

REGIONAL AND GENDER DISPARITIES IN EDUCATION IN PUNJAB

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Abstract

Education is a key factor in socio-economic development. People are both ends and means of economic development. Economic development aims at improving quality of human life. In order to develop human resources in a better way it is important that education is imparted to all sections of population in the country so that all people can have opportunity of participating in education, irrespective of one's caste, class, sex, religion or region. However, despite these provisions, it has been noticed that the spread of education is not uniform and there are disparities of all kinds in this field. These include gender disparities (i.e. male female disparities), regional disparities (inter district disparities), social disparities (disparities between SC, ST and other sections) and spatial disparities (rural urban disparities). The development of Punjab has been uneven. Addressing relative deprivations amongst regions and people in education is a serious concern of human development. The challenge for Punjab is to derive its growth targets from those achieved by the developed nations and in some cases, from India's other states. The objective of the present study is to analyse the regional and gender disparities. Finally, study suggested that for removal of gender disparity, there is need to increase number of girls' schools, girls' colleges and female teachers. There is also need of structural changes such as removal of cultural barriers against women's access to education, employment and equal involvement in family decision making. Study also suggest that each district should take steps to improve education status of their districts.

Keywords: Gender inequality, Education, Regional Imbalance

Introduction

It is the education which is the right weapon to cut the social slavery and it is the education which will enlighten the downtrodden masses to come up and gain social status, economic betterment and political freedom (Dr. B.R. Ambedkar). The year for the "Empowerment of women" has just taken its last breath. For providing empowerment, the womenfolk should be properly developed. Education is a pre-requisite for the development of a society. The importance of education in the human resource development has been recognized by all sections of the society and in all types of economies. As essential feature of human resource development is to have equity in terms of accessibility to the facilities of education irrespective of sex, caste, region etc. In fact, equity in education is not purely an educational issue as it cuts across the entire social and political fabric of a nation (Varshney). The growth in educational facilities has not been sufficient to reduce the disparity in male-female literacy. It is often argued that, despite planned and concentrated efforts, both gender and regional disparities in literacy have a remarkable temporal stability. However, these disparities should be seen as part of wider regional imbalances that existed as a result of Indian socio-culture and historical past.

After the partition of the country in 1947, the Punjab Education Department functioned from a camp office set up in Shimla's Metropole Hotel. At that time, the Education Secretary was also Director of Public Instruction on Feb 15, 1959, the office was shifted to Chandigarh, the new capital of Punjab. In 1966, when the southern districts of Punjab were constituted as the new state of Haryana, the department was recognized with some staff going to new state. At present, four Directorates function under the Punjab Education Department, namely the Directorate of Public Instruction (Colleges), Directorate of Secondary Education, Directorate of Primary Education and Directorate of State Council of Educational Research and Training.

Review of Literature

There have been a large number of studies to analyses the regional and gender disparities in education. The learned researcher burnt the midnight oil and tried to reveal some of the hither to unrevealed aspects of disparities in education and it is but natural that their findings have passed the way for further studies and research. No research whatsoever can be conducted in isolation to his predecessors in the field. Consequently, a number of research papers have been studied and the some have been reviewed briefly as follow:

Varshney (2002) examined the inverse relationship between disparity and literacy rates. Compared to male literacy, there has been significant improvement in female literacy. This has helped in reducing the gender disparity. Gender disparity is inversely related to the literacy level. Hence any program aimed at removing disparity should focus its attention on literacy development missions.

Thind, and Jaswal (2004) in their study "Gender bias in Education among the Rural Sikhs of Punjab" found that learning to perform household chores were considered important for girls rather than going to school. The most frequent reasons cited by adolescent girls for dropping out of school in childhood were personal, socio-cultural, economic and situational. The people belonging to southern Malwa were more interested in display of social ceremonies, irrespective of the occasion. They attach greater importance to dowry in terms of giving expensive cars, heavy jewelry, rich clothes, lavish entertainment program and free flowing drinks at the time of marriage of their daughters. They seemed to be firm believers of traditional norms and practices. Their aim of life is to accumulate agricultural land and merry making, be it a birth of a son or winning panchayat elections, but they were least interested in educating girl child. The remaining other areas such as northern Malwa, Majha and Doaba depicted similar trends as far as education of the girl child is concerned.

