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## GENDER DISPARITY IN LITERACY RATE AMONG SCHEDULED TRIBES AND CASTE IN JAMMU KASHMIR IN INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

*Gender as a category needs to be seen within larger social, regional and locational context. Socio- economic inequalities and gender- relation promote girls' ability to go through schooling. Cultural beliefs & practices and regional characteristics also play an important role. There is a wide gender disparity in India's performance on literacy with a difference of around 20 percentage points between male and female literacy rates. The aim of this paper is to study the gender disparity in literacy among the scheduled tribes and castes. The study area is J&K state of India.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Female Literacy; Disparity; Gender ratio.*

### INTRODUCTION

Literacy is the ability to understand, evaluate, use and engage with written texts to participate in society, achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential. Literacy in the 21st century is about **constructing and validating knowledge**. Digital technologies have enabled the spread of all kinds of information, displacing traditional formats of usually more carefully curated information such as encyclopaedias and newspapers. Literacy and basic education are crucial factors for achieving social, economic, and human development. The acquisition of literacy skills is particularly important as it is the foundation for life-long learning and also a human right (UNESCO, 2005; 2008; 2012). Moreover, an informed citizenry, active citizenship and collective actions are critical for the functioning of civil society, especially in a democracy (APHDR, 2008). Gender became an important factor in determining the education level of individual (IMR,2011). Gender disparity in literacy rate declined by 5.34 percent from 21.59 percent (2001) to 16.25 percent (2011). Recently, the World Economic Forum (WEF) ranked India at 135 out of 146 countries in its Global Gender Gap (GGG) Index for 2022. India's overall score has

improved from 0.625 (in 2021) to 0.629, which is its seventh- highest score in the last 16 years. In 2021, India was ranked 140 out of 156 countries. The gender gap is the difference between women and men as reflected in social, political, intellectual, cultural, or economic attainments or attitudes.

Despite the government's effort to ensure equality of opportunity for education for both men and women in our society, the literacy rate of women in India, especially in rural areas, still remains very poor. Schools in rural India are at considerable distances and in absence of strong local law and order, women find it unsafe to travel long distances for schooling. Traditional practices like female infanticide, dowry, and early marriage have also contributed to the problem as many families find it economically unviable to educate the girl child

**TABLE 1 India’s rank in various indices, 2022**

<b>INDIA’S REPORT CARD</b>				
Index/sub-index	2022 (146 countries)		2021 (156 countries)	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
<b>Global Gender Gap Index</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>0.629</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>0.625</b>
<b>Political empowerment</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0.267</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>0.276</b>
<b>Economic participation &amp; opportunity</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>0.350</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>0.326</b>
<b>Educational attainment</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>0.961</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>0.962</b>
<b>Health and survival</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>0.937</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>0.937</b>

**DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY**

In this paper, we have used the secondary raw data which had been collected for Jammu and Kashmir State for the census years 2001 and 2011 from Directorate of Census Operations, Jammu, J&K as well as from the office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner. The collected data has processed to find the change in Gender ratio in the year 2011 and to compute the correlation between the literacy rate and gender ratio.

Formulas used:

**Literacy Rate:**

$$(\text{Number of persons literate aged 7 and above} / \text{total population aged 7 and above}) \times 100$$

**Sex ratio:**

$$\text{Total number of females} / \text{number of males} \times 1000$$

**Change in sex ratio for every percent rise in female literacy:**

Change in Sex ratio/ Change in female literacy

### FEMALE LITERACY AND GENDER RATIO IN J&K

The census provided a positive indication that growth in female literacy rates (11.8%) was substantially faster than in male literacy rates (6.9%) in the 2001–2011 decadal period, which means the gender gap appears to be narrowing. We have explored the effect of female literacy on SCs and STs across the districts of the J&K state for the census years 2001 and 2011 and summarized the result obtained in the following sections.

**TableNo-2: Min and Max Gender ratio of SC population of J&K for census year 2001**

	Gender Ratio (SC Population)	Gender Ratio (SC Population)	Gender Ratio (SC Population)	Gender Ratio (0-6) (SC Population)	Gender Ratio (0-6) (SC Population)	Gender Ratio (0-6) (SC Population)
	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
Max	Doda/Rajouri(954)	Rajouri(956)	Rajouri(911)	Srinagar(1545)	Doda(1102)	Doda (1713)
Min	Pulwama(21)	Kargil(34)	Pulwama(33)	Badgam(400)	Ladakh(800)	Badgam(400)

#### Discussion:

The following table shows the gender ratio of SC population of J&K in 2001. Among the SC population, Gender ratio with Maximum value found in Doda and Rajouri whereas minimum is in Pulwama. Among the SC population of age group 0-6 yrs, maximum value of gender ratio found in Srinagar and minimum in Budgam.

