

Urban-Rural Differential in Literacy Rate: A Case Study of Punjab

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Abstract – *Literacy attainment is essential for the development of any person, society, and nation. It empowers the persons to know their environments and also transforms the mirror of society. The level of educational attainment is one of the vital indicators for the measurement of the development of society. In the 21st century, society who is well educated equipped with a bundle of information, attitudes and computer skills is essential. The present paper is an attempt to study the patterns and their differentials of rural and urban in terms of literacy rate. Punjab in the terms of education status shows a better picture with the literacy rate of 76.68 per cent as per 2011 census. The rank of Punjab is dropped down from 16th position 2001 to the 21st position at all India ranking of literacy in 2011. In this paper, the urban-rural differentials in literacy are measured out which shows the large differentials.*

Keywords: Urban, Rural, Literacy Rate, Spatial Differentials

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INTRODUCTION

The level of literacy creates a comprehensive role in the social and economic development of a society. Literacy enhances the cultural and socio-economic development of the region. It helps in developing bond ethnic and reducing poverty and improvement in the standards of living the society. Literacy improves the ability of a person to contribute much to build up a good society, good economic infrastructure and better interaction within the nation and the outside world. High literacy rate always indicates the good society in comparison to the areas with fewer literacy rates that are underdeveloped.

The literacy rate is considered as the main indicator and measurement for the development in rural and urban areas. It is generally considered high literacy rates in urban places as compared to the lesser literacy rates in rural areas. Approach to literacy is a basic step towards achieving the general wellbeing of people of any area. Literacy is essential for the sustainable development of society. Thus, literacy is observed as a major tool in building a developed and peaceful society in the 21st century.

The educated population has the potential to create social and economic changes in society. There are equal rights to both men and women in almost all the democratic countries including India. Under the Right to Information Act, (2005), primary education is now a fundamental right. According to the Census of India, a person who can read and write with understanding in any language aged above six years considered as literate (Census of India, 1991).

ESCAP, 2010 observed that the Asia-Pacific region has a three-quarter illiterate population of the world and it is also the biggest and most difficult issues in developing countries of which India is a part, second largest populated country are characterized by the great disparity between urban-rural, male-female and young-aged (Krishan & Shyam, 1978).

India has an effective literacy rate of 74.04 per cent. It is to be noted that 82.14 per cent male and 65.46 per cent female are literate meaning thereby a large gender gap in literacy (Census of India, 2011). Punjab is one of among the most developed states of India; rather the state enjoys the prosperity in terms of physiographic conditions, drainage system, economic conditions, agriculture, and other resources. Beside this prosperity, the state has shown some serious concerns related to demographic issues and among this literacy rate is one of the important issues.

“Mewat district of Haryana and Mansa district of Punjab is very backward in literacy almost all levels while Palwal, Kaithal, Fatehabad, and Sirsa districts of Haryana as well as almost western and southern districts of Punjab, contain low literacy” (Singh, 2017).

STUDY AREA

Punjab also called the crown of India is the classic example of the fast-growing economy. It enjoys the credit of ushering the green revolution in the country. The land of five rivers lies in the north-western part of the country. It is bordered by

Pakistan from the western side and Jammu and Kashmir in the north, Himachal Pradesh in the north-east and Punjab and Rajasthan in the south. On the whole, the state lies in the western part of the northern plains of India. Present Punjab occupies 1.54 per cent of the total geographical area of the country and has the total area covered is 50,362 km². It is predominantly an alluvial plain region having three major rivers that Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi. These rivers are of great physiographic, economic and cultural importance. Study area experiences continental monsoonal climate due to its interior location in the lower mid-latitudes. According to the latest census report, the total population of Punjab is 277 million i.e. 2.4 per cent of the population of India. It constitutes 22 districts, 81 Tehsils, 146 blocks and 12,673 villages (pbplanning.govt.in, 2012-13).