Chahal (2005) analyses in the study that number of middle and secondary schools are not adequate. The condition of facilities and infrastructure available in the primary schools is pitiable. Apart from physical inputs, the most glaring weaknesses are lack of motivation, outdated teaching methodology and unskilled teachers. The main stress has only been on formulation of schemes only. Total lack of accountability towards pupils and their performance is further hindering educational development. The teacher pupil ratio is high in primary schools. There are significant inter district disparities are found, especially regarding teacher pupil ration in primary schools. A frequent transfer of teachers is another area of concern. Further field visits in the blocks of Punjab have shown that there is persistent problem of absenteeism.

Sarkaria, Mehar and Dhillon (2006) examined in their study that gender disparity in commerce education. In terms of enrolment, males dominate females in urban, semi urban and

rural area schools. Comparatively, gender bias is more pronounced in rural area schools. In case of commerce education at senior secondary level disparity may be attributed to general perception of the people at large about business education. People think that a job based on commerce education involves field work or outdoor activities. If we go by the socio-cultural back ground of the region parents would rather like their daughters to work in offices or schools preferably among female companion. Further, conservative parents give education to their daughter up to secondary or senior secondary level merely to increase their marriage marketability.

Dhillon & Sarkaria (2007) examined in their study, the Gender Disparity in Education on Senior Secondary level in Punjab across different streams of studies, comparatively gender bias is more pronounced in rural area schools. In terms of enrolment in percentage, males outnumber females in humanities stream and the situation is other way round in case of commerce stream. Overall, most of the male and female students choose humanities group, which is supposed to be the easiest stream of studies but at the sometime has the least vocational value. Gender bias is more pronounced in this stream also where male's enrolment is more than that of females. The authors suggested that in the light of unemployment scenario in the country, students should be motivated to opt for science and commerce stream of studies as they provide more employment opportunities in the present era of liberalization, privatization and globalization. The parents should be made aware of the significance of these two streams.

Objectives of Study

The main aim of the study is to analyse the regional and gender disparities in education in Punjab.

Methodology

Study is based on secondary data collected primarily from Economic Survey of Punjab, Statistical Abstract of Punjab and Annual Plan of Government of Punjab. The data have been analyzed by percentage value and growth rate further analyzed with the help of bar diagram and pie diagram.

Analyses of Data

Overall position of literacy in Punjab is improving gradually. The table 1 shows that total literacy percentage on the basis of 1981 census was 40.86 percent, it rose to 58.51 percent in 1991, further rises 69.95 percent in 2001 and 75.84 percent in 2011. Despite there are different types of disparities, actual progress in literacy can be seen after 1991. That is why according to census of India 2001 (Punjab) the achievements of the decade 1991-2001 termed as the "Literary Decade" this can be clearly seen from fig. 1 and table 1. The truth is that the news is not good, and the increase is not enough. In fact, the rate of growth of literacy has slowed down from the last decade to this decade, and this has serious implications on how we need to go forward. Table 1 reveals that male literacy increases to 80.44 percentage in 2011 from 75.6 percentage in 2001 i.e. 4.81 percent increase in literacy while this increase is 10 percent in 2001 from 1991. On the other hand, female literacy which is 50.41 percent in 1991 it increases to 63.65 percent in 2001 i.e. 13.24 percent with comparison to increase in 2011 i.e. 7.34 percent from 2001 census to 2011 census, this clearly depicts that there is fall in rate of increase in female literacy during decade 2001- 2011. Whether overall literacy improve still there is gender disparity due to continuing strong prejudices against female literacy. Girls are

engaged in domestic work more than the boys and thus they are either not sent to schools or if sent, they get little time for study at home.

Table-1 Demographic Profile of Punjab

Sr. No	Item	Unit	1981 Census	1991 Census	2001 Census	2011 Census
1.	Population	Lac Person				
	(a) Total		167.89	202.82	243.59	277.43
	(b) Male	Lac Person	89.37	107.78	129.85	146.39
	(C) Female	Lac Person	78.52	95.04	113.74	131.04
2.	Decennial Growth of Population	%		20.89	20.10	13.89
	1. Total	%	23.89	20.36	20.40	12.74
	2. Male	%		21.04	19.67	15.21
	3. Female	%				
3.	Literacy Percentage	Lac Person %	68.60	99.32	148.54	187.07
	(a) Total	%	40.86	58.51	69.95	75.80
	(b) Male	Lac Person %	42.15	59.19	85.15	104.36
		%	47.16	65.66	75.63	80.40
	(c) Female	Lac Person %	26.45	40.13	63.39	827.11
		%	33.69	50.41	63.65	70.70
4	Decennial Growth of Literacy	%				
	(a) Total	%		17.65	11.44	5.85
	(b) Male	%		18.50	10.00	4.77
	(c) Female	%		16.72	13.00	7.05

