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Disparities in literacy with Reference to Gender: A study of inter-districts of Haryana

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Abstract

This article investigates the status of Literacy inequality in Haryana in the context of the Gender. The disparities in education are measured by the inequity in educational attainment of male and female. Government of Haryana has made many efforts in the way of provide constitutional provisions, implemented plans & policies, and investing huge amount from time to time. Various schemes & programmes, level of literacy in all spheres, has improved over the period of time but not as desired level, where rural-urban as well as male-female literacy gap exists at wide level. Numerous affirmative actions were also introduced to enhance the female literacy. However there remains a considerable gap in literacy rate. Female literacy is lower than that of their male counterparts in all districts of Haryana. Haryana is one such state that has shown marked improvement in literacy levels but still plagues from massive inequalities. On the basis of secondary data, this paper is aims to analyze the growth of literacy rate by Inter- Districts, gender and region in Haryana.

Keywords: Literacy, Disparities, Gender, Haryana, Rural-Urban, Districts

1. Introduction

Education is a social phenomenon that strongly influences on women's control of their own future but low level of female education have been frequently cited in Haryana. Education is a great source for the potentialities of a human being to emerge in a positive direction so that a man can live dignified life in society. The power of literacy is widely accepted. Education plays a pivotal role in laying a proper foundation for the overall social and economic development of any region. No single nation in the world with illiterate and uneducated people is developed or advanced ^[1]. Good education helps empower you, thus making you strong enough to look after yourself in any given situation. It keeps you aware of your given surrounding as well as the rules and regulations of the society you're living in. Education helps you understand yourself better, it helps you realize your potential and qualities as a human being. Literacy enables people to secure sustainable livelihoods and participate actively in the social, economic and political arena. Education is widely recognized as the gateway to economic security and opportunity, particularly for females. Literacy level of women is an indicator of women empowerment. There is a difference between man and women with regards to literacy level in country. In Haryana lower literacy rate among female indicates their unequal opportunity for basic education. There is a significant correlation between female literacy and demographic indices. As stated by UNESCO's Education for All Global Monitoring Report "literacy skills are fundamental to informed decision-making, personal empowerment, active and passive participation in global social community" ^[2]. Education refers to a system of training and instruction designed to provide systematic knowledge, to develop skill, abilities, character and mental powers as the result of such training. All of these can individually become tools of empowerment for both men and women, observes a UNIFEM report on gender biases and discrimination against women ^[3]. According to Global Monitoring Report (GMR) 2013/14, 37 percent of the global illiterate population is resides in India. The female constitute almost half of the Indian population and yet 35 per cent of female are still illiterate as compared to 18 per cent of male (Census of India, 2011). In 2011, 63 per cent of the total illiterate population is female. Though the efforts and growth is commendable, the 12th Five Year Plan once again underlines the wide disparities across gender, location, region and caste. The Beijing Platform for Action too recognized the education of women and girls as one of the critical areas of concern. At the national level the National Policy for Education equally recognizes education as a vital tool in the empowerment of women. Education was declared a fundamental right but socio-economic status and location continues to influence the provision of educational opportunity and its outcomes in terms of literacy and elementary education in India.

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Haryana: A brief profile

Haryana is a state in north India with its capital as Chandigarh. The area of Haryana is 44,212 square kilometers with 21 administrative districts.

The Population of Haryana according to the census (2011) stands at about 25 million, making it the 17th most populated state in India and 20th largest state in the India in terms of area. 65.21 percent of Haryana population lives in rural areas and 34.79 percent of population lives in urban areas. Sex ratio of Haryana increased to 877 in 2011 which was 861 in 2001. Haryana is one of the wealthier states of India and had the second highest per capita income in the country. Haryana is one of the most economically developed regions in South Asia. Agriculture and Industries are the backbone of the local economy. The largest city of Haryana is Faridabad. The literacy rate of urban area is 83.14% and therefore for rural area it is 71.42%.

