



Gender disparity in the literacy rate in Madhya Pradesh: An analysis of 2011 census

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ABSTRACT

Female literacy is a reasonably good indicator of development in a society. There is a wide gender disparity in the literacy rate in Madhya Pradesh: effective literacy rates (age 7 and above) in 2011 were 80.53% for men and 60.02% for women and 70.63% for total. This paper discusses the male-female differentials in literacy level at district level. The top and bottom ten districts in terms male-female gap in literacy rates and also examines number of districts with various level of gap in male- female literacy levels based on census data of 2011.

Key Words: Female literacy, Madhya Pradesh, Gape in male- female literacy and Ranges of gap in literacy

Literacy forms an important input in the overall development of individuals enabling them comprehend their social, political and culture environment better and respond to it appropriately. Higher level of literacy leads to a greater awareness and also contributes in improvement of economic conditions. It acts as a catalyst for social upliftment enhancing the returns on investment made in almost every aspects of development effort, be it population control, health, hygiene, control of environmental degradation, empowerment of women and weaker sections of the society. All these aspects certainly have influenced by female literacy.

However, there is a wide gender disparity in the literacy rate in Madhya Pradesh and its districts than the national average literacy rate in 2011. Literacy rate is 80.53 percent for males, 60.02 percent for females and 70.63 for total. The corresponding percentages for India are 82.14, 65.46 and 74.04 respectively. The low female literacy rate has had a dramatically negative impact on family planning and population stabilization in India. Studies (East-West Center, 1990; Dharmalingam and Morgan, 1996) have indicated that female literacy is strong predictor of the use of contraception among married Indian couples, even when women do not otherwise have economic independence. Therefore, female literacy is a key aspect in the process demographic change thereby lead

to socio-economic development in India.

Importance

The present paper discusses the gender differentials in the literacy rates of Madhya Pradesh and its districts, which provides crucial information. It is necessary for policy making at state as well as gross rote level.

Methodology

The data for the present study have been taken from provisional totals of 2011 census (Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, 2011 - R.G.C.C.I, 2011). A person aged seven and above, who can able to both read and write with understanding in any language is treated as literate in 2001 census (R.G.C.C.I, 2001). The same criterion has been retained in the 2011 census of India also. As per 2011 census of India, data relates to literacy rates are available for 50 districts in Madhya Pradesh. Hence, the analysis carried to these districts.

Literacy rate by gender

The information relates differentials in literacy rates by gender among the districts will help to plan at micro level to improve the literacy level. Data on literacy Rates by gender in Madhya Pradesh and its districts, 2011 are furnished in table-1.

Table-1: Literacy Rates by gender in Madhya Pradesh and its districts, 2011.

S.NO	District	Literacy Rate (%)			S.NO	District	Literacy Rate (%)		
		Total	Male	Female			Total	Male	Female
1	Sheopur	58.02	70.30	44.45	27	Bhopal	82.26	87.44	76.57
2	Morena	72.07	84.22	57.64	28	Sehore	71.11	82.37	58.86
3	Bhind	76.59	87.17	63.96	29	Raisen	74.26	82.46	65.09
4	Gwalior	77.93	86.28	68.29	30	Betul	70.14	78.41	61.63
5	Datia	73.50	85.18	60.21	31	Harda	74.04	83.12	64.30
6	Shivpuri	63.73	76.21	49.47	32	Hoshangabad	76.52	85.17	67.04
7	Tikamgarh	62.57	73.30	50.71	33	Katni	73.62	84.21	62.47
8	Chhatarpur	64.90	74.22	54.34	34	Jabalpur	82.47	89.11	75.30
9	Panna	66.08	75.63	55.55	35	Narsimhapur	76.79	85.20	67.64
10	Sagar	77.52	86.27	67.71	36	Dindori	65.47	77.58	53.49
11	Damoh	70.92	80.96	59.90	37	Mandla	68.28	79.49	57.20
12	Satna	73.79	83.44	63.42	38	Chhindwara	72.21	80.76	63.38