Source: Annual plan 2008-09 Government of Punjab and Economic Survey of Punjab (2018-19)

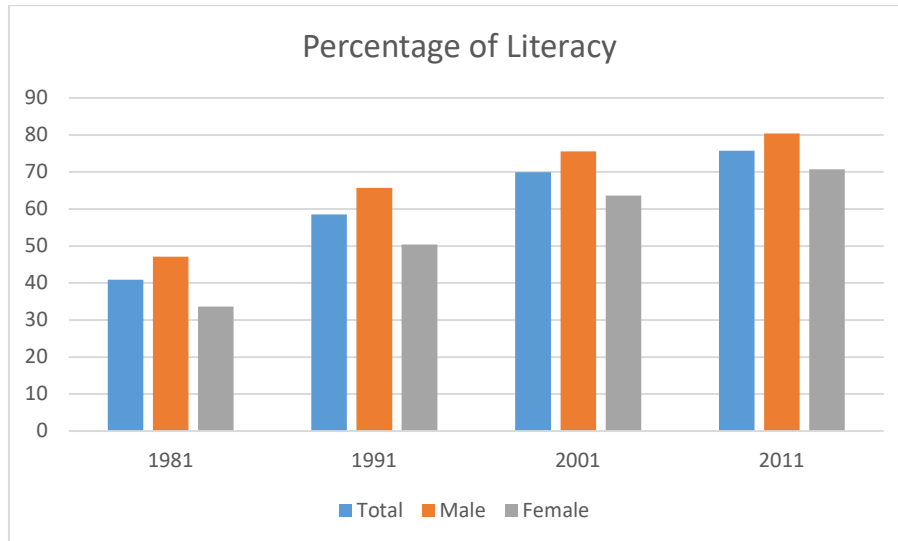


Fig. 1 Progress of Literacy in Punjab

THE GREATEST CONCERN IN PUNJAB IS THAT, STILL FEW SECTIONS DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO EDUCATION. INTER- DISTRICT COMPARISON SHOWS AN INTERESTING PICTURE, TABLE 2 AND FIG.2 REVEALS THAT REGIONAL DISPARITY IN EDUCATION SHOWS DOABA REGION OUTSHINE MAJHA AND MALWA. HOSHIARPUR AND PATHANKOT DISTRICTS HAVE THE HIGHEST LITERACY WHILE MANSA HAS THE LOWEST. TABLE.2 ALSO SHOWS THAT THE PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN LITERACY IN 2011 IS COMPARATIVELY LESS THAN PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN LITERACY IN 2001. MANSA SHOWS HIGHEST POSITIVE IMPROVEMENT OF LITERACY IN THE BOTH DECADES I.E. IN 1991-2001 AND 2001-2011 ON THE OTHER HAND, IN BOTH DECADES I.E. IN 1991-2001 AND 2001-2011, LOWEST IMPROVEMENT CAN BE SEEN IN CASE OF HOSHIARPUR.

THE REGIONAL DIFFERENCES DUE TO EXISTENCE OF LARGER LAND HOLDINGS IN THE MALWA REGION, WITH AGRICULTURE BEING THE PRIMARY OCCUPATION REQUIRING LITTLE EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION. WHILE THE DOABA REGION, EDUCATION ASSUMES GREATER IMPORTANCE BECAUSE THERE IS HIGH INCIDENCE OF OUT MIGRATION. THERE ARE INSTANCES OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION BEING ADVOCATED FOR MATRIMONIAL PURPOSE (PHDR-2004).

