

**“TAHSIL WISE MALE-FEMALE DISPARITIES IN LITERACY OF AHMEDNAGAR
DISTRICT: A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS”**

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Abstract

The main aim of present research paper is to examine the tahsil wise disparities in male female literacy of Ahmednagar District of Maharashtra state. Present paper is entirely based on the secondary data which is obtained from District census handbook Ahmednagar-1971-2011. Disparity index has been employed to measure literacy disparity in male and female. Disparity Index of all 14 tahsils have been grouped into 5 categories namely very low, low, moderate, high and very high. During 2011 low disparity index was observed in Jamkhed tahsil, it was 0.38. On the other hand gender disparity is high in tribal and backward Akole tahsil during the 1971, it was 0.72. Due to poor economic condition, poor access of education facilities, lack of education awareness, social backwardness less transportation connectivity and high concentration were responsible for high index of disparity in the study area. It was observed that, continuous decreased disparity index, due to increase literacy in the study area.

Key Words: Male literacy, female literacy and disparity index.

Introduction:

Education is clearly recognized as one of the key components of policies aimed at solving issues of paramount importance. Without educational policies, policies aimed at improving poverty, public health, reducing infant mortality protecting the environment, strengthening the human rights, alleviating international relations and seeking to gain (UNESCO, 2010). Illiteracy, on the other hand, takes away from man his dignity, perpetuates ignorance, poverty and mental isolation, deters peaceful and friendly international relations and hampers social advancement, economic growth and political maturity (Sawant and Athawale, 1994). Literacy is playing an important role to determine the level of the society not only the economic point of view but also a good sign for healthy environment (Coulombe et al., 2004). In general, the higher literacy is a good indicator forth sound economy as well as quality of life (Sundaram and Nangia,1985). The

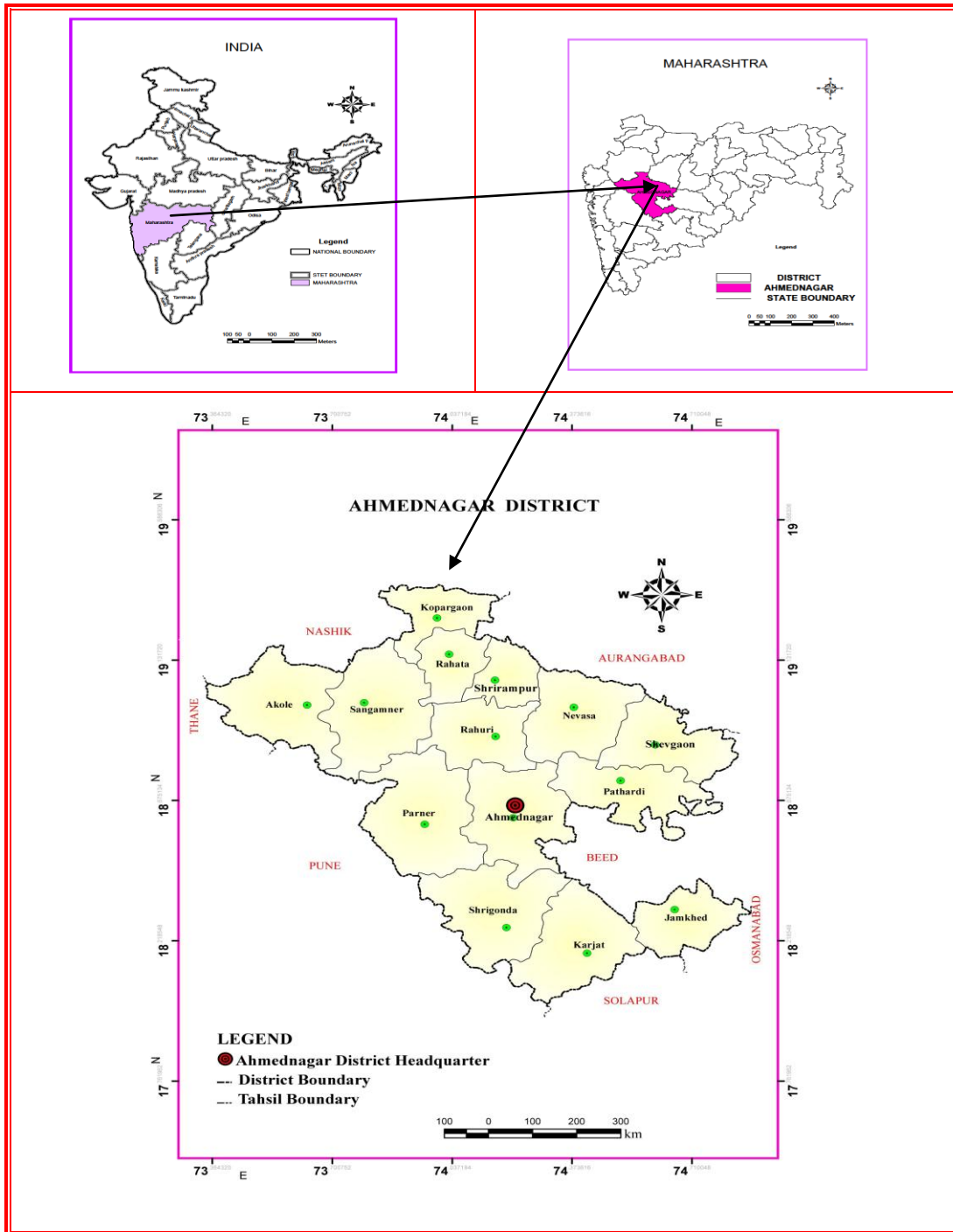
lower the literacy is hurdle for not only the economy but also the society (Mulimani and Pujar, 2015).

