

Unveiling Gender Disparities in Literacy: A Case Study of Haryana, India

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ABSTRACT

The present study attempts to explain gender-based literacy differences within Haryana. The disparity in education is measured in terms of male-female literacy differentials. The differences found based on gender in the state's educational achievement are not only seen in urban areas, but the situation in rural areas is very worrying. The Haryana literacy differential in the male-female population was very high in 2001 at 18.61%, but this gap narrowed down to 13.23% in the 2011 census. This discrimination toward female literacy results from prejudice in Indian traditional society. Women's position and status are not satisfactory in society. Many social and religious bonds confined them to only domestic work and limited their access to education-related programs. For most of the parents in our society, girls' education is not of much importance in terms of economic perspective because of strong prejudice against their employment. For parents, girl education is a kind of unnecessary risk due to the present social conditions in India. The government of Haryana has formulated many policies, schemes, and provisions to improve this situation. However, this gap in literacy in rural, as well as urban areas is very prominent. However, in rural areas, the situation is even worse. This discrimination in education has several reasons behind it.

Keywords: literacy; Haryana; discrimination; economic; risk; policies

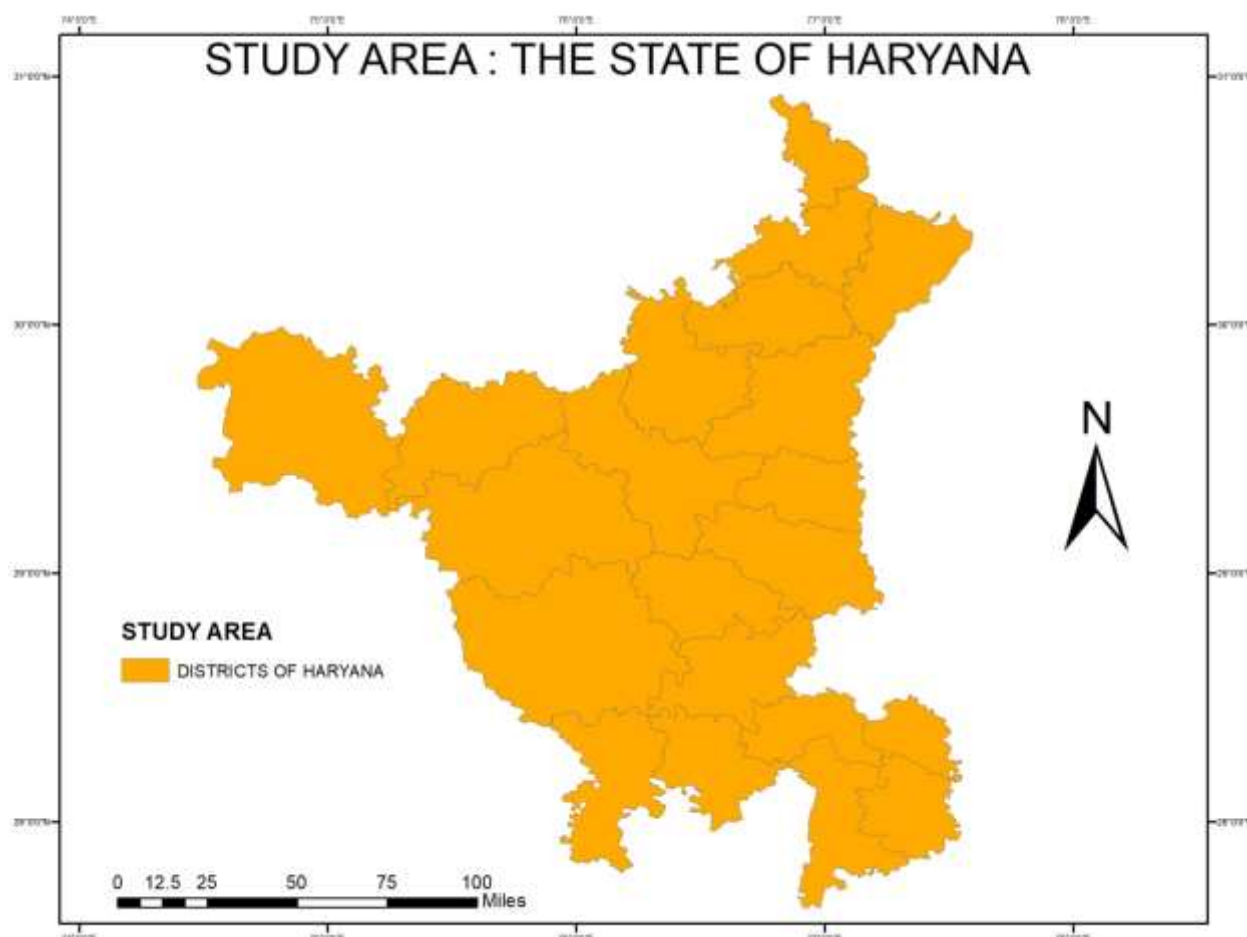
Introduction

Literacy and education are important factors in determining human development and also influence socio-economic growth. Modernization, communication, and commerce as traits of civilization depend upon the diffusion of education. Different research work shows that with the spreading of education, developing countries showing positive trends in economic growth. A recent study conducted in three Asian countries showed that the literacy of parents has a profound effect on their family and if the mother is highly educated, her education has a greater impact on her daughter. (Hill and King, 1995). "Female literacy plays a significant role in reducing the number of births per woman." (Drèze and Murthi, 2001). The biggest obstacle in development in various countries of the world, especially in developing countries is the lack of educational facilities for the girl child. Educating the girl child also plays an important role in reducing the impact of fatal diseases like HIV and related health problems (Sperling, 2005). A society with a higher level of literacy enjoys better health facilities, economic development, women empowerment, and better population policy. According to the Census of India's definition, a person with the age of six years who can read write and understand a language is considered as literate (Som & Mishra, 2014). Education not only gives a respectable position to the woman in the society, but also enhances her character by increasing her social status and this change is seen in most of the countries of the world on the basis of education. (Kamat, 1976). "Literacy is essential for eradicating poverty and mental isolation for cultivating peaceful and friendly international relations and for permitting the play of demographic process" (Chandna, 1980 & Krishan, 1978). Education acts as an instrument for women, which helps them to reduce the effects of inequality and injustice in society. (Patel & Dighe, 1997). Literacy helps society to plan growth. Education brings social order based on equality and social justice in society. Education is a basic parameter of measuring the development of women within the society.

