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Participation of women in education in Punjab

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Abstract

Women's access to education has been recognized as a fundamental right, and increasing girls' education at primary, secondary and higher education level, is a main policy of the international development community and governments of most developing country. Gender equality in education is a critical element of the Millennium Development Goals. Education affected women's wellbeing and provides them a greater voice in household decisions and improved opportunities to participate economic activities of country. Women's education is essential for Social and Economic development of country. Spread of education affected the human resources and country's economic growth. Women education is one of the major effective ways to eradicate poverty and other economic issues of the country. Women education has direct impact on individuals, families and entire society. This paper highlights the women participation in education in Punjab. This study covers the time period from 2001- 2012. This study found that the percentage of female teachers in primary, middle and secondary school level are greater than the male teachers. The enrollment ratio of girls at the primary school level is continuously increasing and it is nearly as high as that of boys. The Punjab state has achieved gender equity in terms of enrollment of students at the primary level with age group 6- 11. This study also found that the overall female literacy rate in Punjab is much lower than the male literacy rate. The state as a whole has 80.40 percent literate males and on the other hand the female literacy rate is put at 70.70 percent, which shows large gap of nearly 10 percent in the distribution of male- female literacy in the state.

Keywords: Education, Eradicate poverty, Women participation, Enrollment ratio.

"If you educate a boy, you only educate an individual: if you educate a girl, you educate the whole family."

1. Introduction

Education is a most important component of human capital. As accumulation of capital in general is necessary for economic progress of country, expansion of investment in education contributes to accumulation of human capital and it turns to economic progress; and since education is capital in this sense, its equitable distribution maximize social welfare of country. Women's access to education has been recognized as a fundamental right, and increasing girls' education at primary, secondary and higher education level, is a main policy of the international development community and governments of most developing country. Gender equality in education is a critical element of the Millennium Development Goals. Education affects women's wellbeing and provides them a greater voice in household decisions and improved opportunities to participate in economic activities of country. Women's education is essential for Social and Economic development of country. Spread of education affected the human resources and country's economic growth. Women education is one of the major effective ways to eradicate poverty and other economic issues of the country. Women education has direct impact on individuals, families and entire society. Education of women has a major impact on the overall development of a society. Jawaharlal Nehru said, "If our nation is to rise, how can it do so if the half of the nation, of our womankind, lag behind and remain ignorant and uneducated?" Education had started spreading slowly and gradually among girls and women in the last quarter of the nineteenth century in different regions of India. Eight women had matriculated from Bombay University in 1883. In 1886, a prasi father got his daughter admitted to the medical college in 1878. By 1927, 450 women students were enrolled in different colleges affiliated to Bombay university while 550 and 140 women were enrolled in Madras university in the arts and the

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medical course respectively (Choksi, 1929.) that time Bombay and Madras were higher in terms enrolment of women in education institution, expenditure on education, the proportion of trained to untrained women teachers, the enrolment of girls in co-educational institution and into the number of government run educational institutions. This paper highlights the women participation in education in Punjab during 2005-06 to 2013-14. This paper is divided into two parts. The first part above is introduction and second part focuses on the participation of women in education at primary, middle, secondary and senior secondary level. For this purpose we used data of total enrolment, women enrolment, men enrolment at primary, middle, secondary and senior secondary level in Punjab for the period 2005 to 2013. To find the coefficient of inequality between men and women enrolment ratio, we adopt formula as follows:

$$CIE = (EM- EF)/ E$$

CIE refers to coefficient of inequality, EM refers to

enrolment ratio of men and EF denotes to enrolment ratio of women and E refers to total enrolment ratio. A positive coefficient denotes inequality against women, negative coefficient means, and inequality against men. High the coefficient shows higher the inequality, and lower value shows lower inequality.

2. Result of Study

According to census 2011, total literacy rate in all over India is 74.04%. The female literacy rate is 65.46% and male literacy rate is 82.14%. Kerala has the highest literacy rate 93.91%, it's followed by Mizoram 91.58%. Bihar has the lowest literacy rate in India with 63.82%. The male literacy rate is highest in Lakshadweep 96.11% and Kerala 96.02%. The male literacy rate is lowest in Bihar 73.39%. The female literacy rate is highest in Kerala 91.98% and Mizoram 89.40% and lowest in Rajasthan 52.66%.