Analysis of Haryana Districts

Table-1 reveals that in Haryana, 8 districts have 80% and above literacy rate, only 1 district have below 50% of literate people and other 12 districts falls between 60% to 80%. 17 districts have male literacy above 80% and none of the district has above 80% of female literate population. 4 districts have 60% - 80% of literate male, 18 districts have female literacy rate in the range of 55% - 70%. Only one districts of literate female is below 50%. None of the district have male literacy rate below 50% or even between 50%-60% and female literacy rate above 80%. In rural area literacy amongst women is low in the state only one district have above 80% female literate. Therefore 16 districts have above 80% of male literates. In urban area male literacy is much higher than that of female literacy. Out of 21 districts 20 districts fall in the range of above 80% of male literacy whereas only 5 districts have above 80% of female literates. Haryana is relatively well developed state but the social indices are quite low. In terms of literacy rate, the State is ranked 20th in the country.

Table 1: Distribution of Districts: Percentage Wise

	Total Literacy Rate	Male Literacy Rate	Female Literacy Rate	Rural		Urban	
				Male	Female	Male	Female
Above 80%	8	17	0	16	1	20	5
60%-80%	12	4	18	5	13	1	15
50%-60%	1	0	2	0	6	0	1
Below 50%	0	0	1	0	1	0	0

Table-2 shows literacy profile of Haryana. The Total literacy rate in Haryana is 76.6 percent with district Gurgaon 84.4 percent having highest and Mewat with 56.1 percent lowest literacy rate. Mewat area is situated in the southern part of Haryana which is dominated by Meos. The whole area is very backward, poor and the almost an illiterate part of Haryana. The literacy programme is the dire need of this area in order to bring its population under the main stream of development (DISE data 2013-14). All the districts, except Mewat, had literacy rate more than seventy percent. The average literacy rate of Mewat in 2011 was 56.10% compared to 43.50% of 2001, and male and female literacy rates were 73% and 37.60% respectively. Lack of access to education among women in the district means that a large number of women do not have the opportunity to realize their potential. Women in Mewat are often denied this essential right to education. Though young girls are sent to the traditional institutions of education in like the Madrasas, but these are generally closed segregated spaces. Lack of security was the major hindrance in the education of girls [4]. Eight out of twenty one districts taken had literacy rate more than Eighty percent. Total literacy rose to 76.6 percent 2011 from 55.85 in 1991 census. Female literacy still remains a matter of utmost concern in areas like Mewat, Palwal, and Fatehabad. In 1966 Haryana had a literacy rate lower than the national average. Seventeen districts are below the state average in female literacy rate. In

fact in a number of districts in rural areas female literacy rate is lower than the national average. Bhiwani the one and only district which have highest literacy rate of female in rural area (86.79 percent) as well as in urban area (89.76 percent). On the other side Bhiwani is the only district where in both the urban or rural area the male literacy rate is lower than the female literacy rate is higher. There has been increase of 9 % literacy since last one decade. In 2001, male-females literacy rate in rural areas is 75.37 % and 49.27% respectively, while in urban areas, it is 85.83% and 71.34% for male and females respectively. In the state as a whole, 83.20% and 89.37% male literacy rate is registered in rural and urban areas respectively in 2011, while female’s literacy rate in rural and urban areas is recorded 60.97% and 77.51%. Thus there is a wide gap between male-female’s literacy rates in rural and urban areas. India’s female literacy is lower than Haryana’s female literacy rate i.e. India 65.46% and Haryana 66.8% as per census 2011 [5]. Significant progress has been made by Haryana in the area of female literacy. Female literacy rates in Haryana have made a quantum jump from a lowly 10.32 per cent in 1971 to an impressive 56.31 per cent in 2001. While the male literacy rates too have registered an improvement from 38.9 per cent to 79.25 per cent in the same period, it is significant to note that the improvement in female literacy rates is almost 5 times while male literacy rates have little more than doubled in the same period [6].