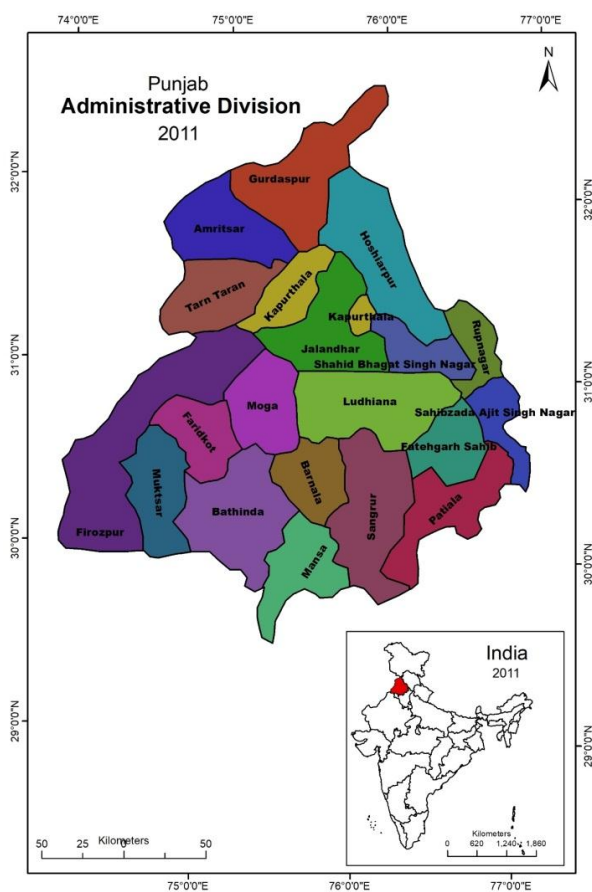


Fig. 1.1

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the study are:

- ▶ To study the patterns of literacy rate in Punjab at the district level.
- ▶ To examine the literacy differential in rural and urban in Punjab at the district level.

DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

In this research paper, data have collected from various sources like as Census of India 1971, Social and Cultural Tables, Series 1, Part II- C, Census of India 1981, Social and Cultural Tables, Series (1), Part IV-A, Census of India 1991, Socio-Cultural Tables, Vol. – 2, Series (1), Part IV, A-C Series, and Census of India 2011, Social and Cultural Tables, Table C- 8. For calculating literacy pattern and differential between urban-rural literacy rate at the district level in Punjab. Data have been collected and tabulated at the district level as a unit of study. Arc GIS software has been used for preparing maps.

QUANTITATE ANALYSIS

Census of India adopted the formula for calculating the level of literacy rate is as under:

$$\text{Literacy Rate} = \frac{\text{Total Literate Population}}{\text{Total Population} - (0-6 \text{ aged groups})} * 100$$

To calculate urban-rural differential in literacy rate the formula of Krishna & Shyam (1978) has been used. The differential has been measured as under:

$$ID = \frac{U - R}{T}$$

Whereas,

ID = Index of urban-rural differential

U = per cent of literate in urban population

R = per cent of literate in rural population

T = per cent of literate in total population

Classes are based on Jenks method. Punjab average and standard deviation have also calculated to see the disparities within the state.

TRENDS OF LITERACY RATE IN PUNJAB

Punjab has recorded the highest total literacy (38.69 per cent) in 1971. After 1971; the total literacy rate in Punjab was greater than India. In Punjab; literacy rate has increased almost 38per cent, from 38.69 per cent in 1971 to 76.68 per cent in 2011 while in India; it has increased almost 40 per cent, from 34.45 per cent to 74.04per cent during 1971 to 2011. Urban literacy in India is remaining almost highest during the entire time period. After 1971; it is remaining almost the same to Punjab. In India; it has increased by almost 25 per cent, from 60.22 per cent to 84.98 per cent. In Punjab; it has increased by almost 23 per cent, from 59.97 per cent to 83.70 per cent. In Punjab; it has increased to almost 40 per cent, from 32.02 per cent to 72.45 per cent while in India; it has

increased 41 per cent, from 27.89 per cent to 68.91 per cent. Differential between urban-rural literacy are remaining almost lowest in Punjab during the 1971 census but after this, it is remaining highest in India. In Punjab; it has decreased by almost 16 per cent, from 27.95 per cent to 11.25 per cent while in India; it has decreased 16 per cent, from 32.33 per cent to 16.07 per cent.

