

Chapter 3

Global Tamil diaspora and profile of selected camps and study respondents

3.1 Introduction

Recent statistics published by the United Nations (2013) show that 232 million people live abroad in other countries. This number constitutes 3.2 per cent of the world's population. They further show a drastic growth since 1990 when 154 million people were reported to be living abroad. Last decade has seen a drastic increase in this number when compared with 175 million people living aboard in 2000. People who leave their traditional ethnic homelands and live in other parts of the world are called as "Diaspora" (IOM, 2004). This concept originated to describe the Jewish dispersal from their original homeland. It is used increasingly to describe any community which in one way or another has a history of migration (Marienstrass, 1989). The concept has also been regarded as useful in describing the geographical displacement and/or identifies the cross-border identities, cultures and social relations in the contemporary world (Hall, 1993). Thus, it is used to describe the processes of transnationalism, as well as the importance of pre-migration social networks, cultures and capital in a wide range of communities which experience a feeling of displacement (Clifford, 1994; Safran, 1991).

History of Tamil diaspora across the world

Tamil population is originally Dravidian which mainly lives in the southern part of India in the state of Tamil Nadu. Its mother tongue is Tamil. The Census of India, 2001 data on language shows that out of every 10,000 people in India, 592 people have Tamil as their mother tongue. Further, the total population in India which speaks Tamil is 60,793,814 (ORGI, 2001). With this statistics, it could be estimated that the total population which speaks Tamil in India in 2011 would be 71,665,719.

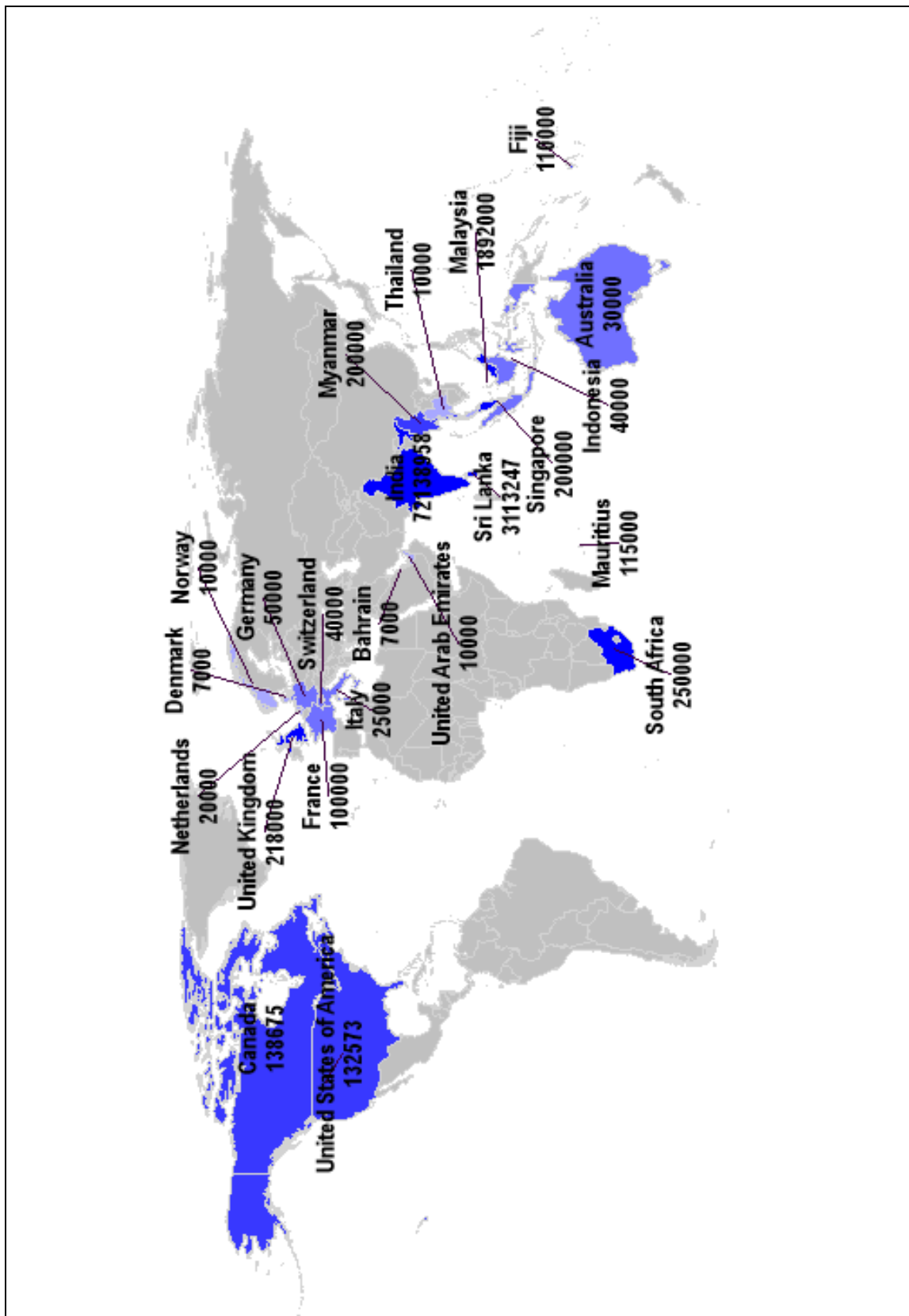
Migration of Tamil population during the colonial period was mainly because of cheap labour. The British rule provided a way for this movement of labour from Tamil Nadu. People were exported as slaves, mainly to the British colonies and European colonies in distant lands. Majority of these migrants have permanently settled in the host countries where they moved as bonded labourers and thereafter started growing in numbers. Movement of the Tamil population also took place during the post-colonial period.

Recent data on world Tamil population reveal that significant numbers of Tamil people are found in 23 countries, including India. Figure 3.1 shows the Tamil diaspora across the world. The map has been plotted using data from different sources and integrating them to a data plotting technology called DevInfo. The map shows that next to India, a vast majority of Tamil population has settled in Sri Lanka counting above 31 lakh, followed by Malaysia with around 19 lakh.

Tamil population in Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan Tamil population has a long history way back to the 2nd century BC (Mahadevan, 2002). Tamil people are classified under two different groups in Sri Lanka. The first group is called Sri Lankan Tamils, Ceylon Tamils or Eelam Tamils. They are descendants of the Tamils of the old Jaffna Kingdom and east coast chieftaincies called Vannimais. These chieftaincies arose in the 12th century with the rise of the medieval Tamil kingdom's golden age and the collapse of the classical Sinhalese kingdom. The second group is called Indian Tamils, Hill country Tamils or Up-country Tamils. They are the Tamils of Indian origin sent to Sri Lanka during the 19th century to work as bonded labourers. These immigrants are considered as 'indentured labourers' who were bound by a contract and it was almost impossible for them to breach it.

