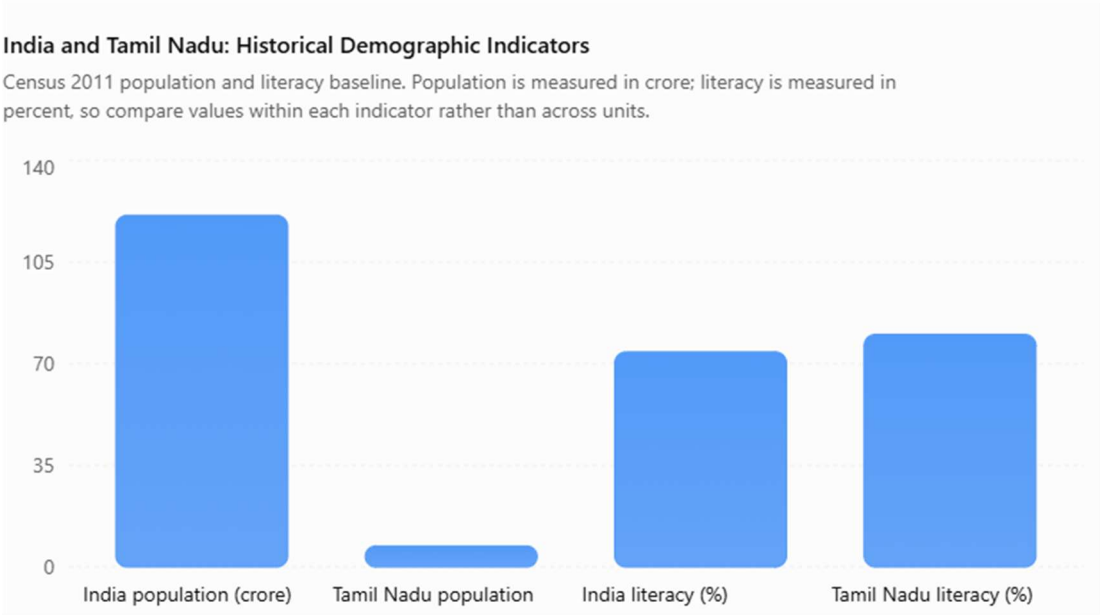
Statistical Profile and Multidimensional Impact of Census 2027 in India and Tamil Nadu

S. No.	Indicator	Statistical Data	Economic and Policy Implications
1.	**India's population**	121.09 crore (2011)	Provides a baseline for measuring demographic change and planning public services.
2.	**Tamil Nadu's population**	7.21 crore (2011)	Supports state-level development planning and resource allocation.
3.	**Tamil Nadu's share of India's population**	Approximately 5.96% (2011)	Helps assess the state's demographic importance in national policy.
4.	**Tamil Nadu's literacy rate**	80.09% (2011)	Provides a baseline for evaluating educational development and human capital.
5.	**India's literacy rate**	74.04% (2011)	Enables comparison of educational outcomes between Tamil Nadu and India.
6.	**Approved Census 2027 budget**	₹11,718.24 crore	Indicates the financial resources allocated to census operations.
7.	**Expected field functionaries**	Approximately 30 lakh	Reflects the scale of employment, training and administrative coordination required.
8.	**Census operation phases**	2 phases	Supports systematic household data collection and population enumeration.
9.	**Digital data collection**	Mobile applications and central monitoring portal	Can improve data processing, monitoring and administrative efficiency.
10.	**Caste enumeration**	Included in Census 2027	Can strengthen evidence on social composition and help inform inclusive policies.

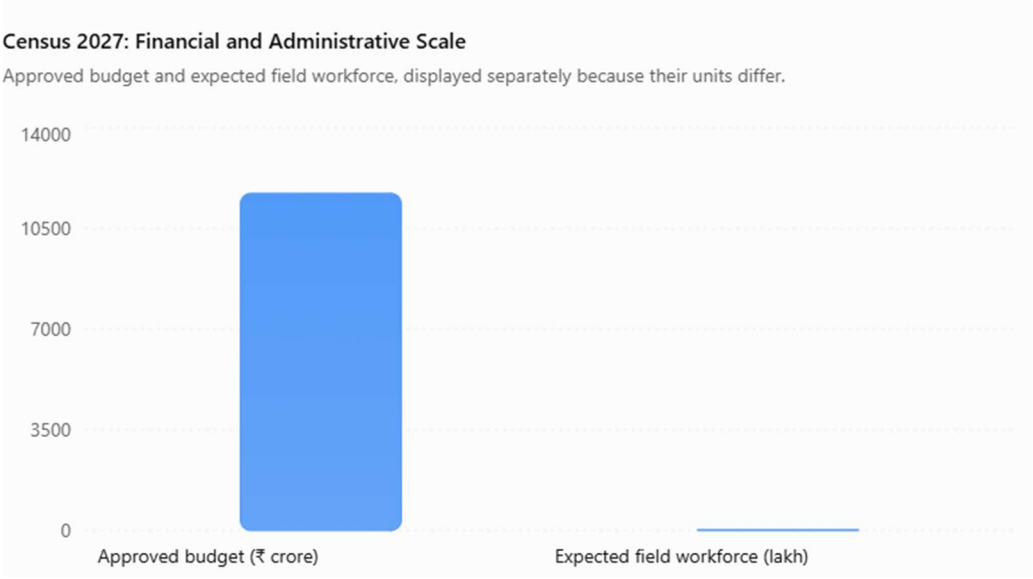
Sources: Census of India 2011; Tamil Nadu Department of Economics and Statistics, Statistical Handbook of Tamil Nadu 2021–22; Press Information Bureau, Government of India, "Cabinet Approves Scheme of Conduct of Census of India 2027," 12 December 2025; and PIB, "Census 2027: India's First Digital Enumeration Exercise," 25 April 2026.

The Government of India has approved ₹11,718.24 crore for Census 2027, which will use digital data collection, mobile applications, and online self-enumeration. Approximately 30 lakh field functionaries are expected to support this exercise. The census will also include caste enumeration and collect information on demographic, educational, economic, and migration

characteristics. These initiatives can improve the availability and usefulness of population statistics for public administration and research.



The study will assess how census information influences fiscal transfers, welfare expenditure, employment planning, infrastructure investment, and the distribution of public services. It will also examine public awareness, willingness to participate, trust in government institutions, and concerns about data privacy. From a political economy perspective, the research will consider how population composition and social inequalities affect policy priorities and representation.



In Tamil Nadu, particular attention will be given to rural–urban differences, gender inequality, disadvantaged communities, migration, and access to education, healthcare, housing, and employment. The study will use secondary data from Census 2011, Census 2027 publications, government reports, and relevant economic and social indicators. Comparative statistical analysis will help identify changes in population characteristics and differences across

districts and social groups. The findings are expected to support transparent governance, equitable resource allocation, inclusive development, and evidence-based public policy in Tamil Nadu and India.

