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## Gender disparities among districts of Punjab

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### Abstract

Inequality between men and women is one of the most crucial disparities in many societies, and this is particularly so in India. On one level, gender disparity can be narrowly defined as the purely descriptive observation of different outcomes between males and females. The variables chosen for examination include those, which have a bearing on gender and equity issues. We found that in Punjab, there is decrease in gender disparities during last decade but the rate of this is very slow.

**Keywords:** Gender disparity, Inequality, Work participation

### 1. Introduction

Gender is a social construct. It defines and differentiates the roles, rights, responsibilities, and obligations of women and men. The innate biological differences between females and males form the basis of social norms that define appropriate behaviors for women and men and that determine women's and men's differential social, economic, and political power (United Nations, 2005) [8]. There are large disparities in the economic, social and schooling opportunities available to men and women in India. Gender disparities begin early in life, with female infants having a lower chance of survival than male infants, owing largely to parental neglect of female infants. The discrimination against the female continues as the child grows older – first in the form of smaller rations of food and nutrition (especially for higher-order females) and later in the form of fewer schooling opportunities relative to boys. As women enter the labour force, they face discrimination in the labour market as well, primarily in the form of lower wages. There are marked regional differences with respect to gender disparity within the country. This paper focuses on gender disparities in Inter-district comparison in the areas of, health, education, status of women and social opportunities have been done.

Discrimination on the basis of 'gender' has been observed in all spheres of human interests including the granting of land rights by the state [Agarwal 2002] [2], intra-household allocation of food and resources [Harris-White 1996; Cowan and Dhanoa 1983; Sen and Dreze 1989] [4, 3, 6] and payment of wages and remunerations [Unni 1999] [7].

### 2. Methodology: Data Collection

The objective of this research is to examine the inter district disparity or inequality between men and women. The analysis of the above objective is based on the some selected variable based on secondary data. All 20 districts of Punjab are considered in the study. The secondary data had collected from the various sources like Report of Census of India and Punjab, research papers, books etc. Statistical methods were used for the determination of disparity.

### 3. Results and Discussion

**A. Literacy-** Differences in female and male literacy rates are one aspect of this broader phenomenon of gender-based inequality in India. As per 2011 Population census, the literacy rate in Punjab is 75.8% which is higher than the literacy rate of 69.95% in 2001. In 2011, only 70.7% of females in Punjab were literate compared to 80.4% of men. The male and female literacy rates were 75.6% and 63.55% respectively in 2001. Inter- District Analysis reveals that female literacy is highest in Hoshiarpur district (80.3%) which is comparable to Delhi (80.8%) whereas lowest literacy rate was in Mansa district (55.7%) which was

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comparable to Jharkhand (55.4%). Gap in literacy rate of male & female in Punjab has also decreased over the years. During 2001 and 2011, the literacy gap came down from 11.9% to 9.7% respectively. It is observed that female literacy rate is continuously increasing. It may be due to government rules & policies. The total literacy rate, literacy in male and female in Punjab is shown in table 1.

**Table 1:** Sex-wise Literacy Rate in Punjab as per census year 1971 – 2011

Literacy Rate			
Year	Male	Female	Total
1971	42.23	24.65	34.12
1981	51.23	34.35	43.37
1991	65.66	50.41	58.51
2001	75.63	63.55	69.95
2011	80.4	70.7	75.8

Source: Director, Census Operations, Punjab

**B. Sex ratio-** Sex ratio in districts of Punjab is presented in table 2 and it is clear from the table that there is also continuously increase in sex ratio. Females constitute 47.23% of total population of the state as compared to 48.5% at national level. Although sex ratio has improved from 854 in 1961 to 895 in 2011 in the state yet it still lagged behind the national average which was 941 in 1961 and 943 in 2011. On the other hand, sex ratio in 0-6 year’s age-group has decreased from 901 in 1961 to 846 in 2011 which is a serious cause of concern. At the national level also, this ratio declined from 976 in 1961 to 914 in 2011. Among districts in the State, Hoshiarpur has the highest sex ratio i.e. 961 (2011 census which is comparable to Tamil Nadu (996). Doaba region districts of the state are the top ranking districts in terms of sex ratio where range of Sex Ratio is between 912 to 961. The district with lowest sex ratio was Bathinda (868) which is close to sex ratio of Delhi (866).The sex ratio of this district is decreased that extensive research is needed reason for this decline.

**Table 2:** Comparison of Sex Ratio (Females per 1000 Males) in Punjab

Sr.no.	District	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
1	Gurdaspur	869	890	907	903	890	895
2	Amritsar	854	856	871	873	871	889
3	Tarn Taran	NA	NA	NA	NA	887	900
4	Kapurthala	886	889	898	896	888	912
5	Jalandhar	867	883	890	897	887	915
6	S.B.S Nagar	900	887	898	900	914	954
7	Hoshiarpur	902	899	919	924	935	961
8	Roopnagar	812	854	862	870	889	915
9	S.A.S. Nagar	NA	NA	NA	NA	840	879
10	Ludhiana	856	848	860	844	824	873
11	Firozpur	840	876	884	895	885	893
12	Faridkot	849	866	879	883	883	890
13	Shri Muktsar Sahib	846	863	885	880	891	896
14	Moga	862	866	881	884	887	893
15	Bathinda	834	851	861	884	870	868
16	Mansa	830	852	869	873	879	883
17	Sangrur	832	840	860	870	870	885
18	Barnala	NA	NA	NA	NA	907	876
19	Patiala	831	850	870	881	875	891
20	Fatehgarh Sahib	815	831	841	871	854	871
Panjab		854	865	879	882	876	895
India		941	930	934	927	933	943

Source: Director Census Operations, Punjab

**C. Health-** The mortality rate of females tend to exceed those of males until the late twenties, and even till the late thirties in some states, and this-- as known from the experiences of other countries, is very much in contrast with what tends to happen when men and women receive similar nutritional and health care (Sen, 1992) [1].

**D. Work Participation** – Women’s participation in the labour force has long been central to research on gender inequalities. In Punjab working participation rate is low but we can say that there is improvement in participation rate. As per census 2011, women constitute only 11.99% of main workers and 6.44% of marginal workers to total workers in the state. The corresponding figures at National level are 18.53% and 12.58% respectively. The workforce participation rate of females in Punjab is 13.90% while the male work participation rate is 55.20% as compared to National average where corresponding figures were 25.5% and 53.3% respectively. In other words, workforce

participation rate of females in Punjab is over four times lower than their male counterparts in the state and nearly two times lower than female work participation rate at National level.

**Table 3:** Sectoral and sex-wise participation rate of workforce in Punjab-2011 (Percentage)

	Rural	Punjab	India
Male		54.9	53.0
Female		14.3	30.0
Total		35.6	41.8
Urban			
Male		55.5	53.8
Female		13.2	15.4
Total		35.8	35.3
Total			
Male		55.2	53.3
Female		13.9	25.5
Total		35.7	39.8

Source: Population Census 2011 India

#### 4. Conclusion

Gender disparity is not only a phenomenon of poverty; there is almost no correlation between per-capita income and the gender disparities in health and education outcomes. So, while the absolute level of health and education outcomes for girls are strongly related to economic conditions, the disparities between females and males are not. It is concluded from the results that gender disparity is higher in some of the districts, but in some developed districts of Punjab, there is successive decrease in gender disparity as compared to Rajasthan, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Therefore, by enforcement of government rules, policies and along with that general awareness of people can reduce this difference.

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