



LITERACY PATTERN IN MAHARASHTRA: A DISTRICT WISE ANALYSIS OF 2001 CENSUS

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Literacy rate is one of the important demographic elements, which is a good measure of human progress towards modernization. Literacy as per definition of the Indian Census Operation of 2001, a person aged seven and above, who can both read and write with understanding in any language, is treated as literate. A person, who can only read but cannot write, is not literate. In the censuses prior to 1991, children below five years of age were necessarily treated as illiterate. The results of 2001 census reveal that there has been an increase in literacy in the country. The literacy rate in the country is 64.84 per cent, 75.26 for males and 53.67 for females.

Results and Discussion:-

Literacy Pattern in Maharashtra:-The rank of Maharashtra in general literacy in India 1991 was twelfth and in 2001 was tenth. The literacy rates were 64.47 and 77.27 per cent in 1991 and 2001 respectively. The increase during the period was 12.4 percent corresponding all India figures for 1991 and 2001 were 52.21 and 64.84 percent respectively and the decennial increase in literacy was 12.63 percent. The literacy pattern in Maharashtra has been discussed on the basis of the areal variations in the values of male, female and general literacy rate and the male-female differential in literacy rates, in the districts of Maharashtra (Table-1) Four regions identified as having (1) very high literacy (more than 80%) (2) high literacy (75-80%) (3) moderate literacy (70-75%) (4) low literacy (less than 70%) reveals the spatial pattern in Maharashtra (figure-1)

1. Districts Having Very High Literacy Rate: The district having very high literacy rate form two continuous region surrounding the metropolis of Mumbai and Nagpur viz Mumbai, Mumbai suburban, Thane, Sindhudurg, Pune Akola, Amravati, Wardha and Nagpur (Table-1). Mumbai and Mumbai suburban districts has been excluded because of its purely urban nature where literacy rates are very high. Thane district has become industrial district due to the effect of Mumbai. We found large number of factories and

companies located at Thane Bhivandi, Kalyan, Vasai Ulhasnagar. As a result of this there is high literacy rate. But due to the Varli Adivasi Community literacy rate has come down which is below the expected literacy rate. Pune also having high literacy rate because varies companies and factories are establish, excellent transport facilities like air, railway, road etc. Beside this University of Pune play important role in this development. Except the western mountainous region of Pune district large number of land is irrigated with Canals and farmers are prosperous (economically developed) One thing which can be pointed out is that Sindhudurg district stand out strikingly with literacy rate as high as 80.3 percent and urbanization level as low as 9.47 percent.

Another continuous region of very high literacy rate is surrounding to metropolis of Nagpur. Akola, Amravati, Wardha and Nagpur district has high literacy rate. These four districts are well connected with railway, national highway and road facilities. Western part of Nagpur is famous for the producing orange and northern region for coal and Manganese. Due to industrialization and urbanization the literacy rate of Nagpur district increased up to the 84 percent. As mention above this category has a high degree of urbanization 55.96 percent its population (Table-2) enumerated as urban. While the degree of urbanization for the state was 30.78 percent. The urban centers of these districts are fairly large foci of dense and important transport network and have a large number of educational institutions of all grades and Mumbai, Nagpur and Pune are being primate cities and old in age has a traditional influence over the surrounding areas. The proportion of non-agricultural workers in some districts is much higher than the other districts. It is clear therefore, that the occupational structure of this area is quite diversified. The high proportion of non agricultural workers results in higher literacy, owing to their employment in occupations on which literacy is the essential prerequisite. This area also has the highest male and female literacy rate (Table-1) while

