

# Rural Literacy in Punjab and Haryana: A Comparative Current Scenario and Changes during the Last Four Decades

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**Abstract:** *The study examines the trend of literacy and gap between male-female literacy (1971 to 2011) in comparative mode among Punjab, Haryana and India. The study also analysis the spatial pattern of literacy as well as gender disparities in literacy at district level between Punjab and Haryana and reveals that Punjab has recorded highest total literacy (except 2011) and female literacy as well as lowest gap between male-female Literacy during the entire time period. Haryana was backward in literacy at all levels (total, male and female) up to 1971 but after this; Haryana has recorded much progress; total literacy of Haryana is remaining highest in 2011 census while male literacy is remaining highest in Haryana after 1971. Rapidly growth is recorded in female literacy but its status is not satisfactory especially, in Haryana and India. Literacy gap between male-female has recorded highest in Haryana during the entire time period however, it is still high in Haryana and India. Mewat district of Haryana and Mansa district of Punjab are very backward in literacy at all levels while southern districts of Punjab such as Muktsar, Bathinda have almost same condition. Palwal, Kaithal, Fatehabad and Sirsa districts of Haryana as well as almost western frontier districts and the districts which are situated around to southern districts in Punjab, contain low literacy. Value of male-female literacy differential index in Haryana (0.31) is almost double compare to Punjab (0.16). Entire western and southern districts of Haryana (except Kaithal, Sirsa and Gurgaon) have high differential between male-female literacy however, Mewat, Palwal and Mahendragarh districts contain very high differential while entire Punjab has low differential.*

**Keywords:** Comparative Trend of Literacy and Gap between Male-Female Literacy, Spatial Pattern and Gender Disparity in Literacy.