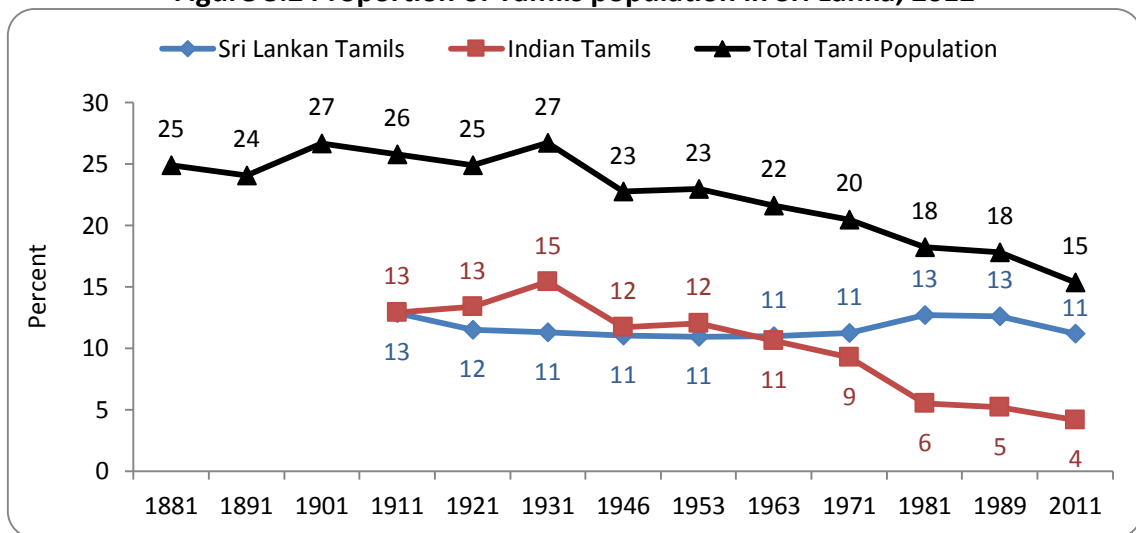
Figure 3.1 Number of Tamil population across the world, 2012



Source: Tamilnet, 2008; Dept of Statistics, Singapore, 2010; Dept of Statistics, Mauritius, 2011; Dept of Census & Statistics, Sri Lanka, 2012; Carley, 2012; Sivasupramaniam, 2012.

The Tamil population in Sri Lanka mainly lives in nine districts in three provinces. The districts of Northern Province are Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu and Vavuniya. The districts of Eastern Province are Amparai, Batticaloa and Triconmalee while the district in North-Western Province is Puthalam. The census of Sri Lanka and estimates of Tamil population in Sri Lanka (figure 3.2) show a declining trend of Tamil population over a period of time. During the 19th century, about one-fourth of the population was Tamil. Though the country has seen an increase in Tamil population in the early 20th century, the proportion started declining after 1946. The recent census of Sri Lanka (2012) shows that 15 per cent of Sri Lankan population is composed of Tamils.

Figure 3.2 Proportion of Tamils population in Sri Lanka, 2012



Source: Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka, 2012

3.2 Profile of refugee camps

Understanding the population and its geographical surrounding is one of the basic necessities of social sciences. Hence, it is necessary to know what the population is and its geography in terms of indicators pertinent to infrastructure surrounding the selected refugee camps. Infrastructure includes availability of drinking water, drainage facility, transport facility, road connectivity, government hospitals, private hospitals, health assistance from aid agencies, post office, etc. Besides this information, demographic information such as camp population, number of families residing in the camp and number of families repatriated after the end of civil war in 2009 has also been collected for the study. In addition to information on infrastructure, details were also collected on the distance of infrastructure from the camp.

Demographics of selected refugee camps

Table 3.1 presents demographics of the selected refugee camps such as the number of families, population and number of families repatriated. The camp in Krishnagiri district is large in size, followed by the camps in Dharmapuri and Villupuram districts. On an average, each family has 3 to 4 members. While the post-conflict repatriation was initiated by the Government and UNHCR, the study investigated if any refugees repatriated to Sri Lanka from the camps after the 2009 conflict. A maximum number of 16 families repatriated from Villupuram camp, followed by 13 families in Krishnagiri camp. No repatriation has been reported in Salem camp.

Table 3.1 Family size, camp population and families repatriated					
Camp demographics	Dharma- puri	Krishna- giri	Thiruvana- malai	Villu- puram	Salem
Number of families	60	160	36	69	31
Total camp population	242	530	146	240	127
Average family size	4	3	4	3	4
Number of families repatriated after 2009 civil war	4	13	2	16	0

Availability of health services

Almost all the selected camps have government hospitals in their vicinity, i.e., within five kilometres. Except Villupuram camp, other camps have private hospitals in their vicinity. In addition, free routine health care is provided by government and non-government organisations (NGOs) working for the wellbeing of the refugees. Respondents confirm weekly visits by government health care providers and routine health check-up on a monthly basis (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Health infrastructure in the vicinity of camps					
Health infrastructure	Dharma- puri	Krishna- giri	Thiruvana- malai	Villu- puram	Salem
Government hospital in the vicinity of camp	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Distance from the nearest government hospital	3 kms	2 kms	1 km	4 kms	5 kms
Private hospitals/clinics in the vicinity of camp	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Routine health care support by government	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Routine health care support by NGOs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Environment and sanitation

Table 3.3 gives the sanitation-related indicators in the surveyed refugee camps. All the camps are connected to tap water for drinking along with storage tank. Majority of households do not have bathroom and toilet facilities within the premises but the government and NGOs have provided them. Salem camp has better facilities with more bathrooms and toilets than other camps. Except Tiruvanmalai camp, other camps have waste water outlet.

In addition to sanitation facilities, the camps were ranked on a five-point scale (1 – very bad, 2 – bad, 3 – average, 4 – good and 5 – very good), for their environment based on two parameters, viz., greeneries and cleanliness of the surrounding. For this two indicators, the ranking is given based on the researcher's assessment. To this end, a relook and revision of the ranks was done once the survey in all the camps was completed. This was required as the data collected from the camps initially had over-

rated the indicators and thus needed to be adjusted on the basis of the observations carried out in camps where data collection was made at a later stage.

The assessment of camps based on greeneries and cleanliness shows that Salem camp is very good in terms of environment while Thiruvanamalai camp is the worst. It is noteworthy that Thiruvanamalai camp is temporary where recently arrived refugees are accommodated in a warehouse with sheets used as partition among the families. The cleanliness in Villupuram camp and the greeneries in Dharmapuri and Krishagiri camps found average as compared to other camps.

Sanitation facilities	Dharma-puri	Krishna-giri	Thiruvana-malai	Villu-puram	Salem
Availability of tap water for drinking	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Availability of bathroom – public/ private	Public	Public	Public	Public	Public
In case of public, number of bathrooms	7	15	4	5	4
Number of persons using one bathroom	35	35	37	48	32
Availability of toilet – public/ private	Public	Public	Public	Public	Public
In case of public, number of toilets	20	24	10	16	10
Number of persons using one toilet	12	22	15	15	13
Availability of waste water outlet	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Cleanliness surrounding the camp	Good	Good	Very bad	Average	Very good
Greeneries surrounding the camp	Average	Average	Very bad	Good	Very good

Transport and communication

Except Villupuram camp, other camps are situated adjacent to metallic road with regular public transport. Villupuram camp is situated in the interior and less frequented by bus services though the nearest bus stand is 4 kilometres away. Krishnagiri camp is situated adjacent to the state highway and hence the buses cross the camp in every five minutes. Salem camp is just a kilometre from the bus stand, while Dharmapuri and

Krishnagiri camps are two kilometres from the bus stand. In all the five districts, post offices are located close to the bus stand and hence they have the same distance as the bus stand.