Economic and Financial Implications of Census 2027 for Tamil Nadu and India

Census 2027 will play an important role in improving population-based resource allocation, fiscal transfers, public expenditure, infrastructure investment and long-term economic development in India and Tamil Nadu. The last population census was conducted in 2011, and the forthcoming census will provide updated demographic, housing, educational, migration and socio-economic information. It will be conducted in two phases, with house listing during April–September 2026 and population enumeration scheduled for 2027. The Union Government has approved an expenditure of ₹11,718.24 crore for this exercise. At the national level, updated population data can help governments assess regional development needs, improve welfare programme targeting and strengthen evidence-based decisions on public investment. Population size, age composition, urbanisation and migration are important factors in planning schools, hospitals, affordable housing, transport, drinking water and employment programmes. However, fiscal transfers between the Union and states depend on the applicable Finance Commission recommendations and other policy rules; census population figures alone do not determine allocations. The details of the Economic and Financial Implications of Census 2027 for India and Tamil Nadu are stated in table – 2.

Table – 2

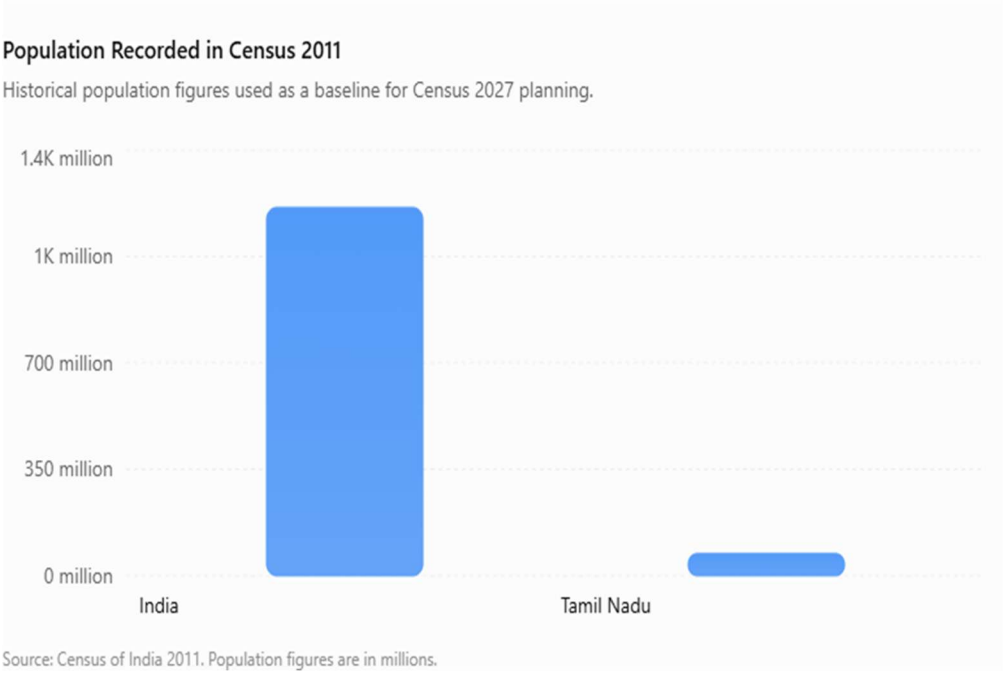
Economic and Financial Implications of Census 2027 for India and Tamil Nadu

S. No.	Statistical indicator	India	Tamil Nadu	Economic and financial implications
1.	**Last completed census**	2011	2011	Updated population data will improve development planning.
2.	**Population recorded in Census 2011**	1,210.9 million	72.15 million	Provides a historical baseline for assessing population change.
3.	**Approved Census 2027 expenditure**	₹11,718.24 crore	State-specific allocation not stated here	Supports census operations, training, technology and administration.
4.	**Census field functionaries**	About 30 lakh nationwide	Included in the national workforce	Creates temporary work and supports data collection.
5.	**House-listing and housing census**	April–September 2026	Within the notified national framework	Helps identify housing, water, sanitation and infrastructure needs.
6.	**Population enumeration**	February 2027, subject to notified exceptions	Under the national census programme	Updates population, demographic and socio-economic information.
7.	**Digital data**	Mobile-based enumeration	Part of the	Can improve data processing,

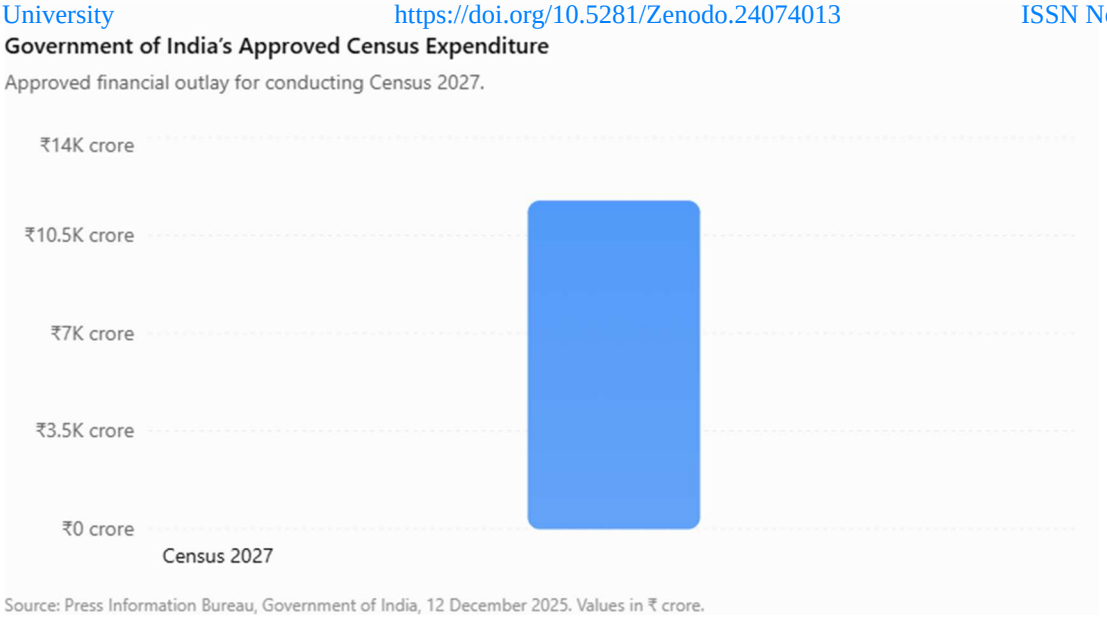
	collection		national digital exercise	monitoring and planning efficiency.
8.	**Fiscal transfers**	Based on applicable Finance Commission recommendations and other rules	Depends on relevant transfer mechanisms	Updated population data may inform future policy discussions, but does not automatically determine transfers.
9.	**Infrastructure investment**	National and regional planning	District and urban-level planning	Supports decisions on transport, schools, hospitals, housing and public utilities.
10.	**Employment and human capital**	National workforce planning	State and district-level skill planning	Helps align education, training and employment programmes with demographic needs.
11.	**Social equity**	Identification of population groups and development gaps	Better assessment of regional and social disparities	Can strengthen targeted welfare programmes and inclusive development.