Table 2: Literacy Profile of Haryana: Literacy Rates, District Ranking, Rural Urban, Male-Female 2011

Districts	Literacy rate							
	Literacy Rate	Rank	Male	Female	Rural		Urban	
					Male	Female	Male	Female
Gurgaon	84.4	1	90.3	77.6	91.31	69.63	89.82	81.33
Panchkula	83.4	2	88.6	77.5	84.59	69.10	91.96	84.06
Faridabad	83.0	3	89.9	75.2	87.76	61.97	90.48	78.46
Ambala	82.9	4	88.5	76.5	86.01	70.48	91.47	84.35
Rewari	82.2	5	92.9	70.5	92.88	67.91	93.02	78.31
Jhajjar	80.8	6	89.4	71.0	88.25	68.22	92.94	78.98
Sonapat	80.8	7	89.4	70.9	88.07	67.35	92.42	78.73
Rohtak	80.4	8	88.4	71.2	88.13	66.32	88.83	77.68
Mahendragarh	78.9	9	91.3	65.3	91.15	63.66	92.05	74.69
Yamunanagar	78.9	10	85.1	72.0	82.39	66.60	89.14	80.37
Panipat	77.5	11	85.4	68.2	83.69	62.97	87.48	74.31
Bhiwani	76.7	12	87.4	64.8	66.90	86.79	62.21	89.76
kurukshetra	76.7	13	83.5	69.2	80.99	64.86	89.27	79.82
Karnal	76.4	14	83.7	68.3	81.50	63.70	88.75	78.59
Hisar	73.2	15	82.8	62.3	81.13	57.40	86.28	72.87
Jind	72.7	16	82.5	61.6	80.63	58.15	88.77	73.01
kaithal	70.6	17	79.3	60.7	77.60	57.80	85.46	70.77
Sirsa	70.4	18	78.6	61.2	75.98	56.81	86.66	74.25
Palwal	70.3	19	82.6	56.4	81.37	52.53	86.63	68.96
Fatehabad	69.1	20	78.1	59.3	76.47	56.03	84.95	72.95
Mewat	56.1	21	73.0	37.6	71.61	34.63	83.03	59.34
Haryana	76.6	-	85.4	66.8	83.20	60.97	89.37	77.51

Census: 2011

A district-wise analysis reveals a considerable variation in regard to the educational status of various districts between male and female literacy rates. Thus Rewari, which is at the top in male literacy rates, ranks 9th in respect of female literacy rate. Male-female disparity in literacy is as high as 18.6 in Haryana. Highest male-female disparity is recorded in Mewat (35.04 per cent) and lowest is in Panchkula (11.1 percent). Education can be the key to empowering women and men to break out of the vicious cycle of gender inequality and poverty. An educated girl can educate the family and improve community and society.

2. Conclusion

Level of literacy has been increased over the period of time in Haryana. Urban-rural gap in literacy has been narrowed overall while male-female literacy gap has widened over the period of time. Moreover, literacy gap, by districts as well as by gender, has still exists in all over state and districts also. Gurgaon is ranked top in total literacy while Mewat is worst in the literacy, though Mewat has the highest growth in last decade with 12.63 percent change in literate during 2001 (43.51) and 2011 (54.14). Mewat is one of the Haryana's most backward areas. Many schemes has been run by government like Sarv Shikha Abhiyan, Kasturba Gandhi Bal Vidyalayas, Schemes for providing quality education in Madarasa. All the districts have literacy between 55 to 85 percent. Rural areas by Districts as well as females by gender are still vulnerable in the area of literacy. Especially, literacy among rural-females is very low and 34.63 per cent figure is lowest one in all respect that is found in rural Mewat among females. Many policies and programs for qualitative improvement of primary education in Haryana are started, such as operation black board, improvement in Regional Institute of English, State Institution of Education, Audio Visual Education, etc. Recently various policies and programs to improve

information and communication technology education are started.

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