Table-2 Comparative Growth Rate of Literacy Region Wise

	DISTRICT	LITERACY RATE 1991	LITERACY RATE 2001	% INCREASE IN LITERACY (1991-2001)	LITERACY RATE 2011	% INCREASE IN LITERACY (2001-2011)	REGION WISE % OF LITERACY In 2011
MAJH A REGI ON	GURDASPU R	61.84	73.8	11.96	78.0	4.2	76.68
	PATHANK OT				84.6	-	
	AMRITSAR	58.08	70.4	12.32	76.3	5.9	
	TARAN TARN	-	59.9		67.8	7.9	
DOAB A REGI ON	KAPURTH ALA	63.31	73.9	10.59	79.1	5.2	81.5
	JALANDHA R	68.93	78.0	9.07	82.5	4.5	
	SHAHEED BHAGAT SINGH NAGAR	64.42	76.4	11.98	79.8	3.4	
	HOSHIARP UR	72.08	81.0	8.98	84.6	3.6	
MAL WA REGI ON	RUPNAGAR	68.15	76.1	7.95	82.2	6.1	72.34
	S.A.S. NAGAR	-	78.4	-	83.8	5.4	
	LUDHIANA	67.34	76.5	9.16	82.2	5.7	
	FIROZPUR	48.03	60.7	12.67	68.9	8.2	
	FARIDKOT	49.97	62.0	12.03	69.6	7.4	
	MUKATSA R	46.18	58.2	12.02	65.8	7.6	
	MOGA	52.24	63.5	11.26	70.7	7.2	
	BATHINDA	46.48	61.2	14.72	68.3	7.1	
	MANSA	37.21	52.4	15.19	61.8	9.4	
	SANGRUR	45.99	59.9	13.91	68.0	8.1	
	BARNALA	-	60.3	-	67.8	7.5	
	PATIALA	57.27	69.3	12.03	75.3	6.0	
	FATEHGAR H SAHIB	63.25	73.6	10.35	79.4	5.8	
FAZILKA	-	-	-	68.9	-		

	DISTRICT	LITERACY RATE 1991	LITERACY RATE 2001	% INCREASE IN LITERACY (1991-2001)	LITERACY RATE 2011	% INCREASE IN LITERACY (2001-2011)	REGION WISE % OF LITERACY In 2011
PUNJAB		58.51	69.7	11.2	75.8	6.1	

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab and Economic Survey of Punjab (various issues)

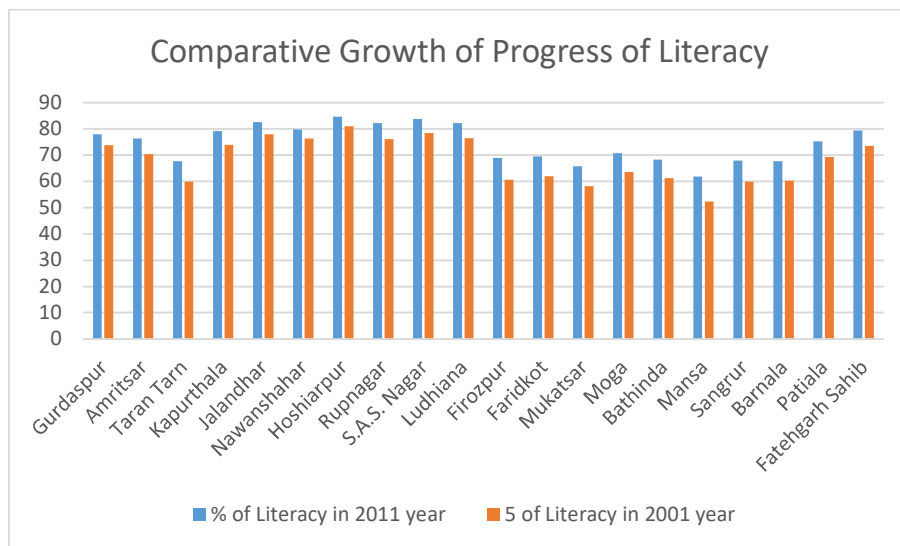


Fig. 2 Comparative growth rate of Literacy (1991-2001)

Table 3 and fig 3 depicts that in all the districts male literacy is higher than female literacy. Doaba region has highest female literacy i.e.(76.8 percent) followed by Majha region (71.5 percent) and Malwa region (66.8 percent). Highest female literacy can be seen in Fatehgarh Sahib (80.3 percent) followed by Hoshiarpur (79.3 percent), Gurdaspur(79.2 percent) and Ludhiana (78.5 percent) while least female literacy in Bathinda(55.7 percent) followed by Faridkot(59.2 percent), Mansa(60.7 percent) and Moga (61.9 percent). Table also shows that the districts which have higher female literacy are not showing same results in case of male literacy except Hoshiarpur. Pathankot has highest male literacy while Mansa has least literacy.