TABLE -1 Literacy Rate (7+) and Male-Female Differential, 2001

State/Div/ Dist.	Person			Rural			Urban			Male-Female Diff.Total Male Female		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Konkan												
Mumbai	86.4	90.2	81.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	86.4	90.2	81.4	8.8	0.0	8.8
Mumbai Sub	86.9	91.6	81.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	86.9	91.6	81.1	10.5	0.0	10.5
Thane	80.7	87.1	73.1	64.4	75.6	52.6	86.5	91.0	81.1	14.0	23.0	9.9
Raigad	77.0	86.1	67.7	73.8	84.1	63.6	87.1	92.0	81.4	18.4	20.5	10.6
Ratnagiri	75.0	85.9	65.8	73.3	85.0	63.6	88.3	91.7	84.7	20.1	21.5	7.0
Sindhudurg	80.3	90.3	71.2	79.3	89.8	69.8	89.7	94.1	85.3	19.0	20.0	8.8
North Mah.												
Jalgaon	75.4	86.9	64.3	72.1	84.0	59.6	83.6	90.6	76.1	21.6	24.4	14.6
Dhule	71.6	81.4	61.4	67.1	78.0	55.7	84.5	90.8	77.7	20.0	22.3	13.1
Nandurbar	55.8	66.2	45.2	51.1	62.0	40.0	80.3	87.4	72.7	21.0	22.0	14.7
Nashik	74.4	83.6	64.4	67.7	79.0	55.8	84.6	90.6	77.9	19.3	23.2	12.7
Ahmadnagar	75.3	85.7	64.3	72.9	84.2	61.1	84.7	90.9	77.3	21.4	23.1	14.1
West.Mah.												
Pune	80.5	88.3	71.8	72.4	83.6	60.7	86.1	91.6	80.0	16.5	22.9	11.6
Satara	78.2	88.2	68.4	76.8	87.5	66.4	86.4	92.1	80.4	19.8	21.7	11.8
Sangali	76.6	86.3	66.7	74.1	84.6	63.5	84.2	91.2	76.8	19.5	21.1	14.5
Kolhapur	76.9	87.5	66.0	73.1	85.2	60.7	85.9	92.6	78.7	21.4	24.5	13.9
Solapur	71.2	82.0	59.8	68.3	79.6	56.1	77.5	87.2	67.5	22.1	23.4	19.6
Marathwad												
Aurangabad	72.9	84.9	60.1	67.0	81.6	51.6	82.7	90.2	74.4	21.4	23.1	14.1
Jalana	64.4	79.1	49.0	61.3	77.4	44.6	77.4	86.3	68.0	30.1	32.8	18.2
Prabhani	66.1	79.6	52.0	61.4	77.0	45.5	75.9	85.1	66.1	27.6	31.5	19.0
Hingoli	66.3	80.7	51.2	64.3	79.7	48.3	76.9	86.3	66.9	29.6	31.4	19.4
Nanded	67.8	80.4	54.3	64.6	78.4	50.0	77.8	86.6	68.3	26.1	28.5	18.3
Latur	71.5	82.9	59.4	68.9	81.2	55.9	80.1	88.5	70.9	23.6	25.3	17.6
Osmanabad	69.0	80.4	56.9	67.0	78.9	54.4	79.6	88.3	70.3	23.6	24.5	18.0
Bid	68.0	80.7	54.6	65.3	78.9	51.0	80.0	88.8	70.6	26.2	27.9	18.1
Amaravati Div												
Buldhana	75.8	86.9	64.1	73.7	85.8	61.0	83.5	91.1	75.5	22.9	24.8	15.6
Akola	81.4	88.9	73.4	78.8	87.9	69.1	85.5	90.5	80.2	15.5	18.7	10.4
Washim	73.4	85.4	60.6	71.4	84.6	57.6	82.4	89.5	74.8	24.8	27.0	14.7
Amaravati	82.5	88.9	75.7	79.2	86.8	71.1	88.8	92.9	84.4	13.2	15.7	8.5
Yavatmal	73.6	84.1	62.5	70.6	82.1	58.5	86.4	92.6	79.8	21.5	23.6	12.9
Nagpur Div.												
Wardha	80.1	87.2	72.5	76.9	84.8	68.6	88.6	93.7	83.2	14.7	16.2	10.6
Nagpur	84.0	90.2	77.4	75.6	84.0	66.6	88.7	93.6	83.4	12.8	17.4	10.2
Bhandara	78.5	89.0	67.8	76.5	87.7	65.2	88.8	95.4	82.0	21.2	22.5	13.4
Gondiya	78.5	89.6	67.6	77.0	88.8	65.6	89.1	95.6	82.4	22.0	23.2	13.1
Chandrapur	73.2	82.9	62.8	67.7	78.8	56.0	84.7	91.3	77.5	20.1	22.8	13.8
Gadchiroli	60.1	71.9	48.1	58.3	70.4	46.0	83.0	90.7	74.8	23.8	24.3	15.9

Source: Census -2001

stands out striking with literacy rate as high as 78.5 per cent and urbanization. In Gondiya, on the other hand, though the percentage of urban population was as low as 11.95 percent in 2001. Male literacy in these districts is high while female literacy is low. The lowest female literacy was recorded (64.1%) in Buldhana. Due to the disparity in male female rates, the male female differential was much higher. Though the urban literacy was more than 83 percent in the entire district, the literacy rate in rural areas were poor. Low level of urbanization and low proportion of people engaged in non-agricultural activities, accompanied by a

the male literacy rate ranges from the minimum of 86.9 percent in Akola, and maximum of 91.6 percent in Mumbai Suburban district. The female literacy rate varies from a minimum of 71.2 percent in Sindhudurg to a maximum of 81.4 percent in Mumbai. The variation in the male female differential was due to obvious reason and varied according to their proximity to Mumbai. Due to the same reason, there also existed a wide disparity in the literacy rates of urban and rural area.