(Ramotra, 2003). "It is an important measure of the social-economic and cultural development" (Azim, 2005) and "It also indicates women's status and autonomy in society" (Frey & Field, 2000; Magadi et al., 2007). "Literacy also affects the welfare of other members like male, female, etc of the society because of the optimistic externalities that it generates" (Tilak, 2008). "Literacy is a tool of personal empowerment and helps in social and human development". (Shakir, 2012), "literacy is an important component of human development". (Khan, 2004; Jhariya, 2014), "it helps to reflect the process of modernization". (Sule & Barakade, 2012). Female literacy is a significant and planned investment in human resources, which in turn develops and improves their personality as well as their family and community. In India, there are a large number of disparities that exist as caste, culture, language, etc. In the 12th Five-Year Plan, a wide number of disparities based on different criteria are underlined (Sharma, 2015). But in these the most prominent disparity is based on gender and in Haryana gender biases dominate the social structure. Here disparity means the difference in outcome (Husain, 2010). The disparity in terms of male-female literacy reflects a sensitive part of gender discrimination (Singh, and Sharn, 2015). It is found in many regions that parents are not very positive towards the schooling of girls because of religious teaching and special treatment regarding the upbringing of females. "Rural families believe that higher education can stand women at that position where they start to make their own decisions". (Iqbal, Mohyuddin, Ali, & Naqvi, 2013). "Cultural beliefs, behavior, and attitude towards women's role in society determine the educational levels of girls in the family". (Buchmann, & Hannum, 2001). In a vast country like India, only 75% of the students in the age group of 6 to 17 go to school and our education system clearly shows discrimination based on gender in enrollment rates and participation ratio. (Bose, 2012; Azim Premji Foundation, 2004). "Different studies reveal that conservative attitudes of the family responsible for less literacy among family". (Ahmed, 2007). In India, a strong son preference desire exists in families. "This attitude gives the son more preference for girls in terms of education and other things. Because of financial and social reasons, girl children are expected to stay home and do all the household work. Some other reasons are to protect their purity and they also do not want to send their daughters far away from home, especially in rural areas. This situation is not only in India but in 40 developing countries, less than 25 percent of women in their reproductive age have finished their secondary education". (Bose, 2012). A global monitoring report from UNESCO's EFA in 2015 reveals that the literacy rate of females was lower than for males, which is respectively 24 and 14 percentage points for adults and youths. "The main challenge should be to increase the enrolment of girls in secondary schools"(Ward, 2007) With the expansion and democratization of education upliftment of disadvantaged groups can be achieved. In the world, the illiteracy of the female population is a huge problem but in India, it is a very prominent one. The problem of illiteracy in the female population is a huge problem around the world but it is very prominent in India. It directly affects the development process. "The problem of illiteracy, in particular among women, is a huge area of concern not only in India but also across the world and it directly impacts development efforts"(Katiyar, 2016). In 2015, the United Nations for 15 years framed 17 development goals (UN, n.d. The Sustainable Development Agenda). Among these 17 development goals, Goal 4 is dedicated to "Quality Education" and Goal No. 5 is dedicated to "Gender Equality". (UN, n.d. Sustainable Development Goals.). Goal NO. 5 aims to ensure education and equal quality education to all and goal 5 ensure to eliminate gender biases in education. In India, the RTE Act provides free and equal education to all. In combination with 21-A in the constitution, free and compulsory education will be provided to all the children of the 6 to 14 age group. (Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development [MHRD], 2016). Article 15(4) and articles 45 and 46 of the Indian Constitution underscore the State Government's commitment to provide a better education facility to educationally backward and SC/ST classes of society. Article 45 determines that free education is provided by the State government to all children up to the age of 14 years. In India there has been higher variation in terms of progress in education among states, "with some states lagging and others surging ahead" (Clarke and Jha, 2006)"Administrators and planners have to pay special attention to bridging the gap between the literacy of males and females in both rural and urban areas" (Grover & Bhardwaj, 2002; Katiyar, 2016).