13	Rewa	73.42	83.67	62.49	39	Seoni	73.01	81.77	64.14
14	Umaria	67.34	78.10	56.06	40	Balaghat	78.29	87.13	69.71
15	Neemuch	71.81	85.87	57.25	41	Guna	65.10	76.57	52.53
16	Mandsaur	72.75	86.81	58.30	42	Ashoknagar	67.90	80.22	54.18
17	Ratlam	68.03	79.38	56.45	43	Shahdol	68.36	78.27	58.16
18	Ujjain	73.55	85.22	61.40	44	Anuppur	69.08	80.05	57.89
19	Shajapur	70.17	83.19	56.36	45	Sidhi	66.09	76.52	55.23
20	Dewas	70.53	82.14	58.27	46	Singrauli	62.36	73.79	49.86
21	Dhar	60.57	71.12	49.69	47	Jhabua	44.45	54.65	34.29
22	Indore	82.32	89.22	74.89	48	Alirajpur	37.22	43.58	30.97
23	West Nimar	63.98	73.96	53.68	48	East Nimar	67.53	77.93	56.54
24	Barwani	50.23	57.32	43.07	50	Burhanpur	65.28	73.08	57.12
25	Rajgarh	62.68	75.07	49.79	51	M.P	70.63	80.53	60.02
26	Vidisha	72.08	81.38	61.67	52	INDIA	74.04	82.14	65.46

Source: R.G.C.C.I, 2011; Census of India, 2011; Provisional Population Totals.

It can be observed from table-1 that the literacy rate of Madhya Pradesh in 2011 is slightly lower (total, 70.63; males, 80.53 and females, 60.02) than the Indian average (total, 74.04; males, 82.14 and females, 65.46). Moreover, the literacy rates by gender are significantly vary among the districts in Madhya Pradesh. The highest literacy rates are recorded in Bhopal (Males,87.44; females,76.57) followed by Jabalpur(males,89.11; females,75.30) and Indore (male,89.22; female,74.89), while lowest literacy rates are

noticed in Alirajpur (male,43.58; female,30.97), Jhabua (males,54.65; females,34.29) and sheopur (males,70.30; females,44.45).

Gap in literacy rate

The information on differentials in literacy of male-females among the districts will useful to handle the issue at districts level .Data on the male-female gap in literacy rate by districts are set in table-2

Table-2: Districts with male-female gap in literacy rate in Madhya Pradesh, 2011.

S.NO	District	Literacy Rate (%)			S.NO	District	Literacy Rate (%)		
		Male	Female	Gap (M-F)			Male	Female	Gap (M-F)
1	Sheopur	70.30	44.45	25.85	27	Bhopal	87.44	76.57	10.87
2	Morena	84.22	57.64	26.58	28	Sehore	82.37	58.86	23.51
3	Bhind	87.17	63.96	23.21	29	Raisen	82.46	65.09	17.37
4	Gwalior	86.28	68.29	17.99	30	Betul	78.41	61.63	16.78
5	Datia	85.18	60.21	24.97	31	Harda	83.12	64.30	18.82
6	Shivpuri	76.21	49.47	26.74	32	Hoshangabad	85.17	67.04	18.13
7	Tikamgarh	73.30	50.71	22.59	33	Katni	84.21	62.47	21.74
8	Chhatarpur	74.22	54.34	19.88	34	Jabalpur	89.11	75.30	13.81
9	Panna	75.63	55.55	20.08	35	Narsimhapur	85.20	67.64	17.56
10	Sagar	86.27	67.71	18.57	36	Dindori	77.58	53.49	24.09
11	Damoh	80.96	59.90	21.06	37	Mandla	79.49	57.20	22.29
12	Satna	83.44	63.42	20.02	38	Chhindwara	80.76	63.38	17.38
13	Rewa	83.67	62.49	21.18	39	Seoni	81.77	64.14	17.63
14	Umaria	78.10	56.06	22.04	40	Balaghat	87.13	69.71	17.42
15	Neemuch	85.87	57.25	28.62	41	Guna	76.57	52.53	24.04
16	Mandsaur	86.81	58.30	28.51	42	Ashoknagar	80.22	54.18	26.04
17	Ratlam	79.38	56.45	22.93	43	Shahdol	78.27	58.16	20.11
18	Ujjain	85.22	61.40	23.82	44	Anuppur	80.05	57.89	22.16
19	Shajapur	83.19	56.36	26.83	45	Sidhi	76.52	55.23	21.29
20	Dewas	82.14	58.27	23.87	46	Singrauli	73.79	49.86	23.93
21	Dhar	71.12	49.69	21.43	47	Jhabua	54.65	34.29	20.36
22	Indore	89.22	74.89	14.33	48	Alirajpur	43.58	30.97	12.61
23	West Nimar	73.96	53.68	20.28	48	East Nimar	77.93	56.54	21.39
24	Barwani	57.32	43.07	14.25	50	Burhanpur	73.08	57.12	15.96
25	Rajgarh	75.07	49.79	25.28	51	M. P	80.53	60.02	20.51
26	Vidisha	81.38	61.67	19.71	52	INDIA	82.14	65.46	16.68