2. District Having High Literacy Rate:- The nine districts viz. Raigad, Jalgaon, Satara, Sangali, Kolhapur, Buldhana, Bhandara, Gondiya and Ahmadnagar-these districts identified as having high literacy rate. Buldhana and Gondiya districts both are leads with 78.5 percent of its total population as literates. The level of urbanization in these districts is much lower than the former category, though Kolhapur had 29.81 percent of its population living in urban areas. The growth of urban population in Kolhapur district was mainly contributed by Karvir and Hatkanangle towns. We found 'Green Revolution' in Kolhapur district because major part of the district comes under the irrigation. Gondiya district

TABLE -2 Literacy Areas and their Structure, 2001 (Figures in %)

	Very High Literacy (>80)	High Literacy (75-80)	Moderate Literacy (70-75)	Low Literacy (<70)
Level of Urbanization	55.96	21.09	26.37	18.30
Percentage of Scheduled Caste	9.61	11.02	11.58	11.57
Percentage of Scheduled Tribes	7.06	6.41	10.27	16.09
Percentage of population engaged in Cultivation	18.19	35.19	34.47	40.46
Percentage of workers engaged in agricultural labour	23.3	31.39	33.95	38.2
Percentage of Workers engaged in household industry.	2.49	3.8	2.23	1.85
Percentage of workers engaged in other activities	56.05	28.91	28.54	19.46

Source: - Computed by author:

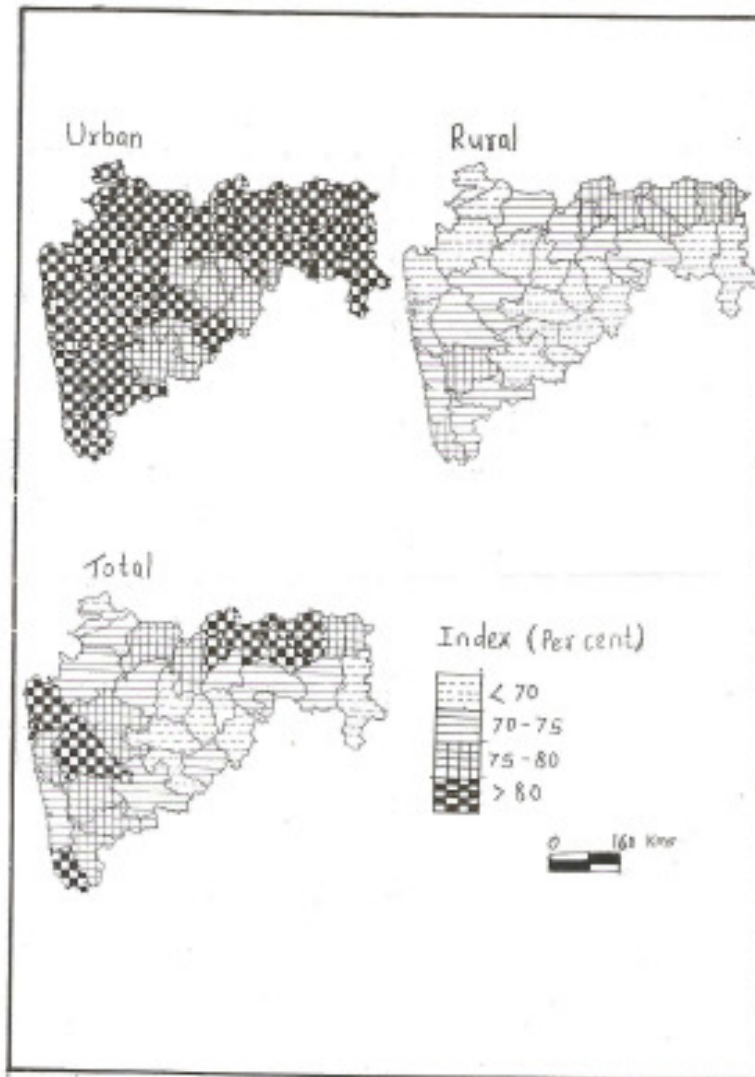


Fig-1 Literacy Rate 2001 - Maharashtra

considerable number (11.02) of scheduled caste population were responsible for the relatively development of literacy rates.

3. District Having Moderate Literacy Rate:-

The nine districts viz. Dhule, Nashik, Washim, Yawatmal, Aurangabad, Latur, Solapur, Chandrapur and Ratanagiri falls into this category. There is very little inter-district variation in literacy and levels of urbanization with the exception of Ratanagiri, which literacy rate is 75% (highest in group) and level of urbanization is 11.33 (Lowest in group). Due to the development of the service sector, it is quite natural the male literacy is higher than the female literacy. Therefore the male -female differential is high (21.43), the highest being Washim district, for both total and rural and Solapur district as urban areas is concern. This is due to considerable population of scheduled caste, (that is 15% in Solapur and 15.9% Washim, that is 15.9% (as a total) and 16.8% (rural) in Washim and 13.6% (Urban) in Solapur.

4. District Having Low Literacy Rate:-

The Marathawada division districts, Jalana, Parbhani, Hingoli, Nanded, Osmanabad, and Bid form a

continuous block of low literacy level. Other two districts of Maharashtra that is Nandurbar and Gadchiroli, having low literacy rate as Adivasi area of Maharashtra.

Conclusion:- The present study indicates that there exist inter-district inequalities in the literacy rates both in case of male and female population as well as between urban and rural areas. Reduction of inequalities is not an isolated objective. It calls for coordinated action in various fields, to counteract the dynamics of socio-economic underdevelopment on the one hand and political institutional framework on the other.

R E F E R E N C E

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