Sources: Government of India, Press Information Bureau, "Cabinet approves scheme of Conduct of Census of India 2027," 12 December 2025; Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, Census 2011 population data and Census 2027 official information.

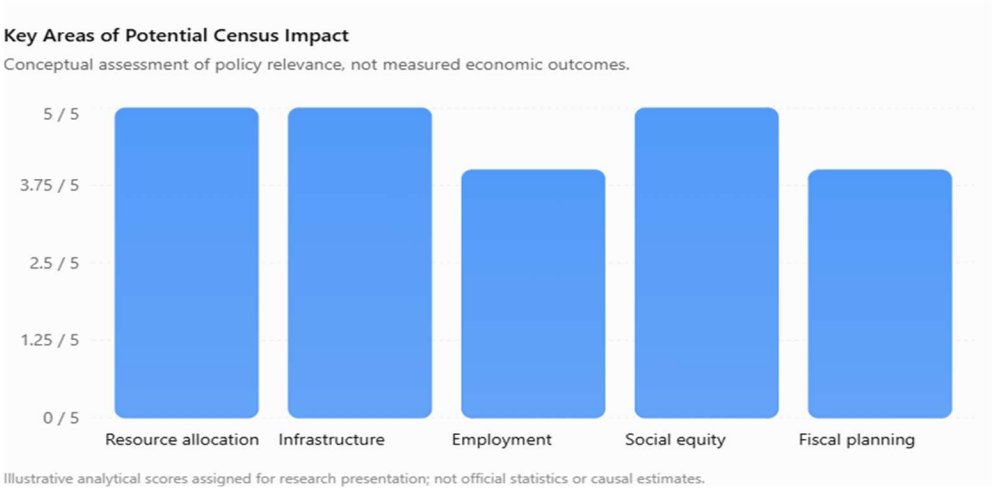
For Tamil Nadu, the census will be particularly valuable for identifying changing demographic patterns, ageing populations, urban expansion and migration towards industrial and service-sector centres.



The state can use these data to improve infrastructure investment in Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli and other developing urban areas. District-level information can also support employment generation, skill development, industrial planning and social welfare expenditure.



Furthermore, reliable population and household data can help identify underserved communities and improve the distribution of public resources. The inclusion of caste enumeration in Census 2027 may provide additional information for assessing socio-economic inequalities and designing more inclusive policies.



In short, Census 2027 can strengthen fiscal planning, public expenditure efficiency and regional economic development. Its effectiveness will depend on accurate data collection, transparent allocation mechanisms and the timely use of census findings to promote inclusive and sustainable growth in India and Tamil Nadu.

Demographic Dynamics and Human Capital in Tamil Nadu

Demographic changes are important determinants of Tamil Nadu's labour-force participation, productivity, human capital development and long-term economic growth. India's Census 2027 will provide an updated population database to support evidence-based planning, resource allocation and inclusive development. Tamil Nadu had a population of approximately 72.1 million in the 2011 Census, compared with 62.4 million in 2001, reflecting a decadal growth rate of about 15.6%. The state's total fertility rate has fallen to around 1.4 children per

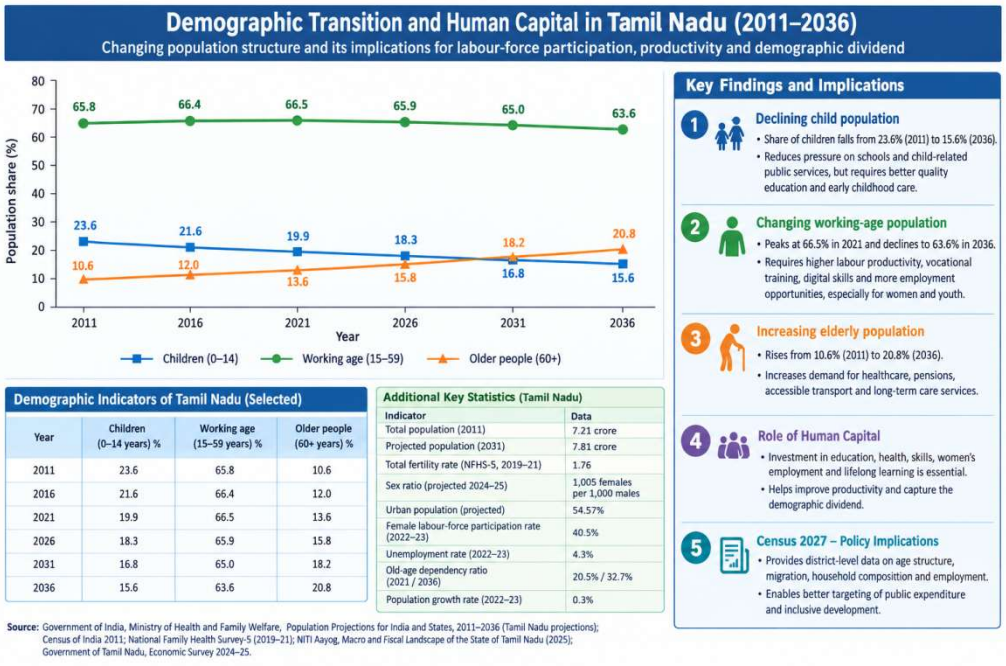
woman, below the replacement level of 2.1. This indicates a gradual transition towards an ageing population and a slower expansion of the working-age population. Consequently, Tamil Nadu must improve labour productivity and create opportunities for young people, women and older workers. Changes in age structure will influence the availability of skilled labour and the state's demographic dividend. Greater investment in education, vocational training, digital skills, healthcare and lifelong learning can improve human capital formation. Higher female labour-force participation, supported by safe transport, childcare facilities and equal employment opportunities, can expand the productive workforce. At the same time, declining fertility and increasing life expectancy will raise demand for elderly care, pensions and healthcare services. The details of the Demographic Dynamics and Human Capital in Tamil Nadu are stated in table – 3.

Table – 3
Demographic Dynamics and Human Capital in Tamil Nadu

S. No.	Demographic indicator	Statistical data	Economic and human capital implications
1.	**Total population**	7.21 crore (2011 Census)	Provides the baseline for population growth and long-term economic planning.
2.	**Projected population**	7.81 crore (2031)	Indicates the need for adequate employment, housing and public infrastructure.
3.	**Working-age population (15–59 years)**	66.5% (2021); projected to decline to 63.6% (2036)	Highlights the need to improve skills, labour productivity and workforce participation.
4.	**Elderly population (60 years and above)**	13.6% (2021); projected to rise to 20.8% (2036)	Increases demand for healthcare, pensions and elderly-care services.
5.	**Child population (0–14 years)**	19.9% (2021); projected to decline to 15.6% (2036)	Requires better-quality education and strategic investment in future human capital.
6.	**Total fertility rate**	1.76 children per woman (NFHS-5, 2019–21)	Below the replacement level of 2.1, contributing to population ageing and slower workforce growth.
7.	**Sex ratio**	1,005 females per 1,000 males (projected, 2024–25)	Highlights the importance of gender equality and women's economic participation.
8.	**Urban population**	54.57% (projected estimate)	Creates opportunities for industrial employment but increases pressure on urban infrastructure.
9.	**Female labour-force participation rate**	40.5% (2022–23)	Expanding women's access to decent work can increase household incomes and economic output.
10.	**Annual unemployment rate**	4.3% (2022–23)	Emphasises the need for employment-oriented education and industry-linked skill development.
11.	**Old-age dependency ratio**	20.5% (2021); projected to rise to 32.7% (2036)	May increase the fiscal burden of healthcare, pensions and social protection.
12.	**Population growth rate**	Approximately 0.3% (2022–23 projection)	Signals the importance of productivity-led growth rather than relying mainly on workforce expansion.

