

## Female Literacy Scenario-A Study of Haryana State

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**ABSTRACT-** *Education is foremost and important dynamic medium of an all round development of women. It is because education is accompanied by awakening consciousness, prosperity, awareness of rights, ability to talk decision, competence to establish one's identity and besides, education eradicates the darkness of bad customs and outworn rituals to bloom the dawn of a new era. Educated women are not the only ones who reap benefit of it, but the coming generations also receive the benefits of it to return their contribution in the development of the social and economical aspects of the country. Education, on the one hand is an asset that can neither be snatched nor be distributed. On the other hand it is a weapon which may provide the sinuous power. This research paper is based on female literacy rate of Haryana state. The present paper is an attempt to study literacy rate in one of the northern states of India, i.e., Haryana. The inter district disparities have been analysed to study the situation of literacy rate in Haryana State. Haryana is the 16th largest state of India and is stretched over an area of 44,212 sq.*

*km. The total population of this state, as per the census report, 2011, is 25,353,081 with a population density of 573.4 per sq. km.*

**KEYWORDS:** Education, Literacy, Sex Ratio, Population

**INTRODUCTION-** Women empowerment is one of the core issues in the process of development all over the world. Although women constitute almost half of the world population and they are playing a very important role in the development of nation in all respects but they suffer from many disadvantages as compare to man at different front including education. Women were denied equal opportunities in different part of the world.

The Government of India has formulated various education programmes and policies from time to time. It is a good signal for women education. In spite of these efforts the position of women has not altered significantly. An attempt has been made in this regard to document the various programmes and policies adopted for women's education and their empowerment. Many programmes and policies have been

implemented with the objectives to educate women as follows.

### **Women and Education in Our Country**

The emphasis laid upon education as an essential tool to nation-building process by leaders of the freedom movement from 19<sup>th</sup> century is not surprising since a holistic review of the entire education system has been undertaken in the post independence era. The first important step taken by the leaders in the Nehruvian era (1947-64) was setting-up a University Education Commission (UEC) headed by Dr. Radhakrishnan. It must be remembered that the commission devoted a full chapter to women's education, discussing various dimensions. However, the opinions of the male commissions on women's role appeared to have advanced little beyond the views that dominated the intelligentsia a few decades ago.

The commission had the mandate to enquire into education at all stages and from diverse aspects, still the fact remains that only two pages have been devoted to women's education and merely a few paragraphs to their higher education. The report begins with a mention of special efforts needed to expand higher education of

women though the general feeling is that women have entered the portals of university education and there end all worries at once. With such elevated sense of optimism, the commission made only two suggestions to enhance women's higher education-provision of financial assistance and hostels.

The right of children to free and compulsory education Act: The Indian Parliament passed the Right to Education Act (RTE) on August 4, 2009. The act describes the modalities of the value of free and compulsory education for children between 6-14 age groups in India under Article 21a of the Indian Constitution. India became one of those countries (total 135) that have made education a fundamental right of every child as the act came into force on April I, 2010.

### **Women in Higher Education**

Stern challenges keep propping up before India. Despite an increasing investment in education 25% of its population still falls in the category of illiterates. Armed 15% Indian students reach high school, and just 9% graduate. Whatever the level the quality of education is exceptionally low and poor as compared

with the other developing nations before 2012; Indian post secondary institutions offer seats enough only for 9% of India's college age population. There are 1522 degree granting engineering colleges in India with an annual student accommodation of 582000 plus 1244 polytechnics with annual intake of 26500 in the ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) India sought to provide the basic infrastructural facilities like education for all, the tenth Five-year plan (2002-07) reflected reduction in gender gaps in literacy.

The eleventh Five-year plan focused on the following main objectives with relation to education:

1. To reduce the drop rates of children from elementary school from 52.2% in 2003-04 to 20% by 2011-12.
2. To develop minimum standards of education attainment in elementary school; and monitor effectiveness of education by regular testing.
3. To increase literacy rate for people of age 7 years or above to 85%.
4. To lower gender gap in literacy to 10% before March 31, 2012.

Women's Universities in the 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year plan. Women's education is the

main priority. 20 women universities are proposed to be established, facilitating their entry into higher education even from very traditional background, rural and sub-urban areas. The central governments shall fund them to establish in the twelfth Five year plan (2012-17) and the State Governments have to provide the land and help establish such universities.