Study Area

Haryana came into existence in 1966 after separation from Punjab (India). Punjab and Himachal Pradesh are on the north-west side, and Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan are on the east side and share a boundary with Haryana. The coordinates of Haryana is 27°37'N to 30°53'N and 74°28'E to 77°36'E longitude. The total districts in Haryana are 22 and the total area is 44212sq.km.



Objectives

1. To study the regional pattern of male-female literacy in Haryana
2. To study the literacy differential between the male and female population in Haryana.
3. To discuss the factors responsible for a regional imbalance in male-female literacy

Methodology

The secondary source of data obtained from the census 2011 is used in the present study for various analyses. Collected data were processed and presented in the form of tabular and graphical techniques using Excel software. The spatial distribution was presented with the help of maps. Arc G.I.S 10.1 software was used. Topographical sheets were scanned and then georeferenced with the help of this software. These georeferenced toposheets were digitized to make base maps of the Fatehabad District and its blocks. Choropleth maps are used to depict the regional pattern of male-female literacy differences. In this paper mainly three types of analysis are done, firstly the comparison of male-female literacy for the year 2011 secondly regional differences in male-female literacy for the year 2011 and thirdly the representation of these differences with the help of a map for the year 2011.

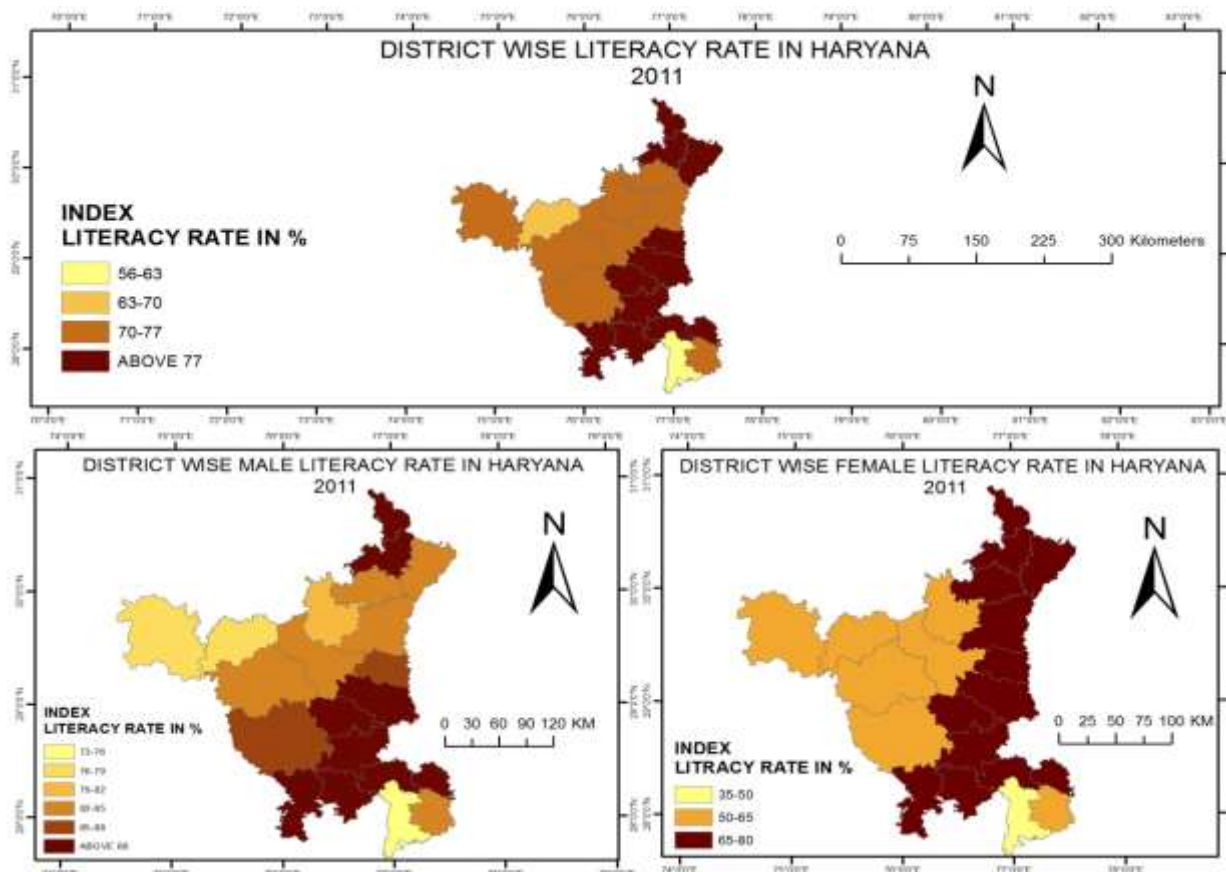
LITERACY DIFFERENCES IN TOTAL POPULATION