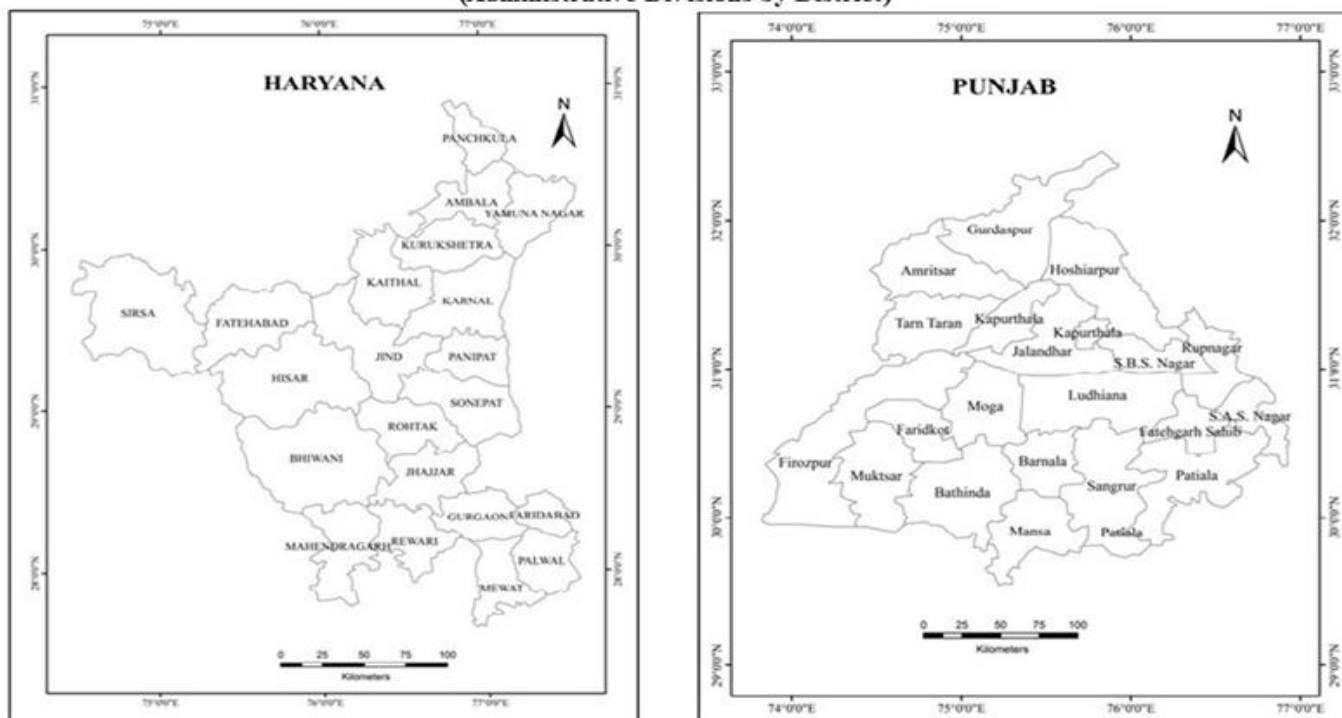
## 1. Introduction

According to Indian census, literacy is defined as the ability of people to read and write a simple message in any language with some understanding. It is not mandatory that to be treated as a literate, a person should have received any formal education or acquired any minimum educational standard. Literacy status can be acquired through adult literacy classes or by attending any non- formal education system. Persons who are unfortunately blind and read in Braille are also treated as literates. From 1991 census, children below seven years are ignored when working out literacy rate in the country and the population aged seven years and above only would be classified as literate or illiterate. The proportion of literate persons in a population is known as literacy level and the process of dissemination of literacy among the people in a society known as literacy transition. Literacy is related to all type of development which prepares the individual for full participation in a rapidly changing social and economic order. Better literate person is more likely to secure qualitative employment, more earnings, long and healthy life, cleaner and sustainable environment. An overall progress in literacy is necessary in a country, equally important is its distributional spread in all its areas – towns and villages, social classes and the two sexes (Gosal, 1979). The status of literacy is varied significantly across different regions and different communities depending on the socio-economic and demographic characteristics as well as on the magnitude and direction of modernization, urbanization and industrialization. In this context, the study examines the status of literacy between Punjab and Haryana in comparative mode.

## 2. Study Area

It is a comparative study of literacy transition (1971-2011) between Punjab and Haryana states which are located on the north-western side of Indian Union. Punjab consists 20 districts and Haryana has 21 districts at the time of census (2011) enumeration. Punjab is extended from 29° 30' north to 32° 32' north latitudes and 73° 55' east to 76° 50' east longitudes while Haryana is stretched from 27° 39' north to 30°55'5'' north latitudes and 74° 27'8" east to 77° 36'5" east longitudes. The west frontier of Punjab is connected with the boundary of eastern Pakistan while the Ravi, before running into Pakistan, is now the most western river of the Indian Punjab. Jammu & Kashmir is located in the north of Punjab. Himachal Pradesh is situated in north- east of Punjab while Haryana is situated to its south- east. Similarly, Uttar Pradesh is situated in the east of Haryana while Haryana adjoining with national capital. Rajasthan is located in south of Punjab and Haryana. Geographically, Ghaggar river makes the south-west boundary of Haryana which divides Punjab from Haryana, Siwalik hills are situated in north Haryana. River Yamuna flows in east of Haryana which separates Uttar Prades from Haryana. Arawali hills are situated in south Haryana.

**Administrative Maps of Study Area  
 (Administrative Divisions by District)**



Source: Census of India: 2011

Figure 1

**Objectives of the study**

- To examine comparative trend of literacy (1971-2011) at the levels of total, male and female as well as gap between male-female literacy among Punjab, Haryana and India.
- To represent the comparative spatial pattern of literacy at district level between Punjab and Haryana.
- To identify disparity between male-female literacy at district level.