The entry of women into job-oriented courses, such as commerce, Law Engineering and technical fields suggests that though the liberal stance of education may prevail for most of the students the trend of the employment orientation of women is conspicuous, too. Another important factor is the growth in the number of girls in short terms courses such as polytechnics, computer courses and information technology (IT). The opening up of job opportunities scope of self-employment besides the need to combine both familial and occupational roles is clearly visible in women's opting for non-traditional courses.

Various education policies and programmes have been introduced to emphasize the need to use education as an agent of basic change in status of women. The National Policies propose national

education system to play a positive role as an interventionist in the process of women empowerment, fostering new values through redesigning of curriculum text book, training and orientation of teachers, decisions making and administration, along with active involvement of educational institutions. Removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to, and retention in elementary education will receive overriding priority, through provision of special support services, setting up of targets and effective monitoring. Some important programmes and policies regarding education are:

1. National Policy on Education, 1968.
2. National Policy on Education, 1986.
3. National Policy and education, 1986 (As modified in 1992).
4. National common minimum programme of the UPA Government, Announced in May 2004 extracts relating to education.
5. National curriculum framework, 2005.

6. Right to children to free and compulsory education Act, 2009.

### **Education in Haryana**

Every state must have an action plan for promotion of women education. The Haryana Integrated Women's Empowerment and Development Programme was prepared in 1991 and operationalised in 1994 with massive assistance from the United Nations Fund for Population Activity. The main object was to create an environment in society improvement in the status of women. The project gave assisted a large number of girls for attending supplementary coaching classes and purchasing books and uniforms. The project trained over 10,000 adolescent girls in employment skills, health, education and non-formal education to create an awareness of their rights. The project achieved a great success in its objective of women's education.

In Haryana, educational scenario was reviewed to reorient the thrust of education policy because after 1991, a need is felt to make education more relevant to the emerging environment. As a result, state wide debates and workshops were organised, which have resulted in education policy in 2000. The main objects of the

policy were to provide education to all without any discrimination at any stage of education, promoting efficiency and effectiveness making the system work through effective management of education, increase in both public and private investment is education, promoting active participation of village, education committees, mother teacher association, parent teacher associations in management of education, introduction of computer education at school and college level, reforms in examinations and evaluation system and making NCC, NSS, sports, value education, environments education, Yoga, scouting etc. as integral aspects of institutional activities.

The government of Haryana had also made provision for 25% reservation for women in industrial training institutes for technical education and mentioned that 31 industrial training institutes were being run exclusively for women and their training. The government has also provided a special concession of 50% in bus passes to girls students so that they may travel by paying minimum for education. In another effort to encourage girls to pursue higher education, the government of Haryana subsidized the interest liability by 5% an education loan

availed to them through Haryana Development Corporation. Under this scheme, various banks have sanctioned more than 3000 cases of loan for girls. At the same time the government is providing a tuition fee-free education up to the graduation level for girls.

It is noteworthy that Haryana is the sole north-Indian state to set-up an exclusively women University at Khanpur Kalan near Gohana. The institution is expected to provide golden opportunities to the fair sex to avail higher education. Besides a PGI (Post Graduate Medical College) is also established at the same place so that women may shine in health sector too.

The other major initiative of the state government is vindicated in the formation of the Sakshar Mahila Smooh (SMS), and now more than 6500 SMS are functioning successfully in the state. These groups of educated women and girls in rural area would prove useful in generating community awareness about gender issues, literacy, and universalization of elementary education, health and nutrition.

It may be concluded that women education in Haryana has been in an uptrend

for some years now. It has exercised a great influence over the dimensions of women empowerment in different fields of life. The creative and productive energies of the fair sex have to have an outlet through creative

and sound education to which they must have access at all cost. Thus, the level of education and higher education for women is to be analysed in depth.

**Table 1.1 Shows the literacy rate in India and Haryana percentage of literates to total population**

India					Haryana				Difference
Years	Male	Female	Total	Difference	Male	Female	Total	Difference	
1901	9.83	0.60	5.35	9.23	-	-	-	-	-
1911	10.56	1.10	5.92	9.51	-	-	-	-	-
1921	12.21	1.80	7.16	10.40	-	-	-	-	-
1931	15.59	2.90	9.50	12.66	-	-	--	-	-
1941	24.90	7.30	16.10	17.60	-	-	-	-	-
1951	24.95	9.45	16.67	15.50	-	-	-	-	-
1961	34.44	12.95	24.02	21.49	-	-	-	-	-
1971	39.45	18.70	29.45	20.76	38.9	10.32	25.71	28.58	-8.38
1981	46.89	24.80	36.23	22.07	51.86	20.04	37.13	31.82	-4.76
1991	52.74	32.17	42.84	20.57	69.1	40.47	55.85	28.62	+8.3
2001	75.26	53.67	64.83	21.59	79.25	56.31	68.59	22.94	+2.64
2011	82.14	65.46	74.04	16.08	85.4	66.8	76.6	18.6	+1.34