Table 3: Gender wise Literacy Rate of 2011

	DISTRICT	LITERACY RATE 2011		REGION WISE % OF MALE LITERACY In 2011	REGION WISE % OF FEMALE LITERACY In 2011
		MALE	FEMALE		
MAJHA REGION	GURDASPUR	82.6	73.0	81.5	71.5
	PATHANKOT	89.2	79.3		
	AMRITSAR	80.2	71.9		
	TARAN TARN	73.2	61.9		
DOABA REGION	KAPURTHALA	83.2	74.6	85.8	76.8
	JALANDHAR	86.1	78.5		
	SHAHID BHAGAT SINGH NAGAR	85.4	73.9		
	HOSHIARPUR	88.8	80.3		
MALWA REGION	RUPNAGAR	87.5	76.4	77.3	66.8
	S.A.S. NAGAR	87.9	79.2		
	LUDHIANA	86.0	77.9		
	FAZILKA	76.3	60.7		
	FIROZPUR	74.5	62.7		
	FARIDKOT	74.6	63.9		
	SRI MUKATSAR SAHIB	71.8	59.2		
	MOGA	74.4	66.5		
	BATHINDA	73.8	61.9		
	MANSA	67.3	55.7		
	SANGRUR	73.2	62.2		
	BARNALA	71.6	63.6		
	PATIALA	80.2	69.8		
FATEHGARH SAHIB	83.3	74.8			
PUNJAB		80.44	70.73		

Source: Economic Survey of Punjab 2015-16

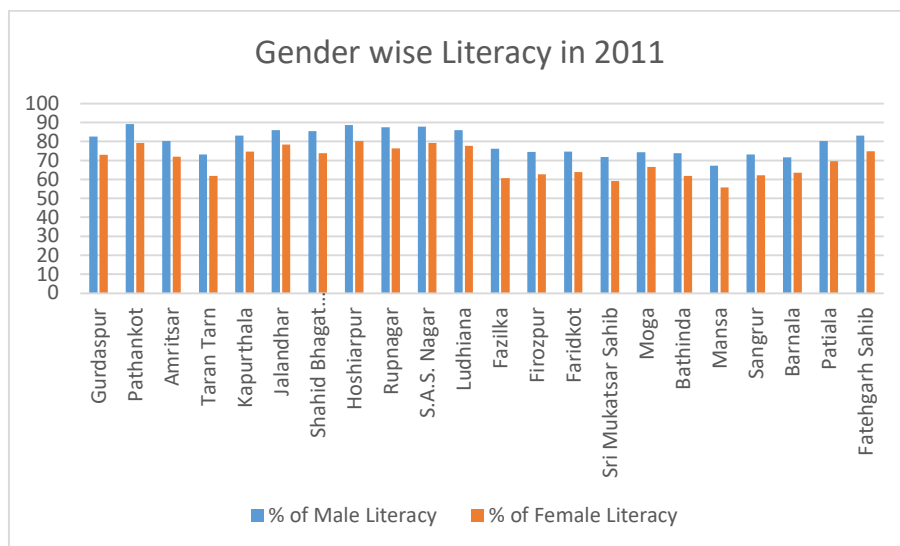


Figure 3: Gender wise Literacy Rate

Table 4, fig. 4 and fig 5 reveals that there is disparity of education at different educational levels. Rate of literacy at primary level is greater than all other levels. There is 1093347 persons are enrolled in primary level and it decreases to 579087 persons in elementary level further it shows fall in secondary level to 397082 which further falls to 316227 in higher secondary level and it comes to 86525 at higher education level. Drastic fall shows in enrolment of students in secondary level from primary level in Ludhiana district. Districts with higher literacy rate shows greater enrolment of students in each level.

Table 4 District Wise Enrolment of Students in Educational Institutions at all Levels

Up to 30 September

District	Primary	Elementary	Secondary	Senior Secondary	Higher Education
Gurdaspur	56320	33242	23508	21674	2243
Pathankot	17797	11376	9205	9162	1305
Amritsar	91494	47352	29708	22990	8067
Taran Tarn	55094	27532	17861	10711	946
Kapurthala	30463	15007	10369	8201	3607
Jalandhar	70669	36535	26186	21781	8410
Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar	22873	12147	8593	7048	2505
Hoshiarpur	60927	31663	23180	20347	6523
Rupnagar	27603	14155	10432	9140	2349
S.A.S.Nagar	44178	19411	12386	9974	2615
Ludhiana	111193	57964	37921	30888	9905
Firozpur	52352	23411	13267	8406	1209