Table 1.1

State and Country	Literacy Rate & Differential by Residence	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
		Total	34.45	43.57	52.21	64.84
India	Urban	60.22	67.23	73.08	79.92	84.98
	Rural	27.89	36.01	44.69	58.74	68.91
	Differential between Urban-Rural Literacy Rate	32.33	31.28	28.39	21.18	16.07
	Total	38.69	48.17	58.51	69.65	76.68
	Urban	59.97	64.96	72.08	79.1	83.70
Punjab	Rural	32.02	41.73	52.77	64.72	72.45
	Differential between Urban-Rural Literacy Rate	27.95	23.23	19.31	14.38	11.25

Source: Computed by Author from Census of India, 1971 to 2011

Patterns of Literacy Rate, 2011

Literacy rate shows that it varies largely from one district to another district of the state. The spatial variations of the state have been divided into four main categories. (i) Low, (ii) Moderate, (iii) High, (iv) Very high spatial patterns of general literacy rate. The distribution of literacy rate in Punjab is not uniform. It varies from 85.43 per cent in Hoshiarpur to 62.8 per cent in Mansa district, the state average literacy rate is higher 76.7 per cent than national average literacy is 74.04 per cent. It is observed from the (table 1.2, fig.1.1) that the four districts of Punjab are having a very low literacy rate that is even below 70 per cent. All these districts are in the southwestern part of the state. The five districts having the moderate literacy rate that varies 70 per cent to 79 per cent are also in south-western and southern parts of Punjab. The districts having high and very high literacy rate are in the northern, eastern and southern parts of Punjab. The reasons for high literacy in these two categories are higher awareness about literacy among the people and a higher rate of urbanization. The four major cities of Punjab – Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, and Patiala come under in this category and are having good educational accessibility in these areas.

Urban-Rural Differential in Literacy Rate

In Punjab, the Literacy rate is noticed by wide urban-rural differentials. The average urban-rural index analyzed in the state is 11.25 per cent. This differential is highly pronounced in Ferozepur (13.69 per cent), Faridkot (13.34 per cent), Muktsar (14.2 per cent), Bathinda (17.49 per cent), Mansa (15.05 per cent) and Patiala (15.05 per cent). On the other hand, the rural-urban differentials in literacy are recorded to be lowest in Gurdaspur (2.25 per cent), Kapurthala (4.72 per cent), and Rupnagar (5.09 per cent) (table 1.2, fig. 1.4).

Table 1.2

Districts	Literacy Rate and Disparity in Literacy by Residence in Punjab: 2011			
	Total	Urban	Rural	Differential
Gurdaspur	81.06	88.00	78.25	9.75
Kapurthala	80.18	85.82	77.13	8.69
Jalandhar	82.40	85.10	79.33	5.77
Hoshiarpur	85.43	88.67	84.55	4.12
S.B.S.Nagar	80.33	82.74	79.79	2.95
Fatehgarh Sahib	80.33	84.33	78.56	5.77
Ludhiana	82.54	84.83	79.26	5.57
Moga	71.55	80.39	69.04	11.35
Firozpur	69.85	79.77	66.08	13.69
Muktsar	66.79	77.02	62.82	14.20
Faridkot	70.65	79.29	65.95	13.34
Bathinda	69.57	80.80	63.31	17.49
Mansa	62.78	76.82	58.99	17.83
Patiala	76.26	85.19	70.14	15.05
Amritsar	77.20	84.36	68.76	15.60
Tarn Taran	69.43	78.12	68.16	9.96
Rupnagar	83.28	87.04	81.95	5.09
S.A.S.Nagar	84.87	88.90	79.91	8.99
Sangrur	68.88	88.90	79.91	8.99
Barnala	68.90	75.39	65.89	9.50
Punjab	76.68	83.70	72.45	11.25

Source: Computed by Author from the census of India

CONCLUSION

As we can say that literacy rate in Punjab increased after the green revolution period that is the 1971 census period. The Punjab government claimed that greater attention has been given to the education sector. There is a large differential between urban and rural literacy rates in some of the districts. The immigrants from the other states as well as the poor labor do not bother to send their children to school. In urban areas, the high cost of living and poverty compels them to send their children to work at daily wages instead of to schools. Another reason is that the parents themselves are illiterate and they do not understand the importance of education in the long run.