**Data and Methodology**

In this study, data have collected from Census of India 1971, Social and Cultural Tables, Series 1, Part II- C (ii). 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. Census of India 2001, Social and Cultural Tables, Table C- 8. Census of India 2011, Provisional population Totals, Paper 1 and 2. for showing trend of literacy and gap between male-female literacy as

well as spatial pattern of literacy and gender disparity in literacy at district level. It is notable that literacy rates for 1971 census are related to population aged five years and above while the literacy rates for the 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011 censuses are related to the population aged seven years and above.

Data have been analyzed keeping state and district as a unit of observation. Requisite maps have been drawn with the help of Arc GIS software. To measure male-female literacy differential; following formula has been used –

$$MFLDI = (MLR - FLR) / TLR$$

Here,

MFLDI = male-female literacy differential index

MLR = male literacy rate

FLR = female literacy rate

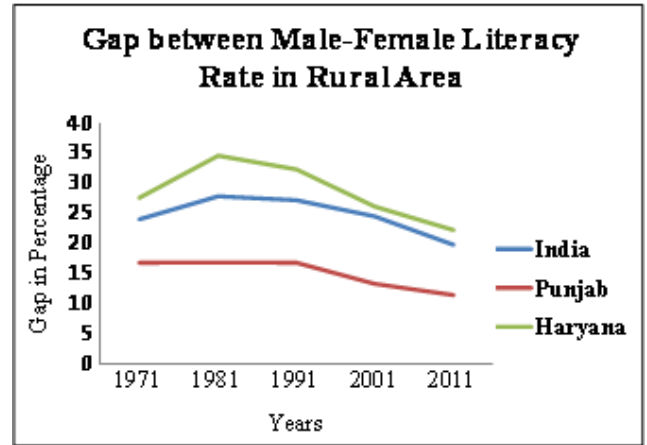
TLR = total literacy rate

**Table 1**

Literacy Rate and Gender Gap (1971-2011)						
State and Country	Literacy Rate and Gender Gap	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
India	Total Rural Literacy Rate	27.89	36.01	44.69	58.74	68.91
	Rural Male Literacy Rate	39.55	49.59	57.87	70.7	78.57
	Rural Female Literacy Rate	15.52	21.7	30.62	46.13	58.75
	Gap between Rural Male-Female Literacy Rate	24.03	27.89	27.25	24.57	19.82
Punjab	Total Rural Literacy Rate	32.02	41.73	52.77	64.72	72.45
	Rural Male Literacy Rate	39.78	49.64	60.71	71.05	77.92
	Rural Female Literacy Rate	22.99	32.73	43.85	57.72	66.47
	Gap between Rural Male-Female Literacy Rate	16.79	16.91	16.86	13.33	11.45
Haryana	Total Rural Literacy Rate	25.92	41.1	49.85	63.19	72.74
	Rural Male Literacy Rate	38.66	53.35	64.78	75.37	83.2
	Rural Female Literacy Rate	11.1	18.78	32.51	49.27	60.97
	Gap between Rural Male-Female Literacy Rate	27.56	34.57	32.27	26.1	22.23

Source: Census of India 1971, Social and Cultural Tables, Series 1, Part II- C (ii).  
 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,  
 Census of India 2001, Social and Cultural Tables, Table C- 8.  
 Census of India 2011, Provisional population Totals, Paper 1 and 2.

Note: literacy rates for 1971 census are related to population aged five years and above while the literacy rates for the 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011 censuses are related to the population aged seven years and above.