Fazilka	60690	32993	20656	16248	1885
Faridkot	28848	15237	9915	7256	2400
Mukatsar	44467	24797	15065	11700	2055
Moga	45207	22902	17679	11927	2261
Bathinda	58687	31743	22110	15927	2277
Mansa	36191	21091	15233	11647	1425
Sangrur	57554	34320	25332	20707	5978
Barnala	23453	12545	10746	7053	1977
Patiala	73885	41749	29071	25706	14793
Fatehgarh Sahib	23402	11915	8659	7734	1790
Punjab	1093347	579087	397082	316227	86525

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab -2019

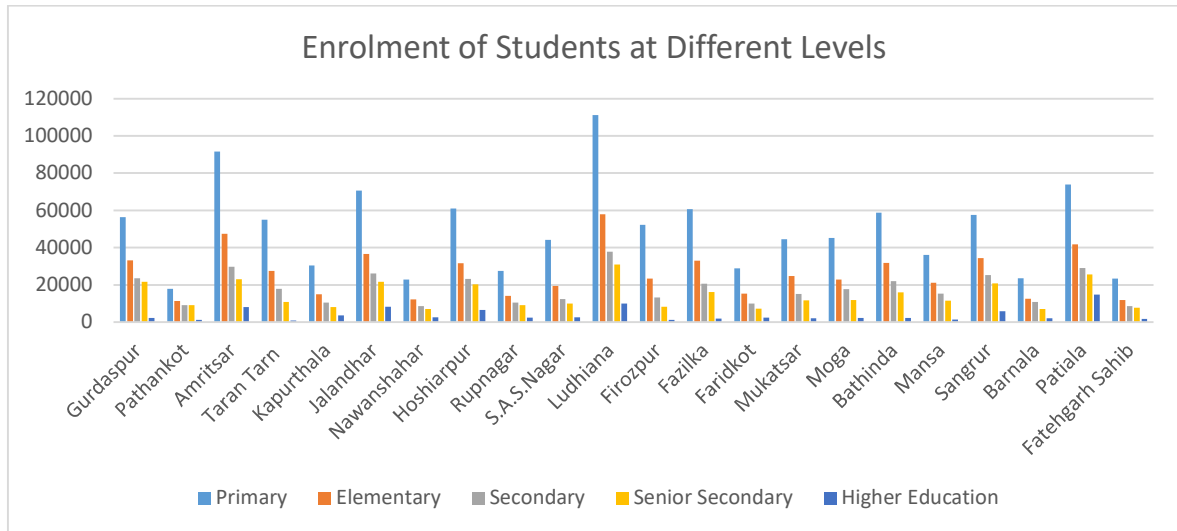


Figure4: Region wise Enrolment of Students at Different Level

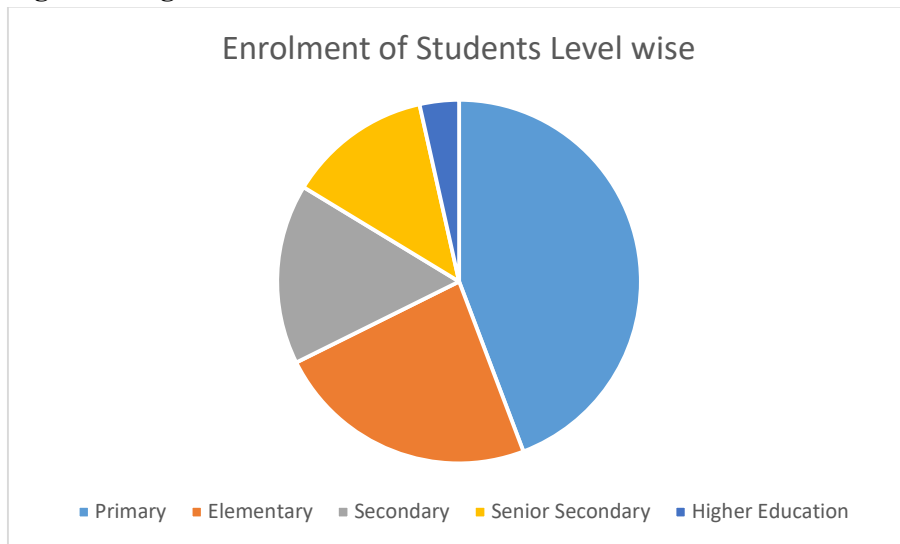


Figure 5: Enrolment of Students in Different Level

Table 5 shows the regional differences on the basis of uneven distribution of educational institutions at all levels in Punjab on the basis of population. There is positive correlation of number of schools and literacy rate. Hoshiarpur district has large number of schools i.e. 147 and highest literacy 84.6. Rupnagar, Fatehgarh Sahib, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar, Gurdaspur and Kapurthala have large number of schools i.e. 151,143,139,138 and136 respectively on behalf of one lac population thus better position of literacy i.e. 82.2,79.4,79.8,78 and 79.1 respectively. Mansa, Mukatsar, Moga, Barnala and Bathinda have a smaller number of schools i.e. 94, 92, 92, 83 and 82 respectively on behalf of one lac population thus rate of literacy i.e. 61.8, 65.8, 70.7, 67.8 and 68.3 is less than other regions. District Ludhiana has a smaller number of schools i.e. 88 on behalf of one lac population and literacy rate i.e. 82.2 the reason is population increases due to migratory population. Pathankot and SAS Nagar are not showing positive correlation between number of schools and literacy rate.

Table 5: District Wise Population and Number of Educational Institutions at all Levels

District	Population	No. of School	Schools per lac population	Literacy Rate
Gurdaspur	1621725	2230	138	78.0
Pathankot	676598	828	122	84.6
Amritsar	2490565	2303	92	76.3
Taran Tarn	1119627	1190	106	67.8
Kapurthala	815168	1105	136	79.1
Jalandhar	2193590	2303	105	82.5
Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar	612310	851	139	79.8
Hoshiarpur	1586625	2337	147	84.6
Rupnagar	684627	1036	151	82.2
S.A.S.Nagar	994628	1123	113	83.8
Ludhiana	3498739	3091	88	82.2
Firozpur	1002874	1146	114	68.9
Fazilka	1026200	1098	107	68.9