Literacy denotes the most basic and essential education for eradicating poverty and mental isolation, for cultivating peaceful and friendly international relations and for permitting the free play of demographic processes (Chandna & Sidhu, 1980). The definition of literacy varies from one country to another country in the world on their historical milieu and social development. Literacy defined by UNESCO as the “ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, compute and written material associate with varying contracts. According to the census enumeration, ‘a person, who can read and write with understanding in any language, is considered to be ‘literate’ (Hassan, 2005; Dutta and Sivaramakrishnan, 2013). The trends in literacy are indicative of the pace at which the society is being transformed. In India, literacy has made remarkable steps since independence. In 1901, a little over 5 % of the Indian population was literate, which increased to around 16 % in 1950, a mere increase of 11 % in the literacy rate during the first half of the century (Dutta and Sivaramakrishnan, 2013). The rate of literacy in India has increased from 18.33 % in 1951 to 74.04 % in 2011.

This increase has been even more dramatic for the female literacy that has increased from 8.86 % to 65.46 % during the same period. India recorded a quantum jump in its literacy rate during 1991-2011 in case of both male and females. Female literacy for 2011 is comparable to 1991's level for males (Chandna, 2016). Three fourth of the male and more than half of the female population aged 7 and over are literate in the country today. The country level data masks large variations across states and locations. Maharashtra stands at the top in the Literacy Rate in India. According to 2011, Census of India, the literacy rate in Maharashtra has increased from 27.91 % in 1951 to 82.91 % in 2011, which is far above the national average. Maharashtra revealed high literacy rates as compared to its neighboring states of Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The levels of literacy vary from district to district in Maharashtra (Bhakare and Hudale, 2011). The highest literacy rate is 90.90 % in Mumbai Suburban District. The lowest literacy rate is registered in 63.04 % in Nandurbar District during the year of 2011. In Maharashtra regional disparity of literacy observed in district to district. Therefore, present research paper highlights regional disparity in pattern of rural-urban literacy of Ahmednagar District from 1971 to 2011. Thus, study of literacy level, trends and patterns is being taken as one of the catalytic aspect for a population geographer. The investigation of geographical

variation of rural-urban gap in literacy helps to identify the areas with deficiency, which can help the policy makers to come up with proper developmental strategies for those regions.