The literacy rate of Haryana in 2011 was 76.6%. The literacy rate of the male population was 85.4 percent and the literacy rate of the female population was 66.8 percent. Haryana ranked 16th place in 2001 and 22nd 2011 in concerning overall literacy.

Table 1. District-wise Male-Female literacy distribution in Haryana, 2011

Sr. No.	Name of the District	Total			Rural			Urban		
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1	Panchkula	83.4	88.6	77.5	77.45	84.59	69.10	88.25	91.96	84.06
2	Ambala	82.9	88.5	76.6	78.64	86.01	70.48	88.15	91.47	84.35
3	Yamunanagar	78.9	85.1	72.0	74.96	82.39	66.60	85.04	89.14	80.37
4	Kurukshetra	76.7	83.5	69.2	73.30	80.99	64.86	84.87	89.27	79.82
5	Kaithal	70.6	79.3	60.7	68.29	77.60	57.80	78.52	85.46	70.77
6	Karnal	76.4	83.7	68.3	73.10	81.50	63.70	83.94	88.75	78.59

7	Panipat	77.5	85.4	68.2	74.09	83.69	62.97	81.37	87.48	74.31
8	Sonipat	80.8	89.4	70.9	78.53	88.07	66.35	86.02	92.43	78.73
9	Jind	72.7	82.5	61.6	70.16	80.63	58.15	81.37	88.77	73.01
10	Fatehabad	69.1	78.1	59.3	66.73	76.47	56.03	79.22	84.95	72.95
11	Sirsa	70.4	78.6	61.2	66.90	75.98	56.81	80.77	86.66	74.25
12	Hisar	73.2	82.8	62.3	70.02	81.13	57.40	80.08	86.28	72.87
13	Bhiwani	76.7	87.4	64.8	75.20	86.79	62.21	82.91	89.76	75.20
14	Rohtak	80.4	88.4	71.2	78.03	88.13	66.32	83.56	88.83	77.68
15	Jhajjar	80.8	89.4	71.0	78.92	88.25	68.22	86.42	92.94	78.98
16	Mahendragarh	78.9	91.3	65.3	78.04	91.15	63.66	83.80	92.05	74.69
17	Rewari	82.2	92.9	70.5	80.87	92.88	67.91	86.13	93.02	78.31
18	Gurgaon	84.4	90.3	77.6	81.10	91.31	69.63	85.94	89.82	81.33
19	Mewat	56.1	73.0	37.6	54.01	71.61	34.63	71.78	83.03	59.34
20	Faridabad	83.0	89.9	75.2	75.72	87.76	61.97	84.87	90.48	78.46
21	Palwal	70.3	82.6	56.4	67.87	81.37	52.53	78.30	86.63	68.96