Sources: Census of India 2011; National Family Health Survey-5 (2019–21); Government of Tamil Nadu, Economic Survey 2024–25; and NITI Aayog, Macro and Fiscal Landscape of the State of Tamil Nadu.

Migration and urbanisation also influence regional economic development. Industrial centres such as Chennai, Coimbatore, Tiruppur and Hosur attract workers and investment, but rapid urban growth can increase housing costs, traffic congestion and pressure on public infrastructure. Rural-to-urban migration may improve employment opportunities, while regional disparities can weaken development in less industrialised districts. Changes in household composition, including smaller families and more elderly dependants, may also affect household savings, consumption and care responsibilities.



Census 2027 can help Tamil Nadu identify district-level demographic differences and design targeted policies for employment, education, healthcare and social protection. Integrating demographic data with economic and labour-market indicators will strengthen governance and fiscal planning. Therefore, Tamil Nadu must convert its remaining demographic-dividend opportunities into sustainable growth through skill development, productive employment, gender equality, healthy ageing and balanced regional development. The Tamil Nadu Economic Survey projects that the working-age population share may decline from 66.4% in 2021 to 63.6% in 2036, while the old-age dependency ratio may rise from 20.5 to 32.7. These projections underline the urgency of strengthening workforce skills, productivity and social protection.

Behavioural Dynamics and Household Welfare in Tamil Nadu

Household behaviour plays an important role in shaping demographic outcomes and economic security in Tamil Nadu. Household size, migration, fertility preferences, educational aspirations, employment decisions and perceptions of government welfare programmes influence income, savings, consumption, health and living standards. Census 2027 can provide valuable demographic information to understand these relationships and support evidence-based policymaking. According to the 2011 Census, Tamil Nadu had a population of approximately

7.21 crore, an average household size of around 3.9 persons, and a literacy rate of 80.09%. These figures provide a historical baseline for studying changes in household structure, education and welfare. The National Family Health Survey-5 (2019–21) reported a total fertility rate of 1.8 children per woman in Tamil Nadu, below the replacement level of 2.1. This reflects changing fertility preferences, improved education and broader access to reproductive health services. Migration decisions are often influenced by employment opportunities, wage differences, education and family responsibilities. Rural-to-urban and inter-state migration can increase household income through remittances, but may also create challenges involving housing, childcare and family separation. Similarly, smaller households may experience lower dependency burdens, while elderly people living alone may face greater financial and care-related difficulties. The details of the Behavioural Dynamics and Household Welfare in Tamil Nadu are stated in table – 4.

Table – 4

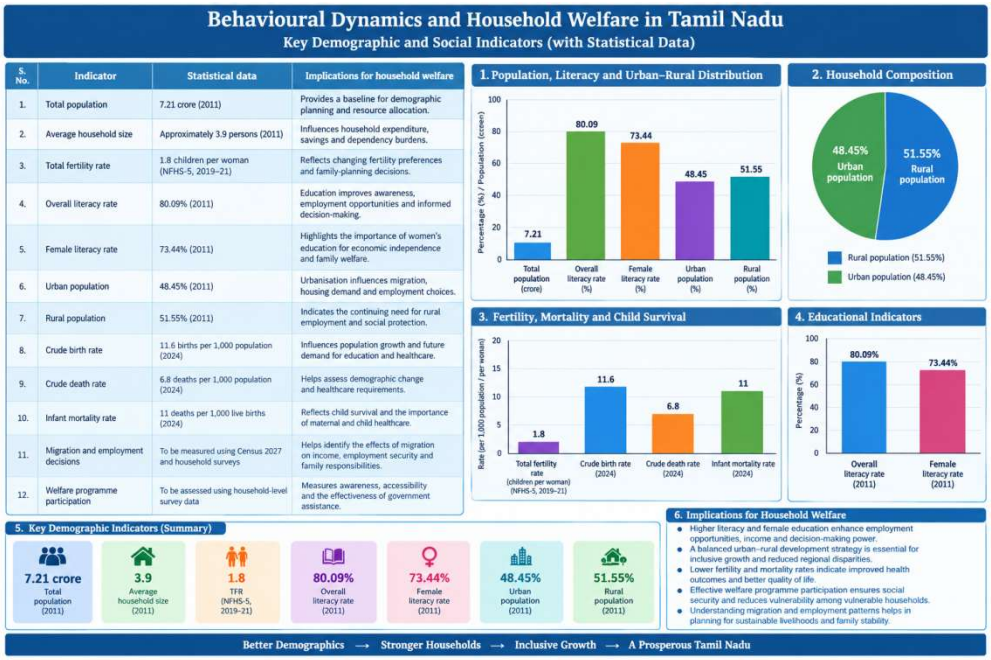
Behavioural Dynamics and Household Welfare in Tamil Nadu

S. No.	Indicator	Statistical data	Implications for household welfare
1.	**Total population**	7.21 crore (2011)	Provides a baseline for demographic planning and resource allocation.
2.	**Average household size**	Approximately 3.9 persons (2011)	Influences household expenditure, savings and dependency burdens.
3.	**Total fertility rate**	1.8 children per woman (NFHS-5, 2019–21)	Reflects changing fertility preferences and family-planning decisions.
4.	**Overall literacy rate**	80.09% (2011)	Education improves awareness, employment opportunities and informed decision-making.
5.	**Female literacy rate**	73.44% (2011)	Highlights the importance of women's education for economic independence and family welfare.
6.	**Urban population**	48.45% (2011)	Urbanisation influences migration, housing demand and employment choices.
7.	**Rural population**	51.55% (2011)	Indicates the continuing need for rural employment and social protection.
8.	**Crude birth rate**	11.6 births per 1,000 population (2024)	Influences population growth and future demand for education and healthcare.
9.	**Crude death rate**	6.8 deaths per 1,000 population (2024)	Helps assess demographic change and healthcare requirements.
10.	**Infant mortality rate**	11 deaths per 1,000 live births (2024)	Reflects child survival and the importance of maternal and child healthcare.
11.	**Migration and employment decisions**	To be measured using Census 2027 and household surveys	Helps identify the effects of migration on income, employment security and family responsibilities.
12.	**Welfare programme participation**	To be assessed using household-level survey data	Measures awareness, accessibility and the effectiveness of government assistance.

Sources: Census of India 2011; National Family Health Survey-5 (2019–21); Government of Tamil Nadu, Economic Survey 2024–25; and NITI Aayog, Macro and Fiscal Landscape of the State of Tamil Nadu.