Map 1.1: Location of Study Area



1.2 STUDY AREA:

Ahmednagar district has been selected for present research paper. There are fourteen tahsils in Ahmednagar district. Map 1.1 shows location of Ahmednagar district which extends between $18^{\circ} 2'$ North and $19^{\circ} 9'$ North latitudes and $73^{\circ} 9'$ East and $75^{\circ} 5'$ East longitudes.

1.3 OBJECTIVE:

The main objective of this paper is to examine tahsil wise male-female disparities in literacy of Ahmednagar district to the geographical point of view.

1.4 DATA SOURCE AND METHODOLOGY:

The present research work is an attempt to examine the regional disparity in pattern of rural-urban literacy of Ahmednagar District from 1971-2011 using Disparity Index. Tahsil has been considered the most appropriate unit of study for which data are available. There were 14 tahsils in the district in 2011. The disparity index measures disparity between two groups in their possession of a particular property in terms of the logarithm of the odds ratio. Sopher's Disparity Index (Sopher DIs, 1974) is a well-accepted measurement technique to identify the disparity between rural-urban literacy groups by using the following formula (Kundu & Rao 1986; Mulimani and Pujar - 2015; Biswas -2016).

Male Female Disparity Index as, $Ds = \log(x_2/x_1) + \log [(100-x_1)/(100-x_2)]$

Where: Ds =Disparity Index

X_1 = Female literacy.

X_2 = Male literacy.

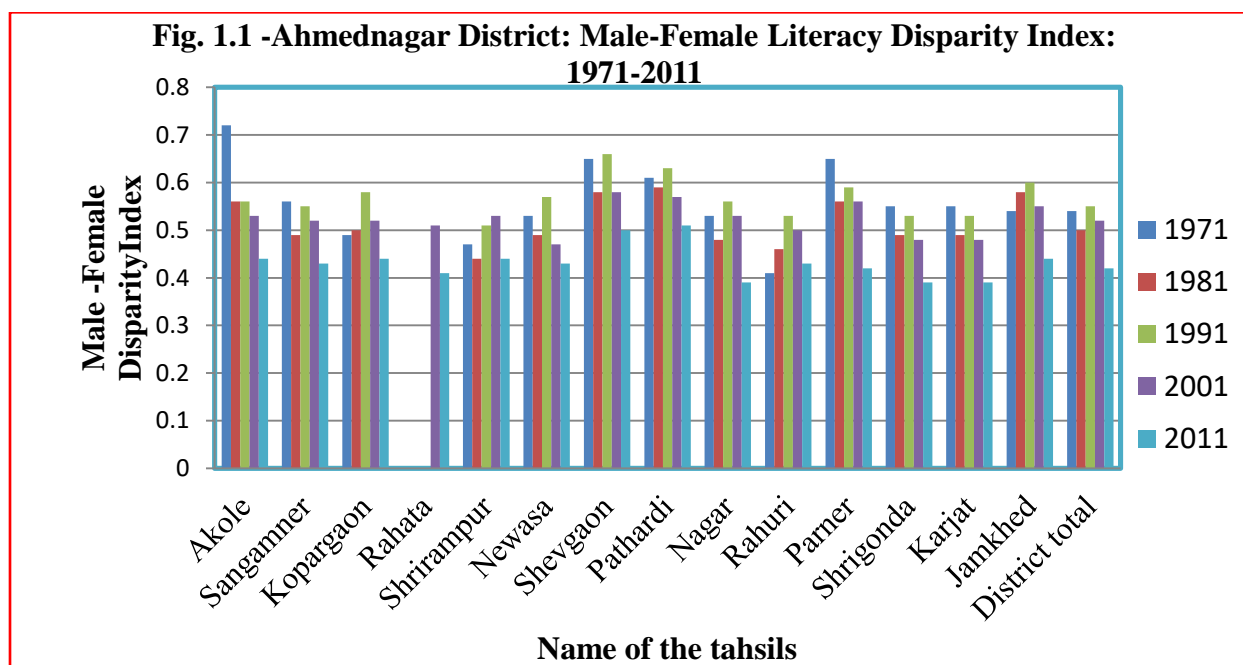
1.5 TAHSILWISE DISPARITY IN MALE-FEMALE LITERACY (1981-2001):