District Wise Total Persons, Male and Female Literacy of Haryana 2011

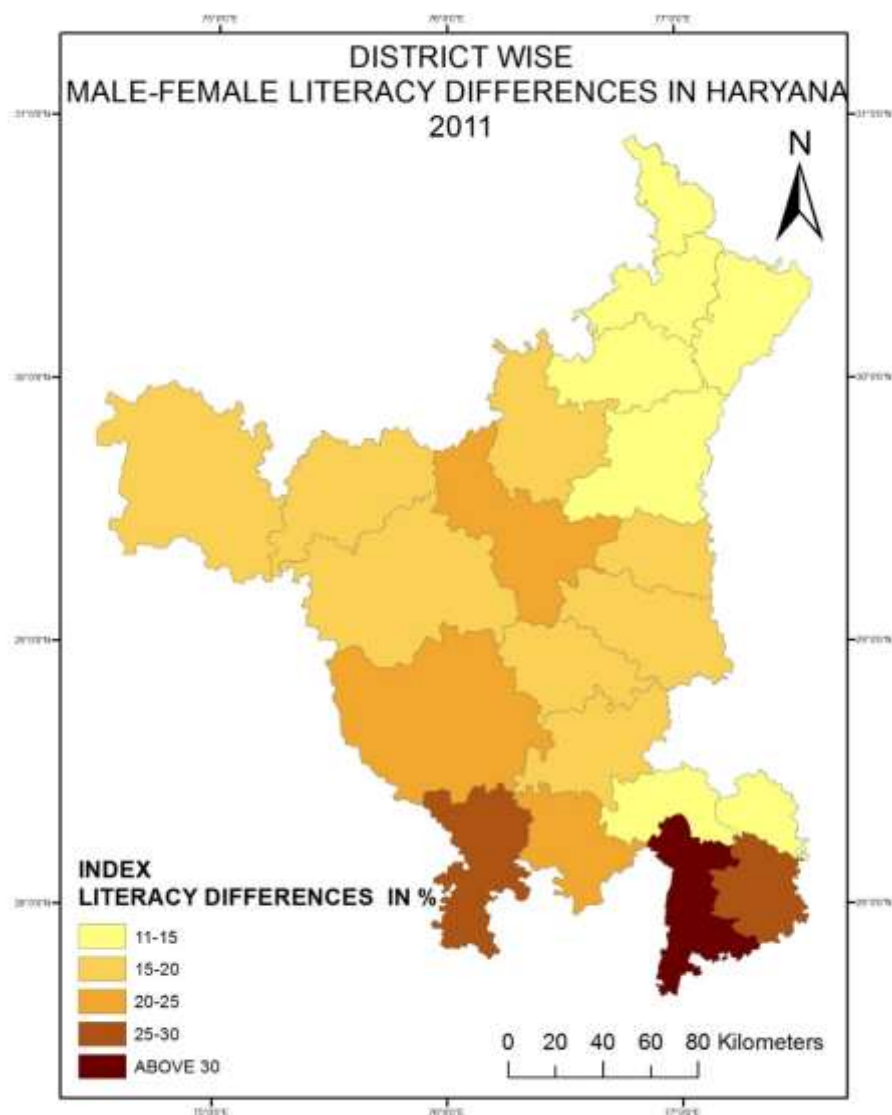
In the 2011 census, the highest literacy rate of the total population is found in the Gurgaon district at 84.4 percent followed by Panchkula at 83.4 percent and Faridabad at 83 percent and the lowest literacy rate is found in the district of Mewat at 56.1 percent followed by the Fatehabad 69.1 percent and Palwal 70.3 percent. The highest literacy rate of the total male population is found in Rewari district at 92.9 percent followed by Mahendragarh at 91.3 percent and Gurgaon at 90.3 percent and the lowest literacy rate is found in the district of Mewat at 73.0 percent followed by the Fatehabad 78.1 percent and Sirsa 78.6 percent. The highest literacy rate of the total female population is found in the Gurgaon district at 77.6 percent followed by Panchkula 88.6 percent and Ambala at 76.6 percent and the lowest literacy rate is found in the district of Mewat at 37.6 percent followed by the Palwal 56.4 percent and Fatehabad 59.3 percent.