Source: - Census of India, 2011

Table 1.1 shows that women's literacy rate in Haryana have been in a process of improvement over the years. The number of women who are literate has

increased by 56.48 percent over the last four decade from 10.32 percent in 1971 to 66.8 percent in 2011. The improvement in the rate of Indian female literacy has also

increased by 46.76% in the same time from 18.70% in 1971 to 65.46% in 2011. It is significant to note that the improvement in female literacy rate of Haryana is almost 10% higher as compared to improvement

into the female literacy rate in India in the same period. However when we compare the female literacy rate of Haryana to other states picture becomes quite dismal.

**Table1.2 State wise Literacy rate of male and female in India 2011.**

Rank	Name of State/UT	Male	Female	Total	Difference
1	Karla	96.02	91.98	93.91	-4.04
2	Lakshadweep	96.11	88.25	92.28	-7.86
3	Mizoram	93.72	89.40	91.58	-4.32
4	Tripura	92.18	83.15	87.75	-9.03
5	Goa	92.81	81.84	87.40	-10.97
6	Daman and Diu	91.48	79.59	87.07	-11.89
7	Pondicherry	92.12	81.22	86.55	-10.90
8	Chandigarh	90.54	81.38	86.43	-9.16
9	Delhi	91.03	80.93	86.34	-10.10
10	Andaman & Nicobar	90.11	81.84	86.27	-8.27
11	Himachal Pradesh	90.83	76.60	83.78	-14.23
12	Maharashtra	89.83	75.48	82.91	-14.25
13	Sikkim	87.29	76.43	82.20	-10.86
14	Tamil Naidu	86.81	73.86	80.33	-12.95
15	Nagaland	83.29	76.69	80.11	-6.60
16	Manipur	86.49	73.17	79.85	-13.32
17	Uttrakhand	88.33	70.70	79.63	-17.63
18	Gujarat	87.23	70.73	79.31	-16.50
19	Dadra Nagar Haveli	86.46	65.93	77.65	-20.53
20	West Bengal	82.67	71.16	77.08	-11.51
21	Punjab	81.48	71.34	76.68	-10.14
22	Haryana	85.38	66.77	76.64	-18.61
23	Karnataka	82.25	68.13	75.60	-14.12
24	Meghalaya	77.17	73.78	75.48	-3.39
25	Assam	78.81	67.27	73.18	-11.54
26	Orissa	82.40	64.36	73.45	-18.04
27	Chhattisgarh	81.45	60.39	71.04	-21.06
28	Madhya Pradesh	80.53	60.02	70.63	-20.51
29	Uttar Pradesh	79.24	59.26	69.72	-19.58
30	Jammu & Kashmir	78.26	58.01	68.74	-20.25
31	Andhra Pradesh	75.56	59.74	67.66	-15.82
32	Jharkhand	78.45	56.21	67.63	-22.24
33	Rajasthan	80.51	52.66	67.06	-27.85

34	Arunachal Pradesh	73.69	59.57	66.95	-14.12
35	Bihar	73.39	53.33	63.82	-20.06
	All India	82.14	65.46	74.04	-16.68

Source: - Census of India, 2011

Despite the fact that a number of educational institutions have propped up in Haryana and immense improvement has been registered over the last 40 years in literacy rate, the state of Haryana remains among the lowest category state for female literacy rate. Table 1.2 shows that the ranks of Haryana at 24<sup>th</sup> place in respect of female literacy rate 22<sup>nd</sup> for overall literacy rate at the all India level. While the overall literacy rate of Haryana is higher than the national rate over the last three decades.

Finally, to conclude it may be said that both the female literacy rate in India and Haryana both have been improving over the years. It is not only the parameter of socio-economic and political development, but also indicator of social transformation, a pointer of changing mind set of people towards an equality in gender discrimination in society. The government has taken various steps and plans for empowerment of women in particular in education therefore, women have been growing well for the last 25 years. Education is the most powerful instrument for changing the status of

women. It is very important for women but, unfortunately, in the male dominated society the education of women has been neglected for a long time. The growth of women education in rural area is very slow. The difference between the literacy rate of man and women has reduced to a great extent but there still also a huge gap between the literacy rate of man and women. In the end, we can say that there has been a good improvement in the literacy rate of women during the last 15 years in both India and Haryana still there is a long way to go in this regard.

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