Educational aspirations influence investments in schooling, higher education and professional skills. Better education can improve employability, earnings and social mobility.

However, unemployment, informal employment and gender inequalities may prevent households from fully benefiting from these investments. Awareness and perceptions of welfare programmes, including the Public Distribution System, health insurance, pensions and educational assistance, also affect programme participation and household financial security.



Census 2027 should therefore examine not only population numbers but also household decision-making, migration patterns, educational expectations, employment security and access to public services. Linking demographic information with socioeconomic indicators can help identify vulnerable households and improve the delivery of welfare benefits. Policies that strengthen education, skill development, decent employment, affordable housing, childcare and social protection can improve household resilience and reduce intergenerational poverty. Such an integrated approach will support inclusive growth, social equity and sustainable economic development in Tamil Nadu.

Governance Effectiveness and Administrative Capacity: The Role of Census 2027 in Tamil Nadu

Census 2027 can strengthen evidence-based governance, improve public-service delivery and promote inclusive development in Tamil Nadu. Reliable population and household data help governments identify development needs, allocate public funds and design welfare programmes according to the actual conditions of different communities. According to the 2011 Census, Tamil Nadu had a population of approximately 7.21 crore, comprising 3.72 crore rural residents (51.55%) and 3.49 crore urban residents (48.45%). The state's literacy rate was 80.33%. These historical figures demonstrate the importance of updating demographic and socio-economic information to understand changing population needs. The first phase of Census 2027 in Tamil Nadu was scheduled for August 2026, covering household conditions, basic amenities and assets. The exercise involved approximately 1.15 lakh enumerators, 19,000 supervisors and 1.2 lakh

house-listing blocks. More than 10 lakh households had completed self-enumeration online by 31 July 2026, according to the official government report. Digital data collection can improve the speed of processing, monitoring and administrative coordination. The details of the Governance Effectiveness and Administrative Capacity under Census 2027 in Tamil Nadu are stated in table – 5.

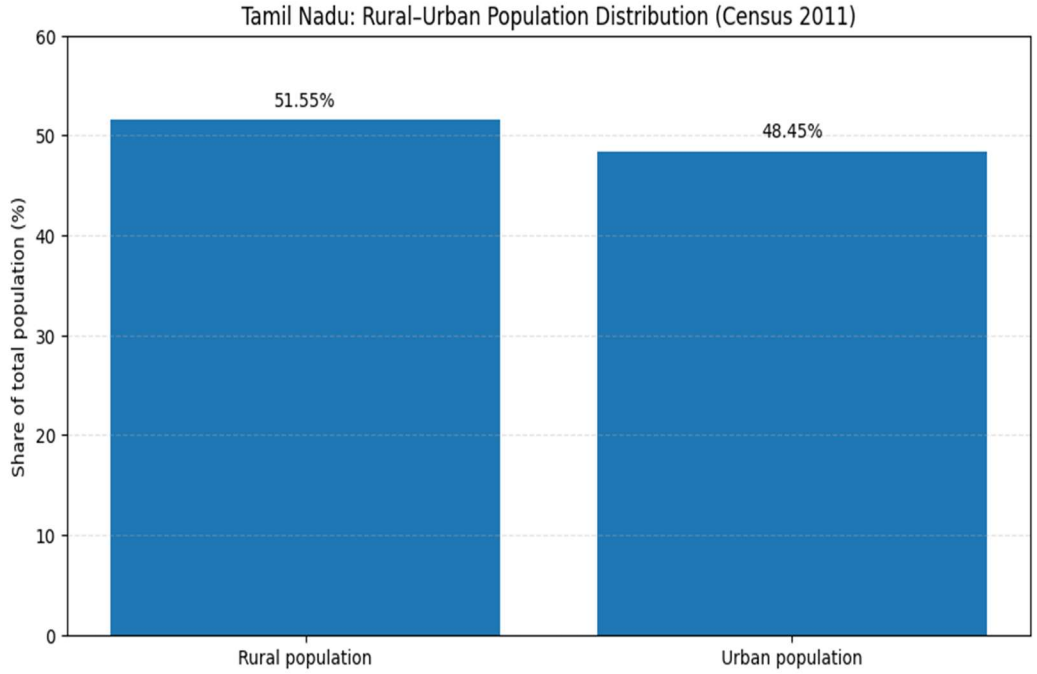
Table – 5

Governance Effectiveness and Administrative Capacity under Census 2027 in Tamil Nadu

S. No.	Indicator	Statistical data	Implications for governance and public policy
1.	**Total population**	7.21 crore (2011)	Provides a baseline for estimating population growth and public-service requirements.
2.	**Rural population**	3.72 crore (51.55%, 2011)	Helps identify gaps in rural healthcare, education, drinking water and sanitation.
3.	**Urban population**	3.49 crore (48.45%, 2011)	Supports urban planning, housing provision, transport and infrastructure development.
4.	**Overall literacy rate**	80.09% (2011)	Helps identify educational inequalities and improve literacy-related programmes.
5.	**Enumerators for Census 2027, Phase I**	Over 1.15 lakh	Supports extensive household coverage and systematic data collection.
6.	**Supervisors for Census 2027, Phase I**	Approximately 19,000	Strengthens monitoring, field-level coordination and data quality.
7.	**House-listing blocks**	Approximately 1.2 lakh	Supports comprehensive coverage of residential buildings and households.
8.	**Household information indicators**	33 indicators	Provides information on housing conditions, household assets and basic amenities.
9.	**Digital data collection**	Mobile application, geo-tagging and real-time transmission	Can improve data processing, administrative monitoring and evidence-based planning.
10.	**Coverage of underserved communities**	To be assessed using updated census data	Helps identify disadvantaged populations and improve the distribution of public services.

Source: Census of India 2011; Department of Economics and Statistics, Government of Tamil Nadu, Statistical Handbook of Tamil Nadu; Press Information Bureau, Government of India, First Phase of Census of India 2027 Successfully Completed in Tamil Nadu, 31 August 2026.

Updated census information can help the Tamil Nadu government identify underserved rural villages, urban slums and marginalised communities that require better access to drinking water, sanitation, housing, healthcare, education and social security. It can also support the rational distribution of teachers, healthcare workers, public infrastructure and welfare expenditure. By identifying population growth, migration and household characteristics, the government can improve local-level planning and reduce gaps in public-service delivery.



Source: Census of India 2011. Total population: approximately 7.21 crore.
Note: Historical baseline; not a 2027 census result.

However, the effectiveness of Census 2027 will depend on accurate data collection, adequate training, digital accessibility, interdepartmental coordination and the protection of personal information. Census findings should be combined with administrative records and independent evaluations to monitor the outcomes of welfare programmes. Overall, Census 2027 can strengthen administrative capacity, improve welfare targeting and promote social equity in Tamil Nadu. Its greatest contribution will be transforming reliable statistical information into transparent governance, efficient public spending and inclusive economic development.