District Wise Total Persons, Male and Female Literacy Difference of Haryana 2011

According to the 2011 census, within the state of Haryana, the highest difference between male and female literacy is found in Mewat district with 35.4 percent followed by Palwal at 26.2 percent and Mahendragarh at 26 percent, and the lowest literacy gap of the male-female literacy is found in Panchkula district i.e 11.1 percent followed by the Ambala 11.9 percent and Gurgaon 12.7 percent.

Table 2. District Wise Total Persons, Male and Female Literacy Difference of Haryana 2011

Sr. No.	Name of the District	Total population		
		Male	Female	Literacy differences
1	Panchkula	88.6	77.5	11.1
2	Ambala	88.5	76.6	11.9
3	Yamunanagar	85.1	72.0	13.1
4	Kurukshetra	83.5	69.2	14.3
5	Kaithal	79.3	60.7	18.6
6	Karnal	83.7	68.3	15.4
7	Panipat	85.4	68.2	17.2
8	Sonapat	89.4	70.9	18.5
9	Jind	82.5	61.6	20.9
10	Fatehabad	78.1	59.3	18.8
11	Sirsa	78.6	61.2	17.4
12	Hisar	82.8	62.3	20.5
13	Bhiwani	87.4	64.8	22.6
14	Rohtak	88.4	71.2	17.2
15	Jhajjar	89.4	71.0	18.4
16	Mahendragarh	91.3	65.3	26
17	Rewari	92.9	70.5	22.4
18	Gurgaon	90.3	77.6	12.7
19	Mewat	73.0	37.6	35.4
20	Faridabad	89.9	75.2	14.7
21	Palwal	82.6	56.4	26.2



Conclusion

Data from the 2011 Census shows that the literacy rate of Haryana was 76.6 percent. The literacy rate of the male population was 85.4 percent and the literacy rate of the female population was 66.8 percent. Haryana ranked 16th place in 2001 and 22nd in 2011 in respect of overall literacy. The overall literacy rate of India was 74.04 percent in the 2011 census and it was 2.56 percent more in the Haryana State. The difference was very narrow and with ongoing efforts and policies of the government, the differentials among the Male-Female and Rural-Urban populations were to go to narrow down. Census 2011 data shows that the Rewari district stands first in terms of total male population literacy rate with 92.9 percent of the literate population and the lowest literacy rate of the male population is found in the Mewat district with 73 percent. In terms of female literacy Gurgaon district stands first with 77.6 percent and Mewat district with 37.6 percent stands last. Within the state of Haryana, the widest gap between male and female literacy is found in the Mewat district, which is 35.4 percent, and on the contrary, the lowest male-female literacy difference is found in the Panchkula district which is 11.1 percent. The highest rural male-female literacy difference rate appears in Mewat at 36.98 percent and the lowest literacy rate differences of the male-female population are found in the district of Panchkula at 11.1 percent. The highest urban male-female literacy difference rate appears in Mewat at 23.69 percent and the lowest urban-rural literacy difference rate recorded in Gurgaon is -1.49 percent. From the above discussion, it is found that the Mewat district of Haryana is most backward. It is the only Muslim-populated district of Haryana. The level of female literacy depends on a number of socio-economic parameters such as the basic nature of the local economy, the process of urbanization, the living standard of people, the social status of the female population, schooling opportunities technological advancement, etc. On the other hand, the Panchkula district is more developed in terms of socio-economic parameters such as educational attainment, the living standard of the female population, economic development, fewer gender biases and better schooling facilities. "The disparity in literacy generates a number of social, economic and political problems that may threaten the very foundation of development" (Singh and Chauhan, 2010). Hence, literacy differentials in the male-female population are very dominant. The proper concern to lessen this disparity is needed. The government should formulate effective policies in the planning process. Female literacy needs to be increased so that the overall development of society is attained.

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