**Figure 5**

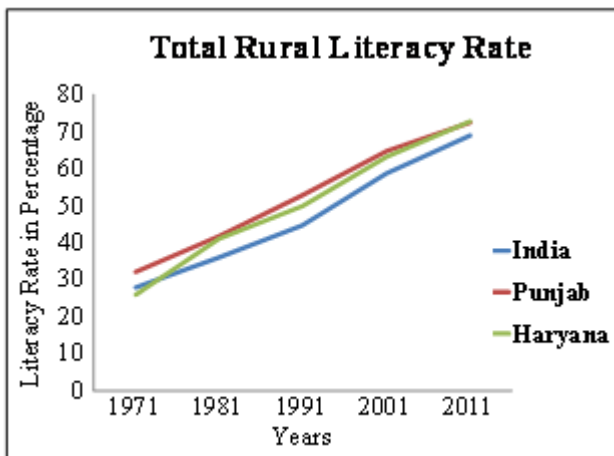
**3. Trend of Literacy**

Punjab has recorded highest total literacy (except 2011), during the entire time period however, in 2011 census, it is almost same to total literacy of Haryana. After 1971, it is remaining lowest in India. In Punjab, it has increased 40 per cent, from 32 per cent to 72 per cent. In Haryana, it has increased 47 per cent, from 25 per cent to 72 per cent while in India, it has increased 41 per cent, from 27 per cent to 68 per cent.

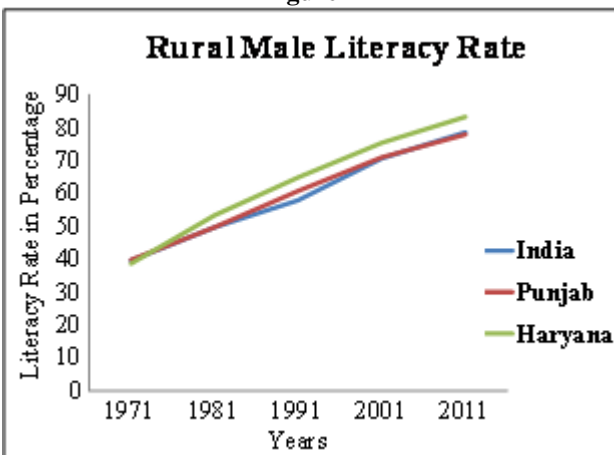
After 1971, male literacy of Haryana is remaining highest during the rest successive censuses while it remained almost same in Punjab and India during the entire time period. In Haryana, it has increased 45 per cent, from 38 per cent to 83 per cent. In Punjab, it has increased 38 per cent, from 39 per cent to 77 per cent while in India, it has increased 39 per cent, from 39 per cent to 78 per cent.

Punjab has recorded highest female literacy during entire time period (1971-2011) while up to 1981, it is remaining lowest in Haryana but after this, it has recorded lowest in India. In Punjab, it has increased 44 per cent, from 22 per cent to 66 per cent. In Haryana, it has increased 49 per cent, from 11 per cent to 60 per cent while in India, it has increased 43 per cent from 15 per cent to 58 per cent.

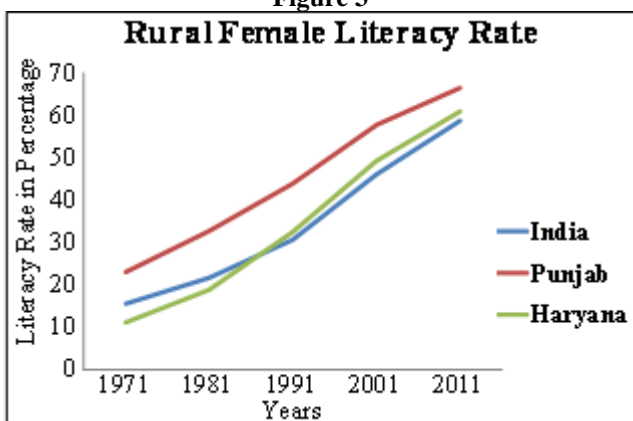
Punjab has recorded lowest gap between male-female literacy during the entire time period while it is remaining highest in Haryana during the same time period. In Punjab, it has decreased five per cent, from 16 per cent to 11 per cent. In India, it has decreased five per cent, from 24 per cent to 19 per cent while in Haryana, it has decreased five per cent, from 27 per cent to 22 per cent.