Source: R.G.C.C.I, 2011; Census of India, 2011; Provisional Population Totals.

It is evident from table-2 that the highest gap in literacy rates of males and females are recorded in districts of Neemuch (28.62),Mandsaur(28.51),Shajapur(26.83), Morena(26.58) Shivpuri(26.74),Sheopur(25.85),Rajgarh(25.28) and Ashok Nagar(26.04),while, lower gap is noticed in Bhopal(10.87)

,Jabalpur(13.81),Alirajpur(12.61),Burhanpur(15.96),Barwani(14.25) and Indore(14.33).

Gap in Literacy rate in Top ten and Bottom districts

Gender differentials in literacy among top ten and bottom ten

districts will through light on the gravity of problem. Data relates to these are given table-3

Table-3: Top ten and Bottom districts with literacy Rates by gender in Madhya Pradesh, 2011.

S.NO	Top ten Districts	Literacy Rate (%)				S.NO	Bottom ten Districts	Literacy Rate (%)			
		Total*	Male	Female	Gap			Total*	Male	Female	Gap
1	Jabalpur	82.47	89.11	75.30	13.81	1	Alirajpur	37.22	43.58	30.97	12.61
2	Indore	82.32	89.22	74.89	14.33	2	Jhabua	44.45	54.65	34.29	20.36
3	Bhopal	82.26	87.44	76.57	10.87	3	Barwani	50.23	57.32	43.07	14.25
4	Balaghat	78.29	87.13	69.71	17.42	4	Sheopur	58.02	70.30	44.45	25.85
5	Gwalior	77.93	86.28	68.29	17.99	5	Dhar	60.57	71.12	49.69	21.43
6	Sagar	77.52	86.27	67.71	18.56	6	Singrauli	62.36	73.79	49.86	23.93
7	Narsimhapur	76.79	85.20	67.64	17.56	7	Tikamgarh	62.57	73.30	50.71	22.59
8	Bhind	76.59	87.17	63.96	23.21	8	Rajgarh	62.68	75.07	49.79	25.28
9	Hoshangabad	76.52	85.17	67.04	18.13	9	Shivpuri	63.73	76.21	49.47	26.74
10	Raisen	74.26	82.46	65.09	17.37	10	West Nimar	63.98	73.96	53.68	20.28

*Top ten and Bottom ten districts are categorized based on Total Literacy Rate.

Source: R.G.C.C.I, 2011; Census of India, 2011; Provisional Population Totals.

It is clear from table-3 that in general, the male-female gap in literacy is higher in bottom ten districts. The highest gap recorded among the bottom ten districts are Shivpuri (26.74), Sheopur(25.85) and Rajgarh(25.28), While, the gap in literacy rates are mostly lower in ten top literate districts. The least gap recorded in top ten districts are Bhopal (10.87), Jabalpur (13.81), and Indore (14.33).It is significant to note that Alirajpur(12.61) the least literacy recorded district also is having the lower gap in literacy rate.