Political Economy and Fiscal Federalism: Implications of Census 2027 for Tamil Nadu

Census 2027 may significantly influence India's political representation, fiscal federalism and the distribution of economic resources. For Tamil Nadu, the key concern is whether population-based representation and fiscal allocation will adequately recognise the state's achievements in population stabilisation, economic development and public-service delivery. The allocation of Lok Sabha seats among states has remained frozen based on the 1971 Census, with the freeze extended until the first Census after 2026. The Election Commission reports that India currently has 543 parliamentary constituencies. Census 2027 could provide updated population data for future delimitation, but the actual outcome will depend on the constitutional and legislative framework adopted. If representation is redistributed strictly according to population, states with faster population growth could gain relative representation, while Tamil Nadu's share could face pressure despite its economic contribution. The details of the Political Economy and Fiscal Federalism Implications of Census 2027 for Tamil Nadu are stated in table – 6.

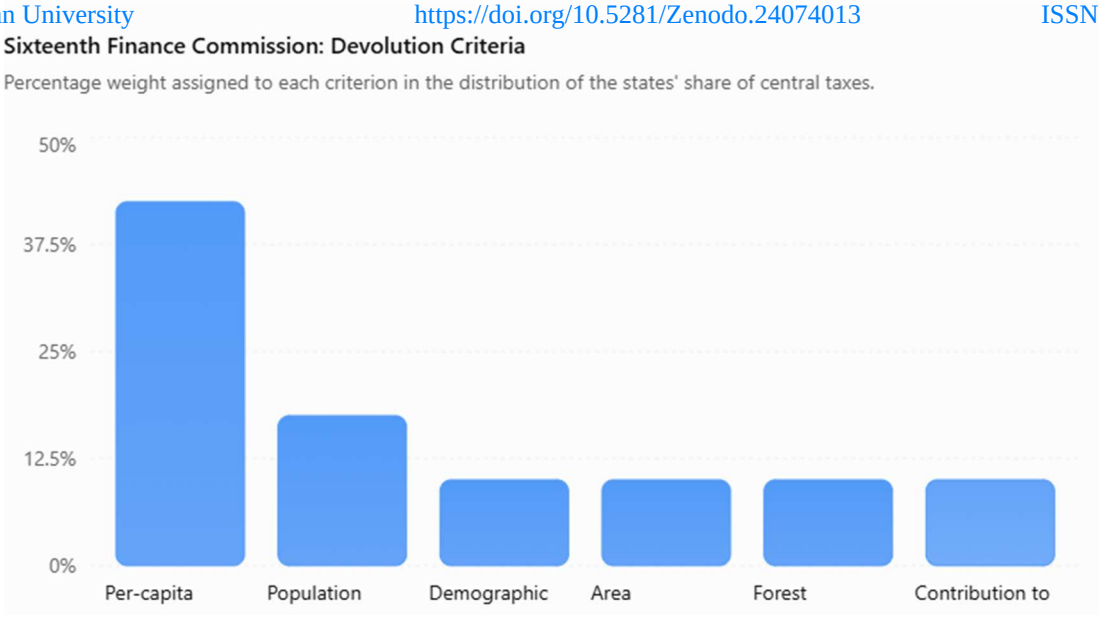
Table – 6

Political Economy and Fiscal Federalism Implications of Census 2027 for Tamil Nadu

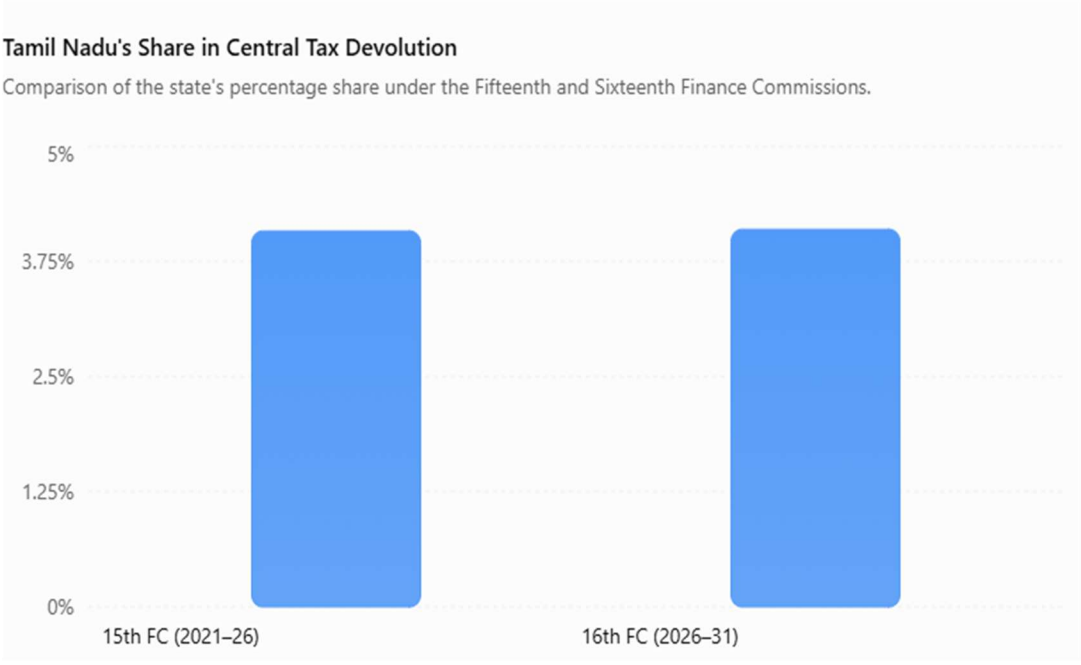
S. No.	Indicator	Statistical data	Potential implications for Tamil Nadu
1.	**Lok Sabha representation**	543 existing elected constituencies	Future delimitation may change the relative representation of states, depending on the applicable constitutional and legal framework.
2.	**Delimitation framework**	Existing constituency boundaries are based on the 2001 Census; the constitutional freeze on inter-state seat readjustment extends until the first Census after 2026.	Tamil Nadu's representation will depend on the rules adopted for future delimitation.
3.	**States' share in central taxes**	41% of the divisible pool under the Sixteenth Finance Commission (2026–31)	Tamil Nadu's fiscal resources depend on the devolution formula as well as its economic and demographic indicators.
4.	**Population criterion**	17.5% weight in the Sixteenth Finance Commission formula, using 2011 Census population	Population remains important, but Census 2027 will not automatically replace the population base used in the current formula.
5.	**Demographic performance**	10% weight in the Sixteenth Finance Commission formula	The formula recognises differences in historical population growth, which is relevant to Tamil Nadu's demographic transition.
6.	**Contribution to GDP**	10% weight in the Sixteenth Finance Commission formula	Economic contribution is explicitly recognised in the distribution of central taxes.
7.	**Tamil Nadu's share in central taxes**	4.097%, rounded to 4.10%, for 2026–31	Changes in future Finance Commission criteria could affect the state's share of central tax revenues.
8.	**Centre–State fiscal relations**	₹1.4 lakh crore provided for Finance Commission grants to states in the Union Budget 2026–27	Transparent allocation and predictable transfers are important for state-level welfare, infrastructure and development expenditure.