2.1 Female Literacy in Punjab: Progress and Inequality

Table 1: Sex- wise literacy rate in Punjab from 1961 to 2011

Year	Total population	Literate			Literacy Rate			Gap Between Male-Female Literacy
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
1961	11135069	2084556	892588	2977144	NA	NA	NA	NA
1971	13551060	2934281	1627842	4562123	42.23	24.65	34.12	17.58
1981	16788915	4214878	2645471	6860349	51.23	34.35	43.37	16.88
1991	20281969	5919225	4012891	9932116	65.66	50.41	58.51	15.25
2001	24358999	8442493	6314677	14757170	75.63	63.55	69.95	12.08
2011	27743338	10436056	8271081	18707137	80.4	70.7	75.8	9.70

Source: Director, Census Operation, Punjab

The above figures show that literacy rate in Punjab has increased from 34.12 percent in 1971 to 75.80 percent in 2011. Male literacy rate increased from 42.23 percent in 1971 to 80.40 percent in 2011. On the other hand female literacy rate also increased from 24.65 percent to 70.70 percent in 2011. Female literacy has increased by 46.05 percent points from the period 1971 to 2011 and male literacy by only 38.17 percent points during same period. Overall literacy rate has increased by 41.68 percent points from the year 1971 to 2011. The gap between male and female literacy rates decreased from 17.58 percent in 1971 to 9.70 percent in 2011. During the last decade, the female literacy rate has witnessed much higher growth 7.15 percentage points as against 4.77 percent for males.

Table 2: Rural – Urban Literacy Rates from 1961 to 2011

Year	Rural			Urban		
	Male	Female	Total	male	Female	Total
1961	28.12	11.51	20.42	56.09	37.70	47.82
1971	34.69	19.88	27.81	58.60	45.40	52.49
1981	41.91	27.63	35.21	60.70	49.70	55.63
1991	60.71	43.85	52.77	77.30	66.10	72.08
2001	71.05	57.75	64.72	83.05	74.49	79.10
2011	76.60	65.70	71.40	86.70	79.20	83.20

Source: Director, Census Operation, Punjab

The rural literacy rate has increased from 20.42 percent in 1961 to 71.40 percent in 2011. Whereas, the urban literacy rate has increased from 47.82 percent in 1961 to 83.20 percent in 2011. The gap between urban- rural literacy rates has decreased from 27.4 percent points in 1961 to 11.8 percent points in 2011. As far as sex wise literacy rate is concerned in rural area, female literacy rate has increased

from 11.51 percent in 1961 to 65.70 percent in 2011, whereas male literacy rate has increased from 28.12 percent in 1961 to 76.60 percent in 2011. The gap between male and female literacy rates in rural area of Punjab has decreased from 16.61 percent in 1961 to 10.9 percent in 2011. In rural areas, Female literacy has increased by 54.19 percent points from the period 1961 to 2011 and male literacy by only 48.48 percent points during same period. The above figures also depicts that, the female literacy rate in urban areas in Punjab has increased to 37.70 percent during 1961 to 79.20 percent during the period 2011. The male literacy rate in urban area accelerated from 56.09 percent to 86.70 percent during 1961 to 2011. In rural areas, Female literacy has increased by 41.50 percent points from the period 1961 to 2011 and male literacy by only 30.61 percent points during same period. The gap between male and female literacy rates in urban area of Punjab has decelerated from 18.39 percent in 1971 to 7.50 percent in 2011.