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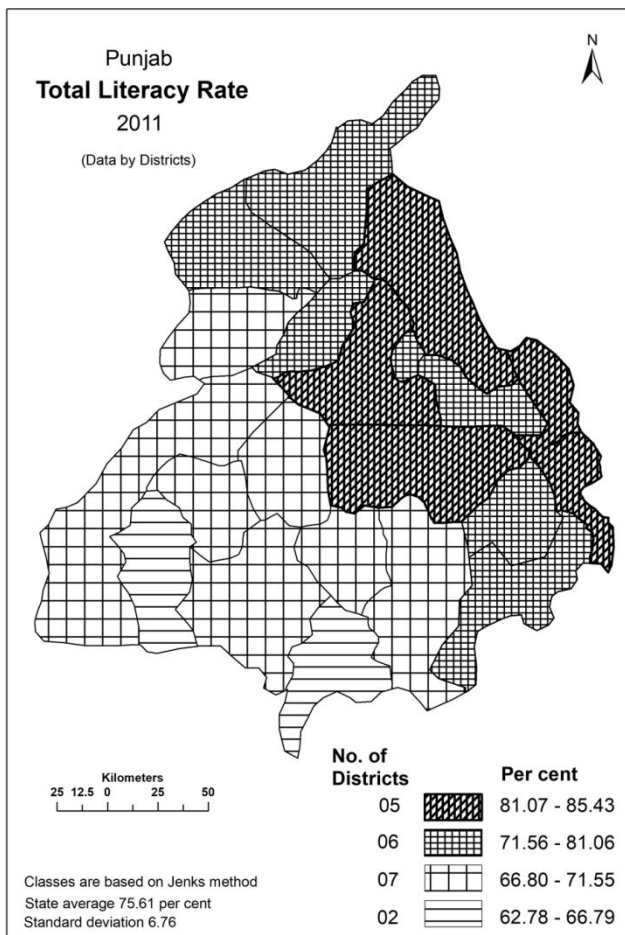