Range of literacy rate

Analysis of districts with ranges of literacy rate by gender will furnish information on number of districts by various ranges with literacy levels. Data on number of districts with ranges of literacy rate by gender in M.P, 2011 are placed in table-4.

Table-4:No.of districts with ranges of literacy rate by gender in M.P, 2011.

Range of literacy rate (%)	Total	Male	Female	Difference (M-F)
≤ 40	1	-	2	-2
41-50	2	1	6	-5
51-60	1	2	23	-21
61-70	21	1	16	-15
71-80	22	21	3	+18
81+	3	25	-	+25
Total	50	50	50	00

Source : R.G.C.C.I, 2011; Census of India, 2011; Provisional Population Totals.

It can be seen in table-4 that majority(31) of the districts with female literacy rates laid in lower literacy ranges (≤ 40,41-50, and 51-60), while an overwhelming proportion(46) of the districts with male literacy rates rest in higher ranges of literacy levels(71-80, 81+).It also can be observed in districts with differentials through various ranges of literacy levels.

Ranges of gap:

The study of districts by ranges of gap in literacy rate can find that the number of districts with severity of the problem with low range. Data regarding these aspects are furnished in table-5.

Table-5: No. of districts by ranges of gap with literacy rate in M.P, 2011

Ranges of gap	No. of districts	Percentage to total no. of districts
≤15	5	10
16-20	18	36

21-25	20	40
26+	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: R.G.C.C.I, 2011; Census of India, 2011; Provisional Population Totals.

Table-5 reveals that high ranges of gap (21-25 and 26+) in literacy rates found in majority (54 percent) of districts and 46 percent of districts have lower ranges of gap in literacy rates(≤15, 16-20). This clearly shows higher differentials in male-female literacy rates.

Districts with below and above average literacy rates

Number of districts with below and above average literacy rates than the state and national, provides information on districts which are laid in these categories. Data relates these are put in table-6.

Table-6: No .of districts with below and above average literacy rates of State and National by gender, 2011.

State / National	Below Average				Above Average			
	Total	Male	Female	Difference (M-F)	Total	Male	Female	Difference (M-F)
State	25	24	28	- 4	25	26	22	4
National	41	30	42	-12	9	20	8	12

Source: R.G.C.C.I, 2011; Census of India, 2011; Provisional Population Totals.

It can be observed from table-6 that the number of districts with below and above average literacy rates in M.P and India by gender is significantly varied. Half of the districts in state are having below average literacy level of the state. Moreover, in 28 districts, the female literacy level is lower than the state average female literacy rate. Further, in M.P, 42 districts have lower level of female literacy than the national female literacy rate. While in above average level of literacy rate, 22 districts have higher female literacy rate than the state female literacy rate. It is 26 districts for males. Further, it is noteworthy that only in 8 districts, the female literacy is higher than the national average, but it is 20 districts for males.

Summary

The literacy rates are significantly varied by gender among the districts. Moreover, high range of male-female gap in literacy rate is exiting in majority of the districts. Based on the

results it can suggested that gross root plans are needed to reduced the gender differentials among districts, which recorded high gap in literacy rates ,especially in bottom ten districts to improve female literacy rates.

Suggestions

1. Literacy among both men and women is necessary as it is a pre-condition for development. The literacy level among women is lower when compared with men. The present literacy programme 'Saakhar Bharat' which is concentrating more on women literacy should be implemented by the districts authorities with concern and commitment at the gross root level.
2. Literacy should be viewed as a peoples programme and all sections of the community should be involved in the programme. The panchayat Raj institutions such as block, Mandal and village level organisations should own the programme and mobile all the sections of community to contribute for the success in terms of providing volunteers, physical facilities, monitoring and evaluation.
3. Mass media has a major role to play in creating conducive environment for the programme. The print and electronic media, folk arts, kalajathara should be used to motivate the learners and to speed the message of literacy to the nook and end corners of the districts.

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