Table 3.4 Transport and communication in the camps					
Transport and communication	Dharma-puri	Krishna-giri	Thiruvana-malai	Villu-puram	Salem
Connectivity to metallic road	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Frequency of public transport to camp	30 mins	5 mins	30 mins	90 mins	15 mins
Distance from nearest bus stand	2 kms	2 kms	3 kms	4 kms	1 km
Distance from nearest post office	2 kms	2 kms	3 kms	4 kms	1 km

Infrastructure index of the selected camps

Infrastructure related information collected for each camp is further used to calculate the “Infrastructure Index” of the camps. The procedure for calculating the index is detailed in section 2.51. Out of the 17 variables collected on infrastructure, 7 variables dropped while 10 variables given in Table 3.5 were used to arrive at the indicator. The variables dropped from the index calculation are government hospital in the vicinity of camp, routine health care support by government, routine health care support by NGOs, availability of tap water for drinking, availability of bathroom, availability of toilet and distance from nearest post office. The reason for dropping these indicators is the availability of these infrastructures in all the camps and of one indicator (distance from nearest post office) having close correlation with other indicator (distance from nearest bus stand).

All the variables used in the formation of index were standardized with units such as kilometre, per person, minutes, binary coding and five point scales. Further, five of the selected variables denoted negative relation with infrastructure while the rest five showed positive relation. The “negative relation” denotes that the lesser the data value, the better is the camp in terms of infrastructure availability. For example, the lesser the distance to the nearest government hospital, the better is the availability of infrastructure. This is vice versa in the case of variables with “positive relation”. For

example, cleanliness of the camp on a five point scale coded as '5' denotes the better position of environment in a particular camp. Differences in these variables were normalized using a normalization technique so as to standardize the indicators in one direction before calculating the Infrastructure Index. Table 3.5 shows the variables used in calculating infrastructure index along with their units and the normalization technique for each variable.

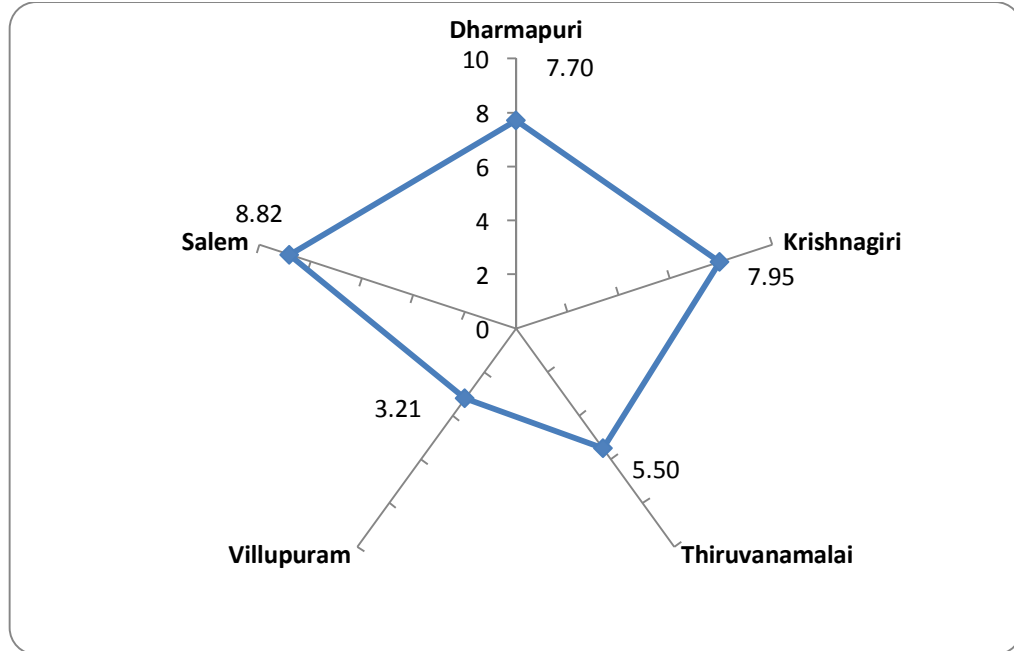
Table 3.5 Variable description and normalization procedure for calculating index		
Variable	Unit	Normalization procedure applied
Distance from the nearest government hospital	Kilometre	$(V_{max}-V_i) / (V_{max}-V_{min})$
Private hospitals/clinics in the vicinity of camp	Binary <i>(1-available and 0-not available)</i>	$(V_i-V_{min}) / (V_{max}-V_{min})$
Number of bathrooms	Per person	$(V_{max}-V_i) / (V_{max}-V_{min})$
Number of toilets	Per person	$(V_{max}-V_i) / (V_{max}-V_{min})$
Availability of waste water outlet	Binary <i>(1-available and 0-not available)</i>	$(V_i-V_{min}) / (V_{max}-V_{min})$
Cleanliness surrounding the camp	Five point scale <i>(1-very bad and 5-very good)</i>	$(V_i-V_{min}) / (V_{max}-V_{min})$
Greeneries surrounding the camp	Five point scale <i>(1-very bad and 5-very good)</i>	$(V_i-V_{min}) / (V_{max}-V_{min})$
Connectivity to metallic road	Binary <i>(1-available and 0-not available)</i>	$(V_i-V_{min}) / (V_{max}-V_{min})$
Frequency of public transport to camp	Minutes	$(V_{max}-V_i) / (V_{max}-V_{min})$
Vicinity of nearest bus stand	Kilometre	$(V_{max}-V_i) / (V_{max}-V_{min})$

Ranking of refugee camps

Figure 3.3 shows the ranking of camps based on the infrastructure index. The camp in Salem district has the finest infrastructure compared with other selected camps followed by the camps in Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri and Thiruvanamalai districts. The results of various indicators substantiate the status of Salem camp. For instance, the relative ranking of the camp on three indicators such as number of public bathrooms

used per person in the camp, cleanliness of the surrounding and greeneries surrounding puts forth Salem camp among other camps. On the other hand, the camp in Villupuram district has relatively poorer infrastructure where the detrimental indicators are vicinity of private hospital, number of persons using one bathroom, connectivity to metallic road, frequency of public transport to camp and vicinity of nearest bus stand.