**Table-no 3: Min and Max Gender Ratio of SC population of J&K for census Year 2011**

	Gender Ratio (SC Population)	Gender Ratio (SC Population)	Gender Ratio (SC Population)	Gender Ratio (0-6) (SC Population)	Gender Ratio (0-6) (SC Population)	Gender Ratio (0-6) (SC Population)
	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
Max	Doda/Rajouri(963)	Kulgam(1250)	Doda(944)	Kargil(2000)	Kargil(2000)	Poonch (1167)
Min	Kupwara(2)	Kupwara(2)	Pulwama(3)	Leh(375)	Ganderwal(667)	Bandipore(600)

#### Discussion:

The following table shows the gender ratio of SC population of J&K in 2011. Among the SC population, Gender ratio with Maximum value found in Doda and Rajouri whereas minimum is in Kupwara. Among the SC population of age group 0-6 yrs, maximum value of gender ratio found in Kargil and minimum in Leh. These variations and abnormal values are due to less population of SC in these districts.

**Table-no 4: Min and Max Gender ratio of ST population of J&K for census year 2001.**

	Gender Ratio	Gender Ratio	Gender Ratio	Gender Ratio (0-6)	Gender Ratio (0-6)	Gender Ratio (0-6)
	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
Max	Kupwara(926)	Kulgam(1250)	Punch(932)	Ladakh(864)	Kupwara(1088)	Kupwara(1090)
Min	Anantnag(884)	Anantnag(886)	Badgam(73)	Poonch/Ladakh(967)	Rajouri(946)	Anantnag(594)

**Discussion:**

The following table shows the gender ratio of ST population of J&K in 2011. Among the ST population, Gender ratio with Minimum value found in dooda whereas maximum is in Anantnag Among the ST population of age group 0-6 yrs, maximum value of gender ratio found in ladakh and minimum in poonch/ladakh.

**Table-no 5: Min and max Literacy Rate of SC population of J&K for Census year 2011**

	Female literacy	Female literacy	Female literacy	Male literacy	Male literacy	Male literacy
	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
Max	Pulwama (100)	Pulwama (100)	Pulwama/Anantnag (100)	Ban/Pul/Shop/Kul (100)	Ban/Pul/Shop/Kul (100)	Ban/Pul/Shop/Kul (100)
Min	Ramban (32.62)	Ramban (31.54)	Ramban (58.60)	Ramban (57.4)	Ramban (57.08)	Kargil (66.37)

**Table-6: Min and Max Literacy Rate of ST population of J&K for Census year 2011**

	Female literacy	Female literacy	Female literacy	Male literacy	Male literacy	Male literacy
	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
Max	Leh(63.36)	Leh(59.31)	Leh(77.11)	Leh(80.45)	Kargil(78.84)	Bandipore(93.89)
Min	Kishtwar(19.81)	Kishtwar(19.73)	Kulgam(5.61)	Kulgam(33.60)	Kulgam(34.31)	Ganderwal(43.51)

**Discussion:**

The table 5 and table 6 indicates Gender gap of literacy of ST and SC among male and female during 2001-2011 census. Level of Gender gap declined among all districts of Jammu and Kashmir State. Therefore, comparison between male and female with the census (2001- 2011) shows the consistently decreasing that would create a big margin Gender gap.

**Measures taken towards increasing literacy rate**

The Constitution of India recognizes the importance of education for all. Therefore, it lays down several provisions to ensure proper and effective implementation of educational rights in the country, which include:

**Education of Minorities:** Article 30 of the Indian Constitution gives all minorities the right to establish and administer institutions of their own choice

**Free and Compulsory Education:** The Constitution of India (u/a 41, 45 and 46 of the Directive Principles of State Policy) instructs the state to ensure that all citizens receive free education

### **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**

The program was launched in 2001, and it aims to universalise education and improves its quality by time-bound implementation strategy and context-specific planning. It includes children from all social classes

### **Midday Meal Scheme**

This plan was launched in 1995 to provide mid-day meals to children studying in primary class. The main objective of creating this scheme was to eliminate classroom hunger of children and to increase attendance and enrolment of children at schools

**The Right to Education (RTE) Act** was enacted in 2009, and this Act made education for every child between 6 and 14 years a fundamental right

**The National Education Policy 2020**, aims to achieve 100% youth and adult literacy.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper is based on the secondary data which aims to find out the disparity in literacy rate among SC and St population in Jammu and Kashmir. An analysis of the National Family Health Survey 1992-1993 revealed that women's education is associated with weaker son preference. In Jammu and Kashmir 88% of women want at least one son and 83% of women want at least one daughter. So, preference for male child along with technological advancements in sex determination has affected the gender ratio enormously especially in urban areas. To fulfill the gap in gender literacy parental attitude should be changed because it has been viewed that girls despite being from the well-off families are not getting proper education as some parents give preference to boy education. The threat of rape, abduction, molestation of girls lowers the passion of parents to send their girls in schools. India being a secular country having diversity of religion with their own customs and traditions, moreover early marriages and expecting girls to do household chores is another cause that hamper the girl education. There should be equal opportunities where the women grape knowledge, information and endowing themselves to change their lives. Therefore, time structure must be set to exclude the existing gap between girls and boys by firstly ensuring worldwide and equal access to completion of primary education by all girls, only then we can stop social discernment and commercial exploitation of our half of the population and achieve the conception of public fairness and accomplish public and commercial progress for the society.

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