Sex-wise study of male-female literacy among the population displayed wide sex disparities. The female literacy level was considerably lower than that of male literacy level. The Indian society is mainly characterized by male civilization; the females are not only degraded but also deprived of the right of study. Disparity in literacy of population witnessed wide sex disparity. Low disparity index indicates that improvement in female literacy level among the population and vice versa. The disparity in male-female literacy may be grouped into three categories namely low, moderate and high.

Table No.1.1: Male Female literacy Disparity Index in Ahmednagar District (1971-2011):

Sr. No.	Name of tahsil	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
1	Akole	0.72	0.56	0.56	0.53	0.44
2	Sangamner	0.56	0.49	0.55	0.52	0.43
3	Kopargaon	0.49	0.50	0.58	0.52	0.44
4	Rahata	-	-	-	0.51	0.41
5	Shrirampur	0.47	0.44	0.51	0.53	0.44
6	Newasa	0.53	0.49	0.57	0.47	0.43
7	Shevgaon	0.65	0.58	0.66	0.58	0.50
8	Pathardi	0.61	0.59	0.63	0.57	0.51
9	Nagar	0.53	0.48	0.56	0.53	0.39
10	Rahuri	0.41	0.46	0.53	0.50	0.43
11	Parner	0.65	0.56	0.59	0.56	0.42
12	Shrigonda	0.55	0.49	0.53	0.48	0.39
13	Karjat	0.53	0.47	0.52	0.46	0.38
14	Jamkhed	0.54	0.58	0.60	0.55	0.44
	Ahmednagar District	0.54	0.50	0.55	0.52	0.42

Source: *Compiled by Author.*



1.5.1 TAHSILS HAVING LOW DISPARITY INDEX: Tahsils having less than 0.50 disparity index are included in this group. Table No. 1.1 and 1.2 shows low male-female disparity index.

During 1971, low disparity index was observed in the tahsils of Rahuri (0.41), Shrirampur (0.47) and Kopergaon (0.49). Tahsils of Shrirampur (0.44), Rahuri (0.46), Karajt (0.47), Nagar (0.48),

Table No. 1.2- Ahmednagar District: Levels of Disparity in Male Female Literacy-1971-2011.

Levels of Disparity	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
	Name of Tahsil				
Low	1. Rahuri 2. Shrirampur 3. Kopergaon	1. Shrirampur 2. Rahuri 3. Karjat 4. Nagar 5. Newasa 6. Shrigonda 7. Sangamner	Nil	1. Karjat 2. Newasa 3. Shrigonda	1. Karjat 2. Shrigonda 3. Nagar 4. Rahata 5. Parner 6. Newasa 7. Rahuri 8. Sangamner 9. Kopergaon 10. Shrirampur 11. Akole 12. Jamkhed
Moderate	4. Newasa 5. Nagar 6. Karjat 7. Jamkhed 8. Shrigonda 9. Sangamner	1. Kopergaon 2. Parner 3. Akole 4. Jamkhed 5. Shevgaon 6. Pathardi	1. Shrirampur 2. Karjat 3. Rahuri 4. Shrigonda 5. Sangamner 6. Nagar 7. Akole 8. Newasa 9. Kopergaon 10. Parner	4. Rahuri 5. Rahata 6. Sangamner 7. Kopergaon 8. Shrirampur 9. Nagar 10. Akole 11. Jamkhed 12. Parner 13. Pathardi 14. Shevgaon	13. Shevgaon 14. Pathardi
High	10. Pathardi 11. Shevgaon 12. Parner 13. Akole	Nil	11. Jamkhed 12. Pathardi 13. Shevgaon	Nil	Nil

Source: Compiled by Author from table 1.1

Sangamner Newasa and Shrigonda (0.49) fall in this group but during 1981. There was no single tahsil included in this category in the year 1991. According to 2001 census, Karjat (0.46), Newasa (0.47) and Shrigonda (0.48) consist in low disparity index. During 2011, there are twelve tahsils out of fourteen included in the low disparity index.