Figure 3.3 Ranking of selected refugees camps based on infrastructure index

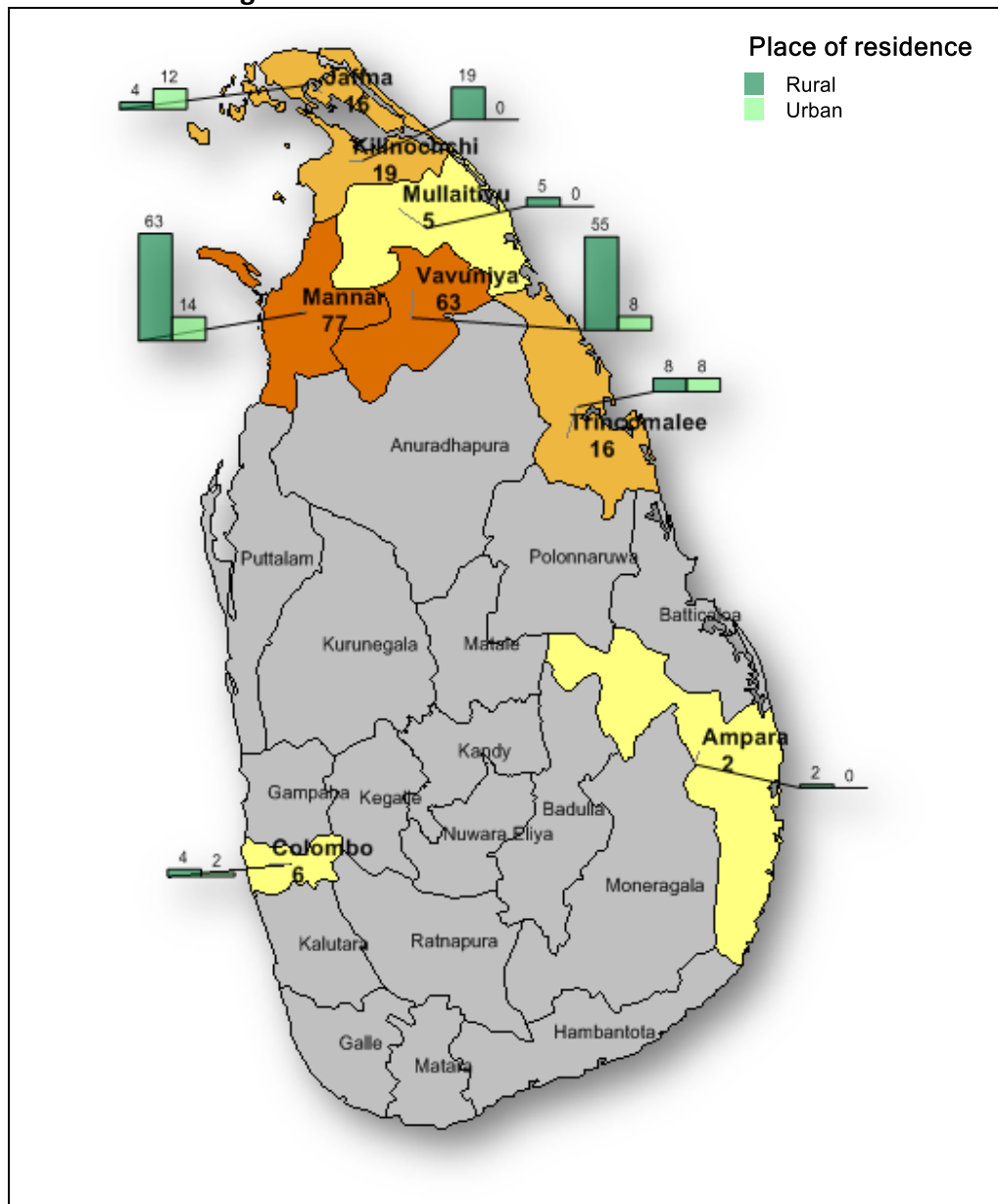


3.3 Profile of surveyed respondents

In addition to infrastructure related information, background characteristics of the refugees were obtained through a quantitative tool. The background information includes place of origin, year of arrival in India, demographic characteristics such as age, sex, family size, education, language proficiency, marital status, religion, ethnicity and occupation. The following section presents the background information about the surveyed refugees.

Place of origin of respondents

Figure 3.4 Place of last residence in Sri Lanka

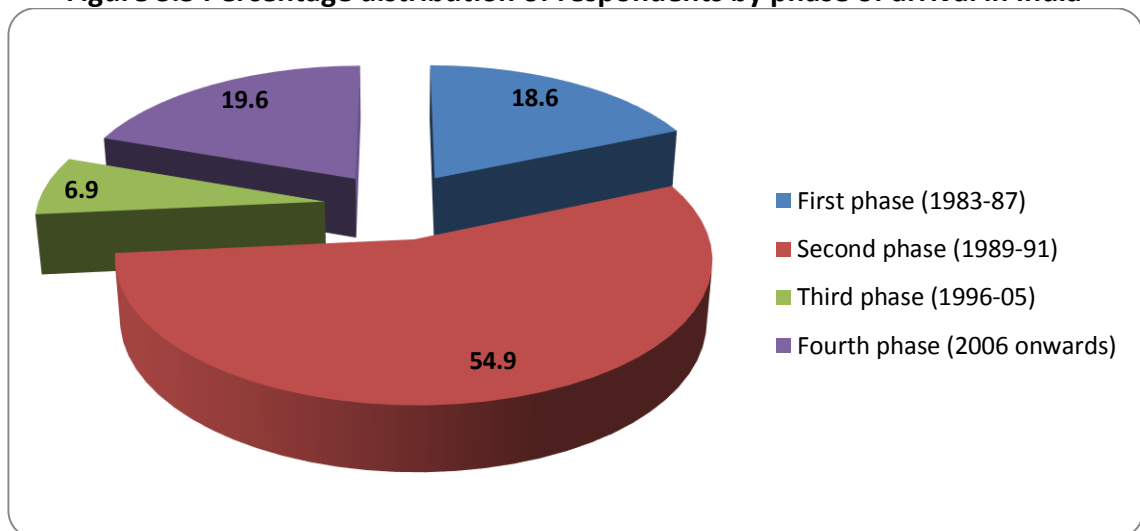


Majority of respondents are from the northern and north-eastern districts of Sri Lanka such as Mannar district (n=77), followed by Vavuniya district (n=63). Nineteen respondents are from Kilinochchi and 16 each from Jaffana and Trincomalee. The Northern Province where the Tamils are dominant is highly conflict affected. The remaining respondents are from Colombo, Mullaitivu and Ampara districts.

Year of arrival in India

The influx of Tamil refugees in India has been classified broadly into four phases. The early and first phase of influx was during 1983-87, the second was during 1989-91; the third was during 1996-05 while the fourth after 2006. The survey collected information about the refugees' year of arrival in India. Based on the year of first arrival, the sample population has been classified into the aforementioned phases (figure 3.5). Nearly two-fifths of the respondents arrived during the first and fourth phases. More than half of the respondents arrived during the second phase, while only seven per cent arrived during third phase.

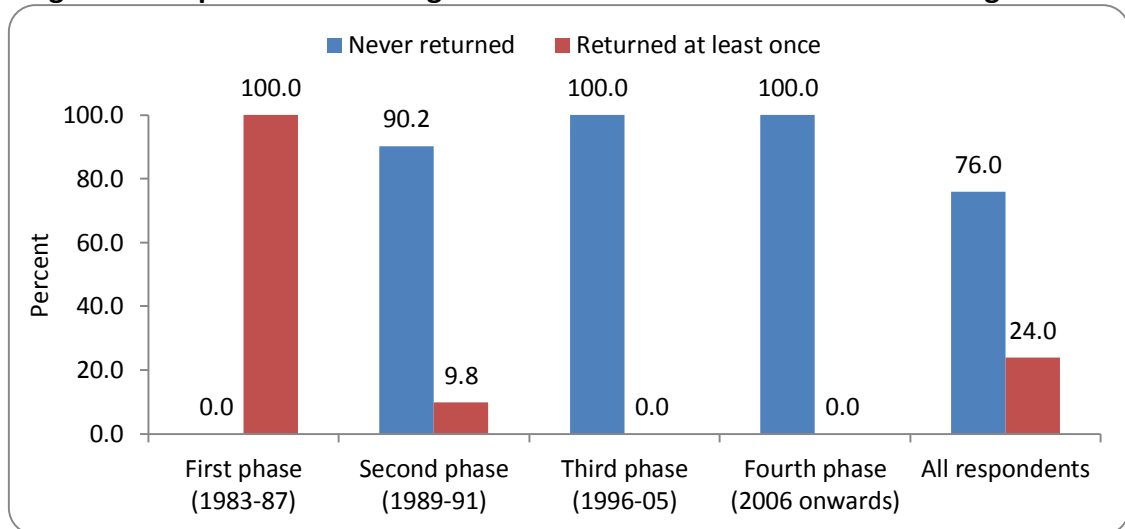
Figure 3.5 Percentage distribution of respondents by phase of arrival in India