The overall total enrolment at primary level has decreased from 1625254 in 2005 to 1323816 in 2012. The above table shows that the enrolment of women in 2005 was 769028 out of 1625254 total enrolments in primary school. The number of women enrolment in primary school level is decreased to 769028 in 2005 to 627242 in 2012 with the rate of (-) 4.42 percent per annum. Both enrolment of men and women are decreased in this period. The trend of reduction in enrollment has also been noted in male enrolment. The number of male enrolled at primary level were 856226 in 2005 which are reduced to 696574 in 2012 with the rate of (-) 4.40 percent per annum. The proportion of women to total enrolment was 47.32 percent in 2005, which is slightly increased to 47.38 percent in 2012. On the other hand proportion of men to total enrolment was 52.68 percent in 2005, which is slightly

decreased to 52.62 percent in 2012. The above figures lower than men. indicates that proportion of women to total enrolment is still

Table 3: Gender wise enrolment at primary level

Year	Enrolment of men	Enrolment of women	Total enrolment	Women Proportion to total Enrolment	Men Proportion to total Enrolment
2005	856226	769028	1625254	47.32	52.68
2006	880051	779523	1659574	46.97	53.03
2007	818097	719811	1537908	46.80	53.20
2008	804594	717274	1521868	47.13	52.87
2009	669790	599336	1269126	47.22	52.78
2010	661536	595277	1256813	47.36	52.64
2011	733670	647649	1381319	46.89	53.11
2012	696574	627242	1323816	47.38	52.62

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab.

Table 4: Gender wise enrolment at Middle level

Year	Enrolment of men	Enrolment of women	Total enrolment	Women Proportion to total Enrolment	Men Proportion to total Enrolment
2005	134676	118722	253398	46.85	53.15
2006	140229	124435	264664	47.02	52.98
2007	136686	119810	256496	46.71	53.29
2008	140571	122180	262751	46.50	53.50
2009	192454	156609	349063	44.87	55.13
2010	191488	154459	345947	44.65	55.35
2011	300245	239856	540101	44.41	55.59
2012	321183	253486	574669	44.10	55.89

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab.

The enrolment of women at middle level in 2005 was 118722 out of 253398 total enrolments at middle school level. The number of women enrolment has increased from 118722 in 2005 to 239856 in 2011-12. Proportion of women to total enrolment has decreased to 46.85 percent to 44.41 percent

during the period 2005 and 2011. Between 2005 to 2011, women enrolment at primary level increased at a rate of 10percent per annum, 12 percent per annum male enrolment and total enrolment both men and women increased at a rate of 11 percent per annum.

Table 5: Gender wise enrolment at Secondary level

Year	Enrolment of men	Enrolment of women	Total enrolment	Women Proportion to total Enrolment	Men Proportion to total Enrolment
2005	424429	366396	790825	46.33	53.67
2006	434392	363113	797505	45.53	54.47
2007	420422	347644	768066	45.26	54.74
2008	431031	364279	795310	45.80	54.20
2009	437966	345585	783551	44.10	55.90
2010	488292	383319	871611	43.98	56.02
2011	691573	535988	1227561	43.66	56.34
2012	707689	546916	1254605	43.59	56.40

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab.

From the above table, it could be seen that there were 366396 Women enrolled out of 790825 students at secondary level in 2005 which works out to be 46.33 percent. Women enrollment increased from 366396 in 2005 to 535988 in 2011-12, which work out to 43.66 percent of the total

enrolment. Secondary level enrolment increased at a rate of 5.4 percent per annum in Punjab. The total women enrolment increased in this period at a rate of 4.4 percent per annum, whereas, men enrolment increased at a rate of 6.2 percent per annum during the period 2005 to 2011.

Table 6: Gender wise enrolment at Senior - Secondary level

Year	Enrolment of men	Enrolment of women	Total enrolment	Women Proportion to total Enrolment	Men Proportion to total Enrolment
2005	645948	519561	1165509	44.58	55.42
2006	651977	526009	1177986	44.65	55.35
2007	650311	514334	1164645	44.16	55.84
2008	658690	536549	1195239	44.89	55.11
2009	783170	632793	1415963	44.69	55.31
2010	955621	1179101	2134722	55.23	44.77
2011	1215211	945963	2161174	43.77	56.23
2012	1349569	1049556	2399125	43.74	56.25

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab.

The overall total enrolment at senior secondary level has increased from 1165509 in 2005 to 2161174 in 2011. The above table shows that the enrolment of women in 2005 was 519561 out of 1165509 total enrolments in senior- secondary level. The number of women enrolment has increased from 519561 in 2005 to 1179101 in 2010. During 2011, women enrolment at senior secondary level has decreased to 945963.