Sources: Election Commission of India, Delimitation FAQ; PRS Legislative Research, Sixteenth Finance Commission Report Summary; Press Information Bureau, Union Budget 2026–27 announcement; PRS Legislative Research, Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026.

Census data also influence the distribution of central tax revenues. Under the Sixteenth Finance Commission (2026–31), 41% of the divisible pool of central taxes is recommended for distribution to states. Population accounts for 17.5% of the horizontal devolution formula, while demographic performance receives 10% and contribution to GDP receives 10%. Tamil Nadu's share is 4.097%, compared with 4.079% under the Fifteenth Finance Commission. These figures show that fiscal transfers depend on several criteria, not population alone.



Tamil Nadu may seek a transparent balance between population needs, economic contribution, demographic performance and fiscal responsibility. Changes in representation and revenue-sharing rules could affect the state's influence over national policies, infrastructure funding, welfare expenditure and development priorities. However, Census 2027 will not automatically determine future tax transfers; Finance Commission recommendations and constitutional provisions also matter.



Census 2027 offers an opportunity to improve evidence-based governance and resource allocation. For Tamil Nadu, a balanced approach should protect fair political representation, recognise population stabilisation, and support equitable fiscal transfers while addressing the needs of less-developed states. Such an approach can strengthen cooperative federalism, social equity and inclusive economic development across India.

Social Equity and Inclusive Development: Implications of Census 2027 for Tamil Nadu

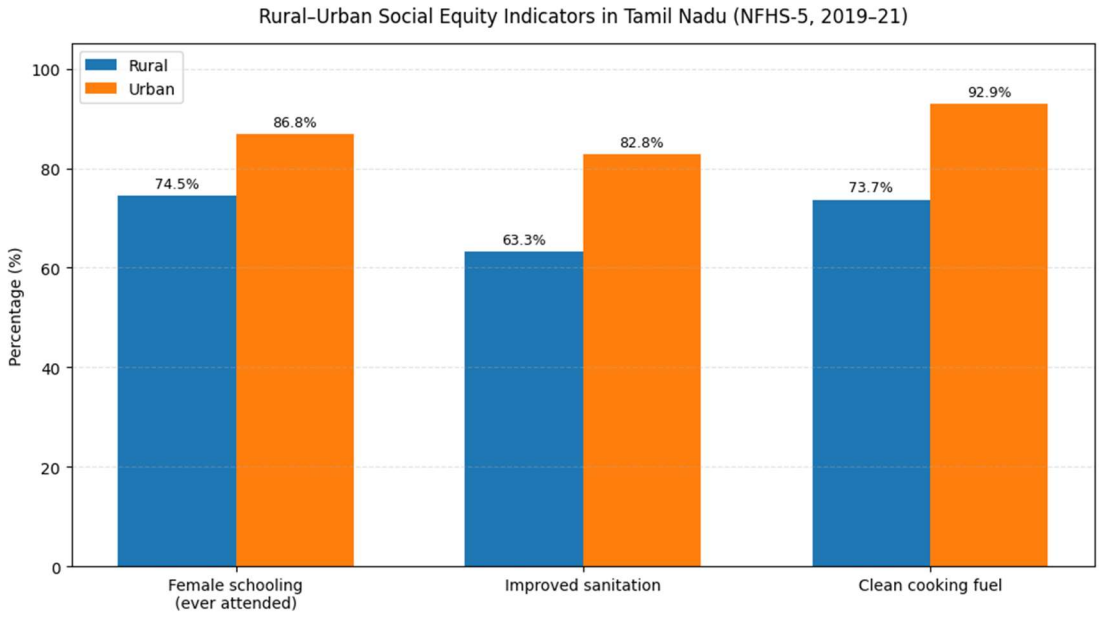
Census 2027 can play a vital role in identifying social inequalities and promoting inclusive development in Tamil Nadu. By collecting detailed information on caste, gender, disability, education, employment, housing and household amenities, it can help governments understand which communities face disadvantages and where public support is most needed. The second phase will include caste enumeration alongside demographic and socio-economic information. The scale of the task is significant. India's last completed Census was conducted in 2011, and Census 2027 will provide updated population information after a 16-year gap. The official schedule includes 36 States and Union Territories, approximately 6.40 lakh villages and 5,128 statutory towns, providing a broad basis for local development planning. Existing statistics reveal important inequalities. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2019–21), women with at least ten years of schooling accounted for 49.9% in rural Tamil Nadu, compared with 63.7% in urban areas. The details of the Social Equity and Inclusive Development under Census 2027, with Special Reference to Tamil Nadu are stated in table – 7.

Table – 7
Social Equity and Inclusive Development under Census 2027, with Special Reference to Tamil Nadu

S. No.	Indicator	Statistical data	Implications for inclusive development
1.	**Caste and social groups**	Census 2027 includes caste enumeration in Phase II.	Helps identify disadvantaged communities and improve the targeting of welfare programmes.
2.	**Gender equality**	Sex ratio: 1,088 females per 1,000 males in Tamil Nadu (NFHS-5, 2019–21).	Supports gender-sensitive education, healthcare and social protection policies.
3.	**Educational access**	Female population aged 6 years and above who had ever attended school: 80.4% overall, 86.8% urban and 74.5% rural.	Highlights rural–urban differences in educational access.
4.	**Housing and sanitation**	Population living in households with improved sanitation: 72.6% overall, 82.8% urban and 63.3% rural.	Helps prioritise sanitation infrastructure in underserved rural communities.
5.	**Clean cooking fuel**	Households using clean cooking fuel: 82.9% overall, 92.9% urban and 73.7% rural.	Identifies households requiring improved access to affordable energy.
6.	**Healthcare protection**	Households with at least one member covered by a health insurance or financing scheme: 66.5% overall.	Supports the identification of households requiring better healthcare protection.
7.	**Disability and employment**	Census 2027 includes disability, work status, occupation and job-seeking information.	Can help improve accessible infrastructure, skill development and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.
8.	**Regional inequality**	Census 2027 will collect demographic, educational, housing and employment information.	Enables district-level planning and more equitable distribution of public resources.

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, Census 2027 Household and Population Enumeration schedules; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), Tamil Nadu, 2019–21.

Similarly, access to improved sanitation was 63.3% in rural areas and 82.8% in urban areas. These differences demonstrate the need for location-specific development policies. Census 2027 can support equitable access to education, healthcare, housing, employment and social protection by identifying disadvantaged caste groups, women, persons with disabilities, low-income households and underserved regions. Its findings can guide the allocation of public funds, the expansion of essential services and the evaluation of welfare schemes. However, income inequality and access to particular services may require supplementary household surveys and administrative records.



Source: National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), Tamil Nadu, 2019–21. Values are percentages.

Census 2027 can strengthen social justice and inclusive development in Tamil Nadu if its data are accurate, accessible and effectively used in policymaking. Special attention should be given to disadvantaged communities, rural households and vulnerable groups to ensure that development benefits reach those who need them most.