Fig. 1.2

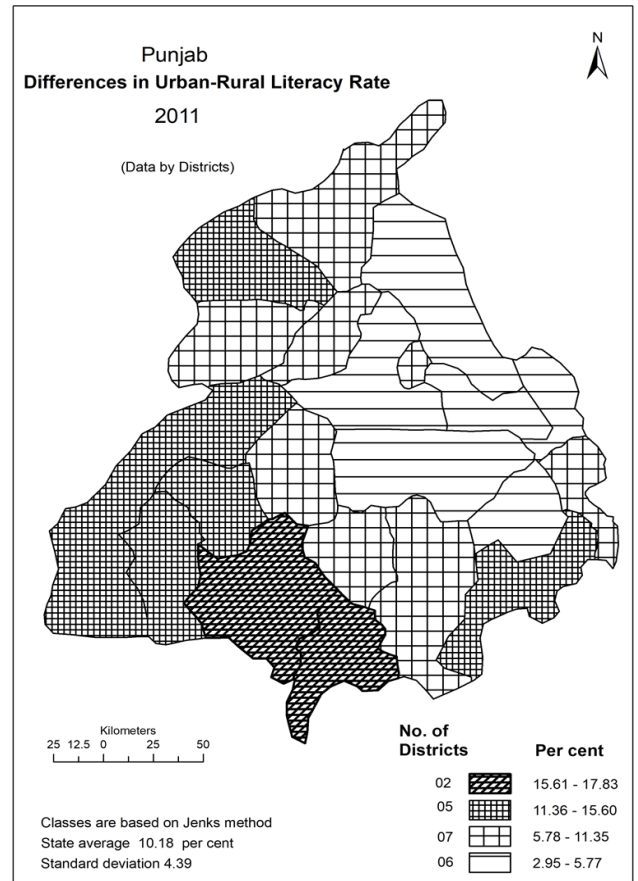


Fig. 1.3

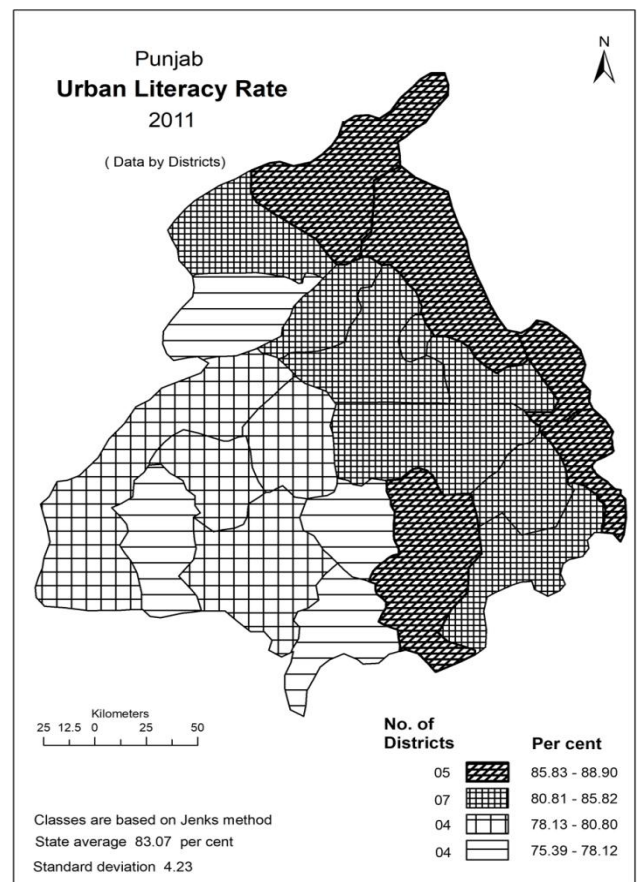


Fig. 1.4

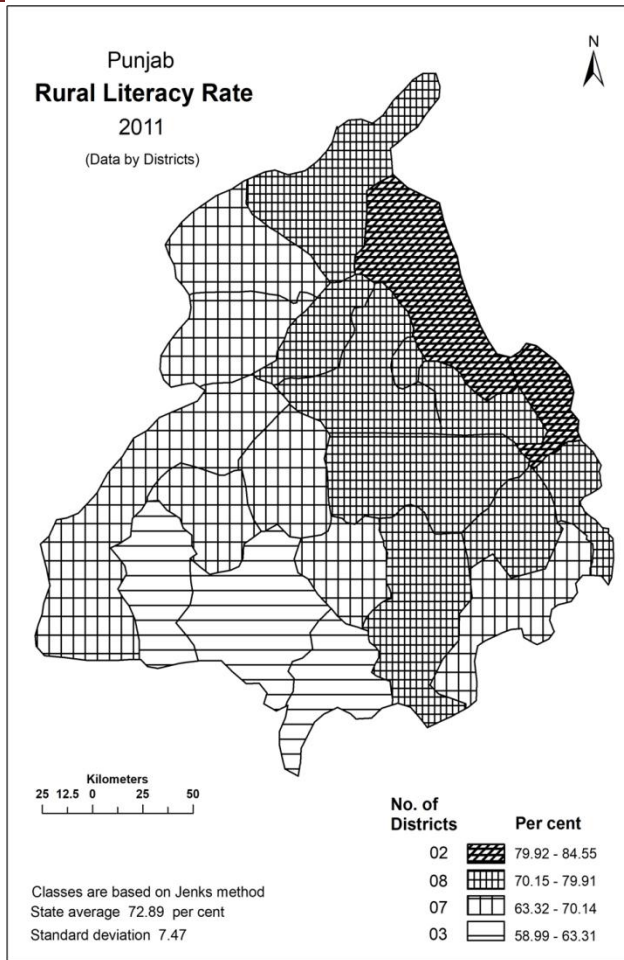


Fig. 1.5

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