Along with the year of arrival, the survey elucidated information about the refugees' return to Sri Lanka at least once after coming to India (figure 3.6). Of all the respondents, only one-fourth returned to Sri Lanka after coming to India. The respondents who came to India during third and fourth phases never repatriated to Sri Lanka. Almost all the respondents who came in the first phase and one-tenth of them

who came in the second phase repatriated to Sri Lanka. It is evident from the fact that India extended its military support to Sri Lanka to its fight against militant group and peacekeeping, during 1987 and 1990 (Hennayake, 1989). The Indian Peace-Keeping Force was formed under the mandate of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord signed in 1987 that aimed to end the Sri Lankan civil war. After the War, Tamil Nadu government facilitated repatriation to Sri Lanka. Majority of Sri Lankan refugees returned back to their origin with an expectation that the civil unrest had been halted and they would have peaceful and sustainable life.

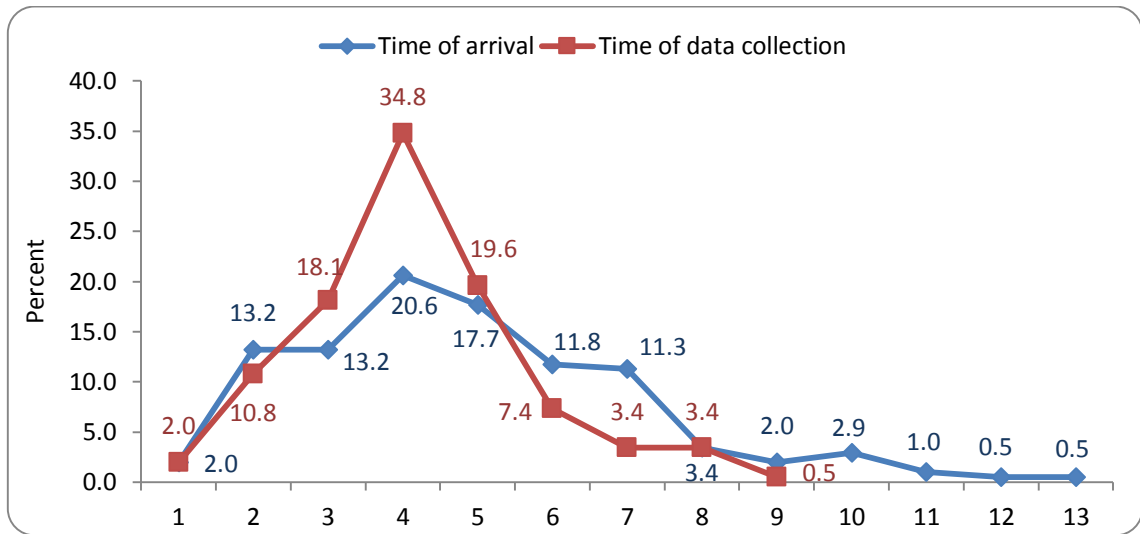
Figure 3.6 Repatriation of refugees to Sri Lanka at least once after coming to India



Family size of refugee households

The study elicited information about respondents' family size both at the time of arrival and their present status. Current average family size of the surveyed refugee households is 4, ranging from the smallest of single member households to a largest of 9 members. A question was asked "When you first came to Tamil Nadu, how many of your family members came with you?" On an average, there were around five family members per refugee family arrived at India. The minimum and maximum numbers of family members at the time of arrival range from 1 to 13. Most of the families had lost their family members in the conflict. Only those members who survived the conflict fled to different countries. However, the data on the number of family members lost in the conflict is not given here.

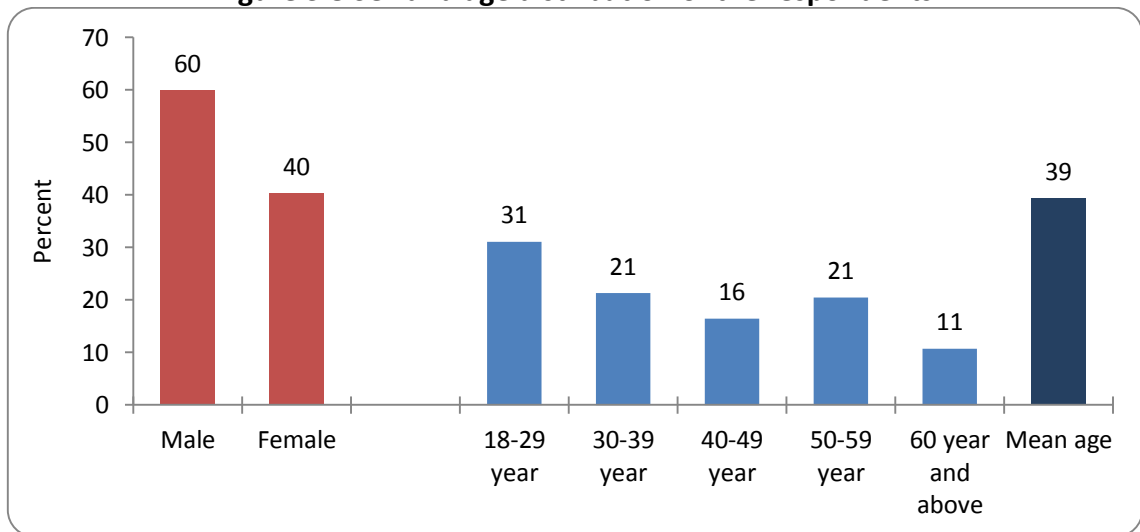
Figure 3.7 Family size of refugee households at the time of arrival and of data collection



Sex and age distribution of respondents

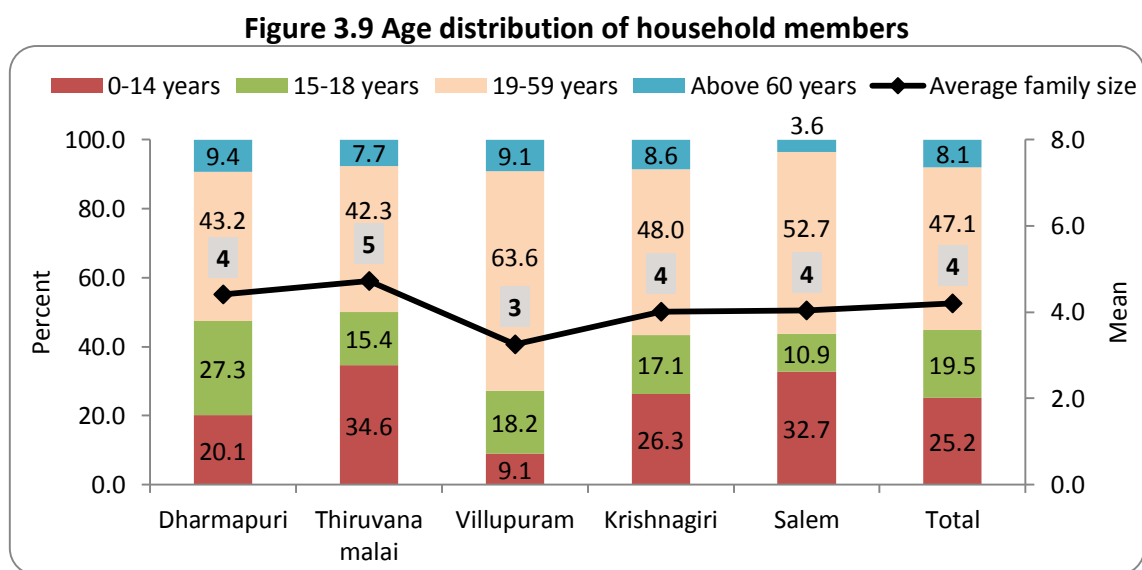
The classification of respondents by sex shows that three-fifths of them are male while the remaining are female. All the respondents are adults of age 18 years and above. Average age of the respondents is 39 years. The youngest respondent is 18 years, while the oldest respondent is 72 years. A majority of respondents are in the economically productive age group 18-59 years. Thirty-one per cent of them are in the age group of 18-29 years. About one-fifth of them are in the age group of 30-39 years. Only 11 per cent of them are older aged 60 years and above (figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8 Sex and age distribution of the respondents