Evidence-Based Public Policy and Sustainable Development: An Integrated Assessment of Census 2027

Census 2027 can provide an important foundation for transparent governance, fiscal sustainability and inclusive economic development in India, particularly in Tamil Nadu. Its population and household data can help governments identify regional inequalities, assess public-service requirements and allocate resources according to actual needs. However, Census data must be combined with economic, employment, education, health and financial statistics to develop effective policies. An integrated policy framework should have five components. First, evidence-based fiscal planning should connect population distribution and household characteristics with budget allocations for education, healthcare, housing, drinking water and social protection. Second, regional balance should be promoted by identifying underserved rural

areas, urban settlements and economically disadvantaged districts in Tamil Nadu. Third, employment generation should be strengthened by combining demographic information with labour-market data to identify skill gaps and improve vocational training, industrial development and entrepreneurship. The details of the Integrated Policy Framework for Evidence-Based Public Policy and Sustainable Development under Census 2027 are stated in table – 8.

Table – 8

Integrated Policy Framework for Evidence-Based Public Policy and Sustainable Development under Census 2027

S. No.	Policy dimension	Statistical data / evidence	Proposed policy action	Expected outcome
1.	**Fiscal sustainability**	Census 2027 approved budget: ₹11,718.24 crore	Link public expenditure with population needs and measurable outcomes	Efficient allocation of public funds
2.	**Regional balance**	District-wise population, housing and household amenities data to be collected	Prioritise underserved districts and rural–urban infrastructure gaps	Balanced regional development
3.	**Employment generation**	Labour-market indicators: labour force participation, worker population and unemployment rates	Integrate Census data with employment surveys and skill-demand assessments	Better job creation and skill matching
4.	**Social justice**	Population enumeration includes demographic, socioeconomic, educational and caste-related information	Design targeted programmes using reliable, aggregated data	More equitable access to welfare
5.	**Education and healthcare**	Household characteristics, educational attainment and demographic data	Allocate resources according to service gaps and population requirements	Improved human development
6.	**Transparent governance**	Census 2027 uses digital data collection and a central monitoring portal	Publish policy targets, expenditure reports and progress indicators	Greater accountability
7.	**Sustainable development**	Combine demographic data with economic, environmental and infrastructure indicators	Integrate inclusive growth with climate resilience and resource efficiency	Long-term sustainable development
8.	**Monitoring and evaluation**	Annual district-level development indicators and programme expenditure	Conduct periodic audits and evaluate outcomes against baseline values	Evidence-based policy improvement

Source: Government of India, Press Information Bureau, "Cabinet approves scheme of Conduct of Census of India 2027," 12 December 2025; "Census-2027," 30 March 2026; and Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Periodic Labour Force Survey indicators.

Fourth, social justice should be supported through reliable information on gender, disability, social groups and living conditions, while protecting personal privacy. Fifth, transparent governance should require departments to publish measurable targets, expenditure details and progress reports. Statistical evidence highlights the scale of this exercise. The Government of India has approved ₹11,718.24 crore for Census 2027, which will be conducted in two phases, with population enumeration scheduled for February 2027 across most of India.

The exercise will collect household, demographic and socioeconomic information, including caste-related data. These data can help governments plan public expenditure and assess development needs more accurately. For Tamil Nadu, Census findings should be integrated with district-level indicators of employment, income, educational attainment, healthcare access and infrastructure. For example, districts with higher unemployment or inadequate public services should receive targeted skill-development programmes, employment support and essential infrastructure investment. Budget performance should be evaluated through measurable indicators, such as employment created, school completion rates, healthcare access and improvements in household amenities. Finally, an independent monitoring mechanism should publish annual progress reports, encourage public participation and audit the use of public funds. Personal census information must remain confidential, while aggregated statistics should be accessible for research and policy evaluation. In short, integrating Census 2027 data with fiscal planning, employment strategies, social protection and transparent monitoring can strengthen evidence-based policymaking. This approach can promote balanced regional development, fiscal responsibility, social justice and sustainable economic growth in Tamil Nadu and India. Census data alone cannot guarantee these outcomes; effective implementation, institutional accountability and regular evaluation are equally essential.

Conclusion

India's Census 2027 offers an important opportunity to update the demographic and household evidence needed for public planning after the long interval since the 2011 Census. With digital data collection and a broad range of demographic and socioeconomic information, it can help governments assess population change, migration, urbanisation, household conditions and demand for public services. For Tamil Nadu, this evidence is especially relevant to planning for an ageing population, changing workforce, urban growth and continuing differences between rural and urban areas. The study's assessment shows that census information may strengthen fiscal planning, infrastructure investment, welfare delivery and administrative coordination. It can help identify underserved communities and localities, inform employment and skills programmes, and guide the allocation of schools, healthcare, housing, transport and social protection. Information on social groups and household circumstances may also contribute to more equitable policy design. However, census figures do not themselves determine fiscal transfers, political representation or the success of welfare programmes. These outcomes depend on constitutional and institutional arrangements, allocation criteria, implementation capacity and political decisions.

Census evidence also has limitations. It is a snapshot rather than a complete explanation of changing living conditions, and it cannot replace specialised surveys or administrative data. The accuracy and usefulness of its findings will depend on complete coverage, consistent

definitions, appropriate training, accessible participation and public confidence. Strong safeguards are essential to protect confidential personal information, particularly as digital data collection expands. For Tamil Nadu and India, the central task is therefore to turn reliable census statistics into transparent, measurable and inclusive public action. Census findings should be interpreted alongside employment, health, education, income and fiscal indicators, with appropriate attention to district-level variation and vulnerable groups. Regular monitoring and public reporting can help determine whether policies are reaching the populations they are intended to serve. Census 2027 can strengthen evidence-based governance and support balanced development, but only when its data are used responsibly and institutions are accountable for results.

Suggestions

The Census 2027 authorities should ensure complete and inclusive enumeration through adequate training, clear instructions, accessible self-enumeration and targeted outreach to migrants, homeless people, remote communities and persons with disabilities. Public communication should explain the purpose of data collection and the privacy protections in place, helping build trust and participation. Digital systems should be supported by reliable technical assistance and secure procedures for handling information. After publication, census data should be made available in timely, accessible and appropriately aggregated formats, while protecting individual confidentiality. Tamil Nadu departments and local governments should use the findings alongside labour, health, education and fiscal data to prepare district-level plans. Such plans should identify service gaps and specify measurable targets for employment, housing, education, healthcare, sanitation and social protection.

Governments should not treat population figures as the sole basis for resource allocation or representation. Allocation decisions should be transparent and account for service needs, development outcomes and relevant constitutional and fiscal rules. Independent audits, periodic evaluations and public progress reports can strengthen accountability. Finally, census information should inform policy without replacing consultation with affected communities or regular assessment of programme outcomes.

Future Research

Future research should compare Census 2027 results with the 2011 Census and intervening official estimates to examine changes in population, migration, urbanisation, household structure and regional disparities. District-level studies in Tamil Nadu could assess how demographic change relates to employment, ageing, public-service access and welfare outcomes. Researchers should also examine public participation, trust in digital enumeration and privacy safeguards. Combining census data with household surveys, administrative records and budget information would provide a more complete assessment of policy effectiveness. Such

work should distinguish observed results from projections and account for differences in data definitions and coverage.

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