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**

**Table 2**

Rural Literacy and Male-Female Differential in Haryana : 2011				
State/Districts	Rural Literacy Rate	Rural Male Literacy Rate	Rural Female Literacy Rate	Value of Rural Male-Female Literacy Differential Index
Haryana	72.74	83.20	60.97	0.31
Panchkula	77.45	84.59	69.10	0.20
Ambala	78.64	86.01	70.48	0.20
Yamunanagar	74.96	69.29	66.60	0.04
Kurukshetra	73.30	80.99	64.86	0.22
Kaithal	68.29	77.60	57.80	0.29

Karnal	73.10	81.50	63.70	0.24
Panipat	74.09	83.69	62.97	0.28
Sonipat	78.53	88.07	67.35	0.26
Jind	70.16	80.63	58.15	0.32
Fatehabad	66.73	76.47	56.03	0.31
Sirsa	66.90	75.98	56.81	0.29
Hisar	70.02	81.13	57.40	0.34
Bhiwani	75.20	86.79	62.21	0.33
Rohtak	78.03	88.13	66.32	0.28
Jhajjar	78.92	88.25	68.22	0.25
Mahendragarh	78.04	91.15	63.66	0.35
Rewari	80.87	92.88	67.91	0.31
Gurgaon	81.10	91.31	69.63	0.27
Mewat	54.01	71.61	34.63	0.68
Faridabad	75.72	87.76	61.97	0.34
Palwal	67.87	81.37	52.53	0.42

Source: Census of India 2011, Provisional population totals, paper 1 and 2.

#### 4. Literacy and Gender Disparity

Value of male-female literacy differential index in Haryana (0.31) is almost double compare to Punjab (0.16). Mewat district (0.68) of Haryana has recorded highest differential while Fatehgarh Sahib district (0.01) of Punjab has lowest differential among the districts of both state. In Haryana, Lowest differential is recorded in Yamunanagar district (0.04) while Firozpur district (0.24) has recorded highest differential in overall Punjab.

Total literacy rate (72.74 per cent) of rural population in Haryana is below almost four per cent from general literacy rate (76.64) of Haryana. It varies from 54.01 per cent in Mewat to 81.10 per cent in Gurgaon while in Punjab; Total literacy rate (72.45 per cent) of rural population is below four per cent from general literacy rate (76.68). It varies from 58.99 per cent in Mansa to 84.55 per cent in Hoshiarpur.

Male literacy rate (83.2 per cent) of rural population in Haryana is below two per cent from general male literacy rate (85.38 per cent) of Haryana. It varies from 69.29 per cent in Yamunanagar to 92.88 per cent in Rewari while in Punjab; male literacy rate (77.92 per cent) of rural population is below almost four per cent from general male literacy rate (81.48). it varies from 64.74 per cent in Mansa to 89.48 per cent in Hoshiarpur.

Female literacy rate (60.97 per cent) of rural population in Haryana is below almost six per cent from general female literacy rate (66.77 per cent) of Haryana. It varies from 34.63 per cent in Mewat to 70.48 per cent in Ambala while in Punjab; female literacy rate (66.47 per cent) of rural

population is below almost five per cent from general female literacy rate (71.34). It varies from 52.47 per cent in Mansa to 79.56 per cent in Hoshiarpur.

Gender disparity in literacy is presented by gender disparity index. Value of gender disparity index (0.31 points) in rural population of Haryana is high 0.07 points from the value of gender disparity index (0.24 points) of all population. It varies from 0.04 points in Yamunanagar to 0.68 points in Mewat while the value of gender disparity index (0.16 points) in rural population of Punjab is high 0.03 point from the value of gender disparity index (0.13 points) of all population. It varies from 0.24 points in Firozpur to 0.01 point in Fatehgarh Sahib.

**Table 3**

Rural Literacy and Male-Female Differential in Punjab : 2011				
State/Districts	Rural Literacy Rate	Rural Male Literacy Rate	Rural Female Literacy Rate	Value of Rural Male-Female Literacy Differential Index
Punjab	72.45	77.92	66.47	0.16
Gurdaspur	78.25	83.49	72.60	0.14
Kapurthala	77.13	82.15	71.80	0.13
Jalandhar	79.33	84.19	74.