Faridkot	617508	583	94	69.6
Mukatsar	901896	826	92	65.8
Moga	995746	917	92	70.7
Bathinda	1388525	1143	82	68.3
Mansa	769751	724	94	61.8
Sangrur	1655169	1633	99	68.0
Barnala	595527	497	83	67.8
Patiala	1895686	1884	99	75.3
Fatehgarh Sahib	600163	856	143	79.4

Punjab	2774338	29704	1071	75.8
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Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2019

Table 6 shows the regional differences on the basis of uneven distribution of teachers in educational institutions at all levels in Punjab on the basis of population. There is positive correlation of number of teachers and literacy rate. SAS Nagar district has large number of teachers i.e. 1459 and upper side of literacy rate i.e. 83.8. Patiala, Fatehgarh Sahib, Pathankot, Gurdaspur and Kapurthala have large number of teachers i.e. 1266,1245,1193,1145 and 1183 respectively on behalf of one lac population thus better position of literacy i.e. 75.3,79.4,84.6,78 and 79.1 respectively. Mansa, Ferozpur, Faridkot and Taran Taran have a smaller number of teachers i.e. 939,938,596 and 601 respectively on behalf of one lac population thus rate of literacy i.e. 61.8, 68.9, 69.6 and 67.8 is less than other regions. District Ludhiana has a smaller number of teachers i.e. 654 on behalf of one lac population and literacy rate i.e. 82.2 the reason is population increases due to migratory population. Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur are not showing positive correlation between number of teachers and literacy rate.

Table 6 District Wise Population and Number of Teachers

Up to 30 September

District	Population	No. of Teachers	Teachers per lac population	Literacy Rate
Gurdaspur	1621725	18571	1145	78.0
Pathankot	676598	8069	1193	84.6
Amritsar	2490565	27846	1118	76.3
Taran Tarn	1119627	6731	601	67.8
Kapurthala	815168	9645	1183	79.1
Jalandhar	2193590	24007	1094	82.5
Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar	612310	6366	1040	79.8
Hoshiarpur	1586625	17353	1094	84.6
Rupnagar	684627	7139	1043	82.2
S.A.S.Nagar	994628	14513	1459	83.8
Ludhiana	3498739	22865	654	82.2
Ferozpur	1002874	9411	938	68.9
Fazilka	1026200	9810	956	68.9
Faridkot	617508	3680	596	69.6
Mukatsar	901896	8910	988	65.8
Moga	995746	10117	1016	70.7
Bathinda	1388525	14477	1043	68.3
Mansa	769751	7227	939	61.8
Sangrur	1655169	17565	1061	68.0
Barnala	595527	5996	1007	67.8
Patiala	1895686	23999	1266	75.3