These tahsils were Karjat (0.38), Nagar and Shrigonda (0.39), Rahata (0.41), Parner (0.42), Sangamner, Rahuri and Newasa (0.43), Kopergaon Shrirampur, Jamkhed and Akole (0.44). It is stated from the above discussion that, after 1991, the gap between male and female literacy

was continuously decrease and low disparity index indicates that improvement in female literacy level among the population, during 2001.

1.5.2 TAHSILS HAVING MODERATE DISPARITY INDEX: Tahsils having disparity index from 0.50 to 0.60 are fall in this category. Table No. 1.1 & 1.2 shows the moderate disparity index of literacy. This category is covered by tahsils of Nagar, Newasa and Karjat (0.53), Jamkhed (0.54), Shrigonda (0.55) and Sangamner (0.56), during 1971. During 1981, seven tahsils included in this category, these were Kopergaon (0.50), Akole and Parner (0.56), Shevgaon and Jamkhed (0.58) and Pathardi (0.59). There are ten tahsils namely Shrigonda (0.51), Karjat (0.52), Rahuri and Shrigonda (0.53), Sangamner (0.55), Akole and Nagar (0.56), Nawasa (0.57), Kopergaon (0.58) and Parner (0.59) indicates moderate disparity index in the year 1991. According to 2001 census there are 11 tahsils viz. Rahuri (0.50), Rahata (0.51), Sangamner⁴ and Kopergaon (0.52), Akole, Shrigonda and Nagar(0.53), Jamkhed (0.55), Parner (0.56) Pathardi (0.57) and Shevgaon (0.58) were fall in this group. In this way the gap between male and female literacy was continuously decreased.

1.5.3 TAHSILS HAVING HIGH DISPARITY INDEX: Tahsils of more than 0.60 disparity index are fall in this category. Table No 1.1 and 1.2 shows high disparity in male-female literacy. During 1971, Akole tahsil indicates highest disparity index of 0.72 followed by Shevgaon and Parner (0.65) and Pathardi (0.61). But during 1981 there is no single tahsil in this category in study region. During 1991, tahsils such as Shevgaon (0.66), Pathardi (0.63) and Jamkhed (0.60) denoted high disparity index. During 2001 and 2011, there were not any tahsils observed in this category, due to continuous decrease of the gap between male and female literacy in the study region.

1.6 CONCLUSION:

This paper provides an insight into the existing pattern of the literacy rate and the levels of disparity of male female. The analysis clearly shows that there is a wide range of variations in rural- urban disparity in literacy among the tahsils of Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra. In detail, although the literacy gaps have declined from 1971 to 2011. Sex-wise study of male-female literacy among the population displayed wide sex disparities. The female literacy level was considerably lower than that of male literacy level. Considering recent census 2011 data,

high disparity was observed in two tahsils viz. Pathardi and Shevgaon. Contrasting to this, low disparity was observed in twelve tahsils namely Karjat, Shrigonda, Nagar, Rahata, Parner, Newasa, Rahuri, Sangamner, Kopargaon, Shrirampur, Akole and Jamkhed tahsils.

The quantitative analysis highlights that low disparity in literacy is characteristics of regions marked by relatively adequate educational facilities, high degree of urbanization, medical facilities, modernization of agriculture and good transport facilities. This kind of disparity in the field of literacy is serious problem in the study area, which needs an immediate attention and long-term action plan. In the context, the result of the present research work proves of immense importance of planners, researchers, administrator, educationist and decision makers.

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