Age distribution of household members

During the survey, data were collected regarding the broad age group of the family members such as children who are 0-14 years, adolescents 15-18 years, adults 19-59 years and elderly above 60 years. Figure 3.9 presents the age distribution of household members. One-fourth of the household members were children while around one-fifth were adolescents. The average family size of a refugee household is 4 members except in Villupuram and Thiruvanamalai which have three and five members respectively. About 47 per cent of household members were adults, while the elderly constitute of eight per cent.



Respondents' age at the time of arrival

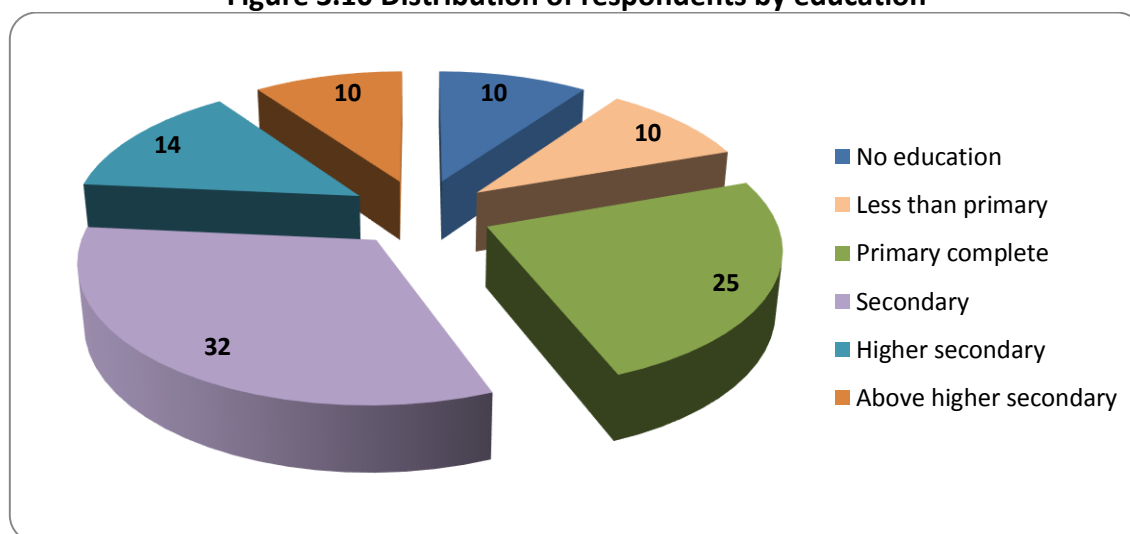
The respondents were asked that "How old were you when you first came to India?" Table 3.6 presents the respondents' age at the time of arrival in India by the phase of arrival. A majority of respondents would have experienced the heat of ethnic conflict as almost two-thirds of them were adults at that time. Of those refugees who were born in India, 16 percent of their families arrived during first phase, while four percent of their families arrived during second phase. These are the people who would not have experienced the conflict unless they were ever repatriated to Sri Lanka. Respondents who arrived during the fourth phase (2006 onwards) were above 15 years and many are above age 35.

Age at the time of arrival in India	First phase	Second phase	Third phase	Fourth phase	All respondents
Not born/born in India	15.8	3.6	0	0	4.9
0 to 14 years	34.2	35.7	57.1	0	29.9
15 to 24 years	23.7	25.0	14.3	27.5	24.5
25 years and above	26.3	35.7	28.6	72.5	40.7
Total (N)	38	112	14	40	204

Education of the respondent

One-tenth of the respondents are illiterates. Over one-third of them have completed up to primary level of education. Another one-third of them have secondary education. Respondents who have completed higher secondary and are either doing their graduation or completed it constitute only 10 per cent (figure 3.10). Educational attainment has been reclassified into fewer categories in later chapters where this variable is used in bivariate analysis for determining its impact on dependent variables.

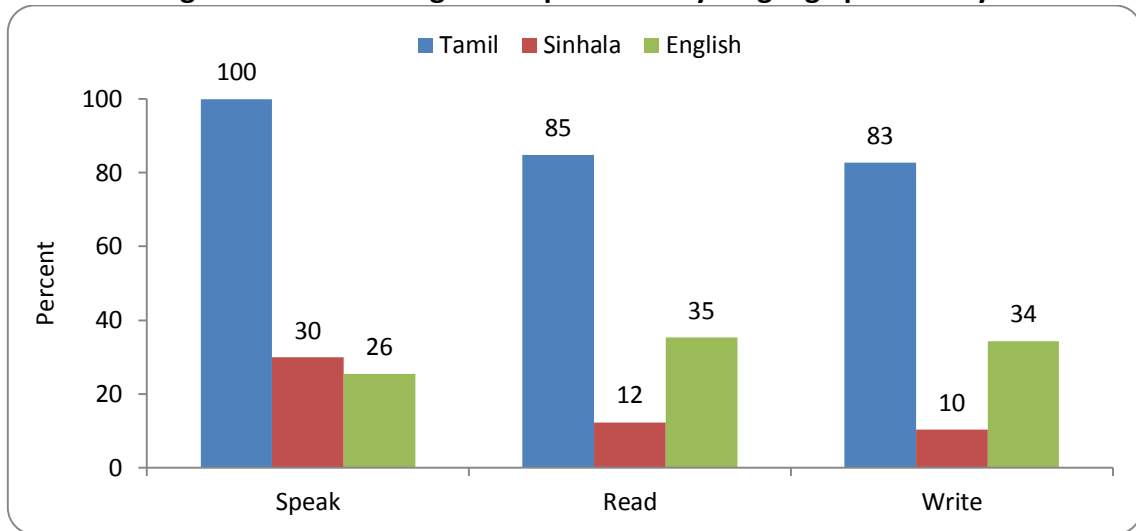
Figure 3.10 Distribution of respondents by education