Fatehgarh Sahib	600163	7474	1245	79.4
Punjab	2774338	281771	10156	75.8

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2019

Dropout among girls is due to many factors like a smaller number of girls' school, lack of qualified female teachers, lack of transport facilities, lack of hostel facilities, fear of sexual harassment and fixed schooling hours. The districts where number of high schools for girls is large, have greater number of enrolment of girls. Besides these girls are more likely to attend schools if they have female teachers. They are more comfortable and more vocal with lady teachers, thus nearly all committees and commissions recommended that there should be more recruitment of women teachers. Parents often complain about insecurity of girls attending schools as we read in newspapers. Thus, number of enrolment of girls also show positive correlation with female teachers. That is why there is regional variation for female education. Table 7 shows relationship between girls' enrolment and number of girls' educational institutions as well as with female teachers. Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar leads in having more girls' educational institutions than other districts, thus enrolment of girls is also on higher side in these districts. The number of girls' educational institutions in these districts is 90 in Ludhiana followed by 82 and 61 in Jalandhar and Amritsar respectively. Enrolment of girls is maximum in Ludhiana i.e. 123259, it is 98534 and 82747 in Amritsar and Jalandhar respectively. On the other side, districts with a smaller number of girls' educational institutions having a smaller number of enrolment of girls. District with a smaller number of schools are Fatehgarh Sahib, Pathankot and Barnala with 12,11 and 15 respectively showing a smaller number of girls' enrolment i.e. 26858,23691 and 26996 respectively. It shows a positive relationship between girls' enrolment and girls' schools. Similar relation of enrolment of girls with number of female teachers can be seen. Ludhiana, Amritsar, Patiala, Jalandhar and Gurdaspur having female teachers 32263,21419,16923,18938 and 13407 respectively, are having female students 123259, 98534,91035,82747 and 66929 respectively Districts with a smaller number of female teachers are Barnala, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar, Faridkot, Mansa, Fazilka i.e. 4296,4369,4493,4684 and 4962 respectively having a smaller number of enrolment of girls in these districts i.e. 26996,26368,31369,41923 and 63660 respectively.

Table 7: Enrolment of girls in relation to girl's Educational Institutions and Female Teachers

Up to 30 September

District	Enrolment of girls	No. of Girls' Educational Institutions	No. of Female Teachers	Female Literacy Rate
Gurdaspur	66929	42	13407	73.0
Pathankot	23691	11	5401	79.3
Amritsar	98534	61	21419	71.9
Taran Tarn	55080	43	7779	61.9

Kapurthala	33358	29	7309	74.6
Jalandhar	82747	82	18938	78.5
Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar	26368	24	4369	73.9
Hoshiarpur	42977	34	12417	80.3
Rupnagar	31805	12	5017	76.4
S.A.S.Nagar	42822	17	10641	79.2
Ludhiana	123259	90	32263	77.9
Ferozpur	48320	23	6381	60.7
Fazilka	63660	13	4962	62.7
Faridkot	31369	17	4493	63.9
Mukatsar	48857	22	5956	59.2
Moga	49455	43	6172	66.5
Bathinda	65125	45	10592	61.9
Mansa	41923	24	4684	55.7
Sangrur	69850	34	11940	62.2
Barnala	26996	15	4296	63.6
Patiala	91035	25	16923	69.8
Fatehgarh Sahib	26858	12	5245	74.8
Punjab	1191018	718	220604	70.73

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2019

Conclusion

Equality of women is necessary not merely on the grounds of social justice as a basic condition for social, economic and political development of the nation. In order to liberate women from male domination, unequal status and for improvement in their employment opportunities, education must be given the highest priority. Punjab has made significant progress in improving the literacy levels in the State. Literacy rate is the primary indicator of the education level of an economy. Literacy rates for males is at par with the national trends as per Census 2011, with a rate of 80.5 percent in Punjab and 80.9 percent at national level. In contrast, females in Punjab perform much better than females at the national level. The literacy rate for females in Punjab is 70.7 percent, significantly higher than the literacy rate of 64.7 percent for females at national level. Still there exists a gender gap between literacy rates of men and women. Enrolment of students increase with the enactment of Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009) to provide universal access to education to all children between the age group of 6 to 14 years. The state intervention is important to provide sound education so it is not only important to initiate schemes but also to ensure its regular monitoring. Each district should take steps to improve education status of their districts. For removal of gender disparity, there is need to increase number of girls' schools, girls' colleges and female teachers. There is also need of structural changes such as removal of cultural barriers against women's access to education, employment and equal involvement in family decision making.

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