While, the men enrolment has increased continuously from 645948 in 2005 to 1215211 in 2011. During 2005 to 2011, women enrolment at senior secondary level has increased at a rate of 12.9 percent per annum, while male enrolment has increased at a rate of 10.1 percent per annum and total enrolment both men and women increased at a rate of 11.5 percent per annum.

Table 7: Girls Enrolment Ratio in Punjab

Years	Class I-V – primary level (6-11 years)			
	Boys	Girls	Total	Coefficient of Inequality
2001-02	76.49	77.38	76.91	0.012
2004-05	74.49	80.52	77.20	0.078
2006-07	78.07	85.36	81.33	0.090
2007-08	93.51	91.96	92.78	0.017
2009-10	108.56	107.50	108.09	0.010
2010-11	109.1	108.03	108.8	0.010

Source: Statistics of School Education, Ministry of HRD, GOI

Years	Class VI- VIII – middle level (11 -14 years)			
	Boys	Girls	Total	Coefficient of Inequality
2001-02	65.15	64.57	64.88	0.009
2004-05	63.78	67.40	65.42	0.055
2006-07	68.12	70.15	69.03	0.029
2007-08	70.35	67.62	69.09	0.040
2009-10	93.59	89.73	91.84	0.042
2010-11	95.80	91.7	94.00	0.044

Source: Statistics of School Education, Ministry of HRD, GOI

Years	Class I-VIII (6-14 years)			
	Boys	Girls	Total	Coefficient of Inequality
2001-02	72.41	72.72	72.55	0.004
2004-05	70.30	75.34	72.57	0.069
2006-07	74.13	79.29	76.45	0.067
2007-08	84.45	82.53	83.55	0.023
2009-10	102.84	100.60	101.83	0.022
2010-11	104.1	101.90	103.10	0.021
2011-12	102.19	101.56	101.91	0.0061
2012-13	105.89	105.15	105.56	0.0070
2013-14	100.35	103.39	101.69	0.0298

Source: Statistics of School Education, Ministry of HRD, GOI

The enrollment ratio for boys at primary level increased from 76.49 percent during 2001-02 to more than 100 percent by 2010-11, as compared to 77.38 percent for girls in 2001-02 and 108 percent in 2010-11. Similarly at middle level the enrolment ratio of girls increased from 64.57 percent in 2001-02 to 91.7 percent in 2010-11, while the enrolment for boys increased from 65.15 percent to 95.80 percent during the same period. However, it is clear that at both primary and middle level, there is no big difference between girls and boys enrolment ratio in Punjab. Further, the coefficient of inequality both at primary and middle levels indicates that inequalities are very less in Punjab. The above table also shows that the enrollment ratio of girls at the primary level as well as middle level is continuously increased and it is nearly as high as that of boys. Therefore we can say that Punjab state has achieved gender equity in terms of enrollment of students at the primary level with age group 6- 11.

We can briefly summarize the conclusion that emerges from above analysis and the implication that follow, as under:

- Literacy rate in Punjab is very much higher in urban area than the rural area.
- Female literacy has increased at higher percentage points than the male literacy rate both in rural and urban areas.

- The Gap between urban- rural literacy rates has decelerated during 1961 to 2011.
- The gap between male – female literacy rates has declined in both urban and rural areas. But the gap rate is still higher in rural areas of Punjab. It is a sound indication of more and more females becoming literate and thus reducing male- female gap in literacy rate.
- Overall female literacy rate in Punjab is much lower than the male literacy rate.
- Girls’ enrolment ratio at elementary level continually increased during 2005-06 to 2013-14.
- Total enrolment (men and women) at primary level has decreased during 2005 to 2012.
- Women enrolment rate is higher than men enrolment at senior- secondary level.
- The coefficient of inequality shows that there is no large difference at elementary education level in Punjab.

Planners must plan programmes of action to improve education conditions in Punjab in General and Primary education level in Particular. Women should be encouraged particularly at primary level, so that women enrolment increases. For this purpose girl students should get special incentives at primary level to improve educational status. In order to improve their literacy level more educational

facilities should be made available to women of Punjab as well as India.

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