Languages known

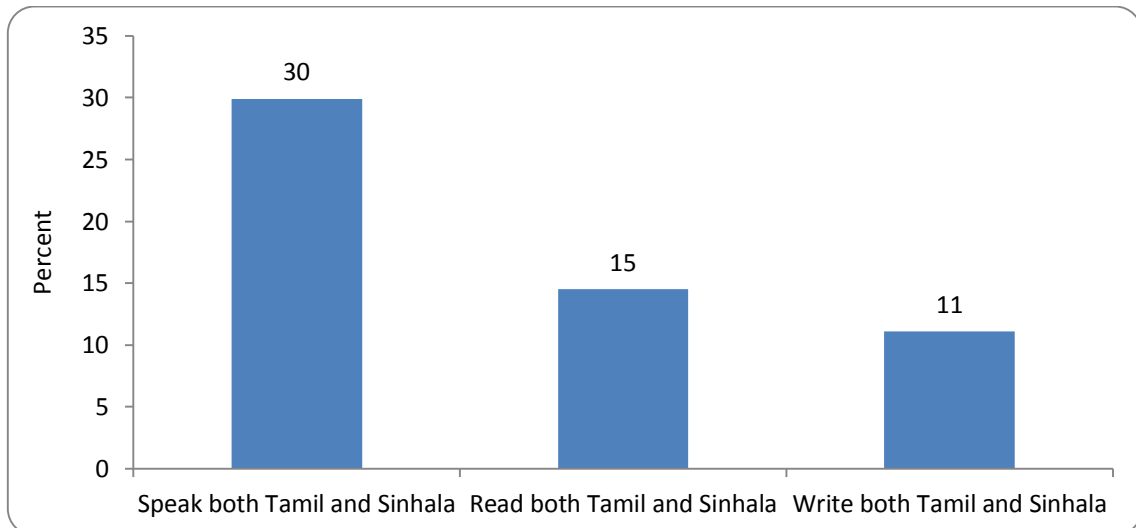
Respondents were asked about their ability to speak, read and write Tamil, Sinhala and English. All of them can speak Tamil and a vast majority can read and write this language. Only 30 per cent of them can speak Sinhala, while 12 per cent can read and 10 per cent can write this language. English is reasonably known by around one-third of the respondents who can either speak, read or write the language (figure 3.11).

Figure 3.11 Percentage of respondents by language proficiency



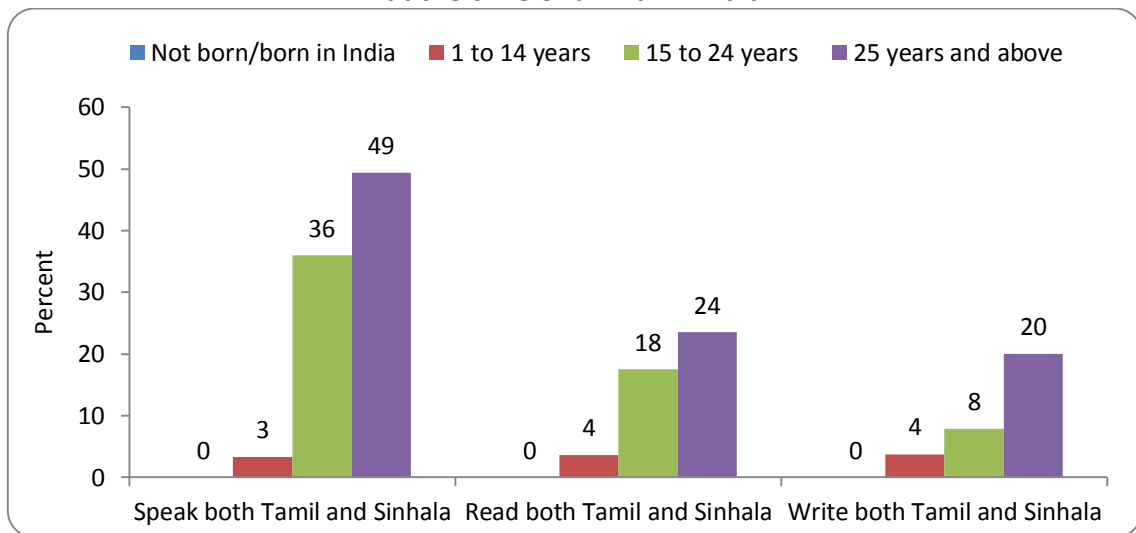
Further analysis was carried out to test the proficiency of the respondents to speak, read and write multiple languages, particularly Tamil and Sinhala (figure 3.12). Only 30 per cent of them can speak both Tamil and Sinhala, while 15 per cent can read both the languages. Just above one-tenth of them can write both the languages.

Figure 3.12 Percentage of respondents by ability to speak, read and write in both Tamil and Sinhala



Bivariate analysis was carried out by the age of respondents at the time of arrival in India and their language proficiency. It shows that only those respondents who born in Sri Lanka are adapted to Sinhala. Further, the longer the years they lived in Sri Lanka, the better is their ability to speak, read or write both Tamil and Sinhala (figure 3.13).

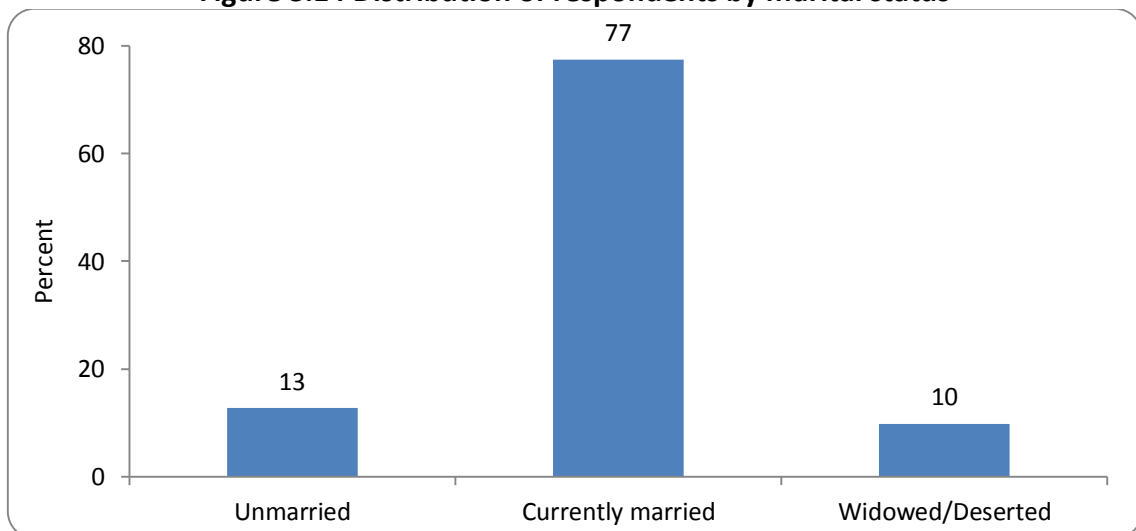
Figure 3.13 Percentage of respondents with proficiency in multiple languages by age at the time of arrival in India



Marital status

Only above one-tenth of the respondents are unmarried at the time of survey. Almost three-fourths of them are married. One-tenth of them are either widowed or deserted. It was also found that single member households mainly constitute of widowed or deserted respondents.

Figure 3.14 Distribution of respondents by marital status



Religion and caste

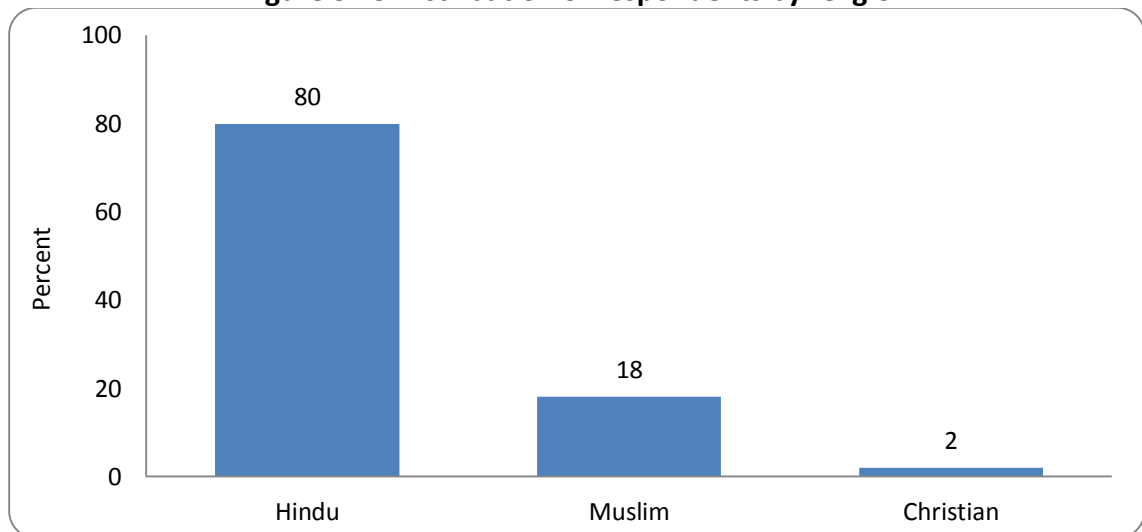
Four-fifths of the respondents are Hindus, while 18 per cent are Muslims. The remaining two per cent are Christians. The study also collected the caste names of respondents. Though most of them have similar caste names as in the Tamil population

in India, since their country of origin is different, the actual caste categories are not presented in this chapter. Most of the respondents belong to the following castes viz., Devar, Vellalar, Gounder, Vellala Gounder, Agamudaiyar, Chettiyar and Tachar.

Occupation

The government has granted permission to the refugees to work in their neighbourhood as well as in other districts of Tamil Nadu. The operation manual of Government of Tamil Nadu (2007) states that the refugees are allowed to work between 6 am and 6 pm so as to earn additional income for the betterment of their lives. If any such work requires stay in other districts for a longer period, they are granted special permission for the same upon request. Those refugees who work outside their district can directly report to the camp on the day of disbursement of monetary aid to collect it. In addition to this, an introduction letter is provided to facilitate loans from money lenders to those refugees who are willing to start their own business. Qualified refugees are also given driving license through transport department (Government of Tamil Nadu, 2007).

Figure 3.15 Distribution of respondents by religion



Refugees mainly work in the informal sector (figure 3.16). Almost one-fourth of them work as painters, moulders and carpenters. One-tenth of them have their own business such as textile or grocery shop. Very few of them work as teachers. Those respondents who do not work are housewives, elderly people, those incapable to work and students.

Figure 3.16 Distribution of respondents by current occupation

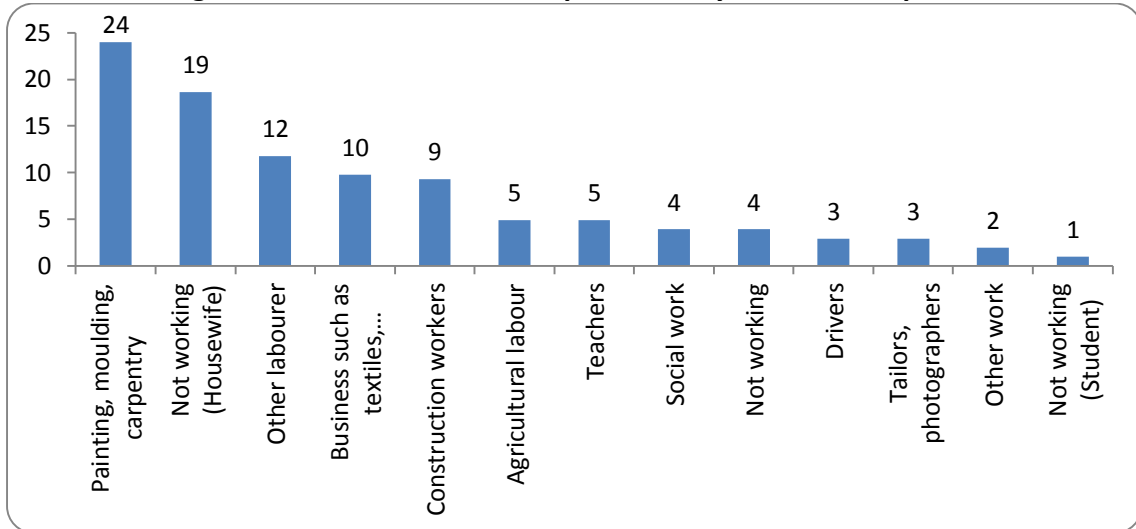
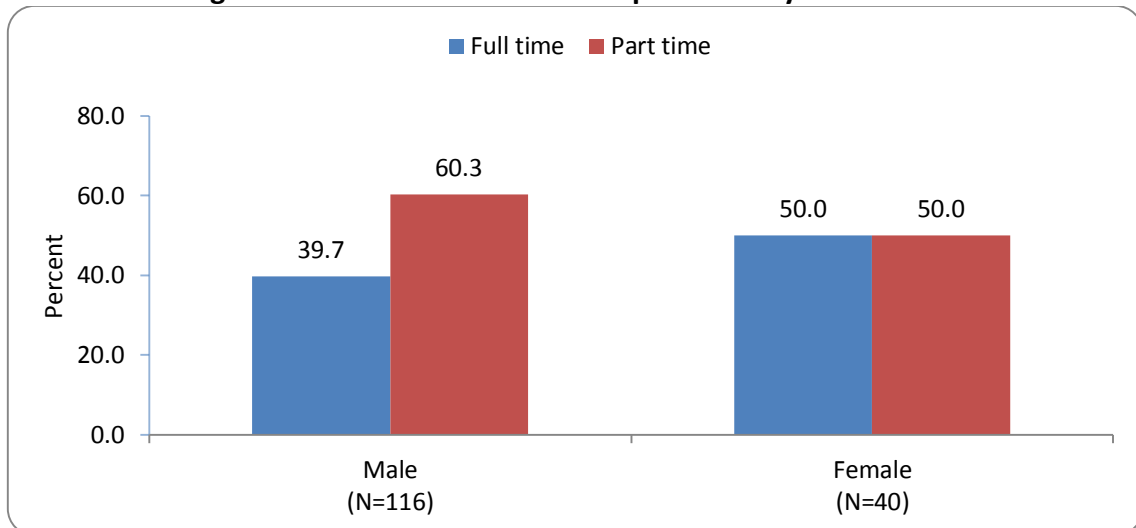


Figure 3.17 Sex distribution of respondents by work status



Of those who were working, further probing was made to understand their partial and fulltime working status. Since finding employment is one of the hardest jobs for refugees, those who work regularly every month are defined as “fulltime employed” and those with seasonal and irregular work are defined as “Part-time employed”. Figure 3.17 shows the distribution of fulltime and part-time employment status of refugees by sex. This analysis excludes those who were not working and students, and thus the denominator for it is 156 respondents. It shows that only two-fifths of the men are fulltime employed, while the rest are employed part time. In the case of women, while a majority of them do not work (which is excluded in this analysis), of those who work, an equal proportions are employed as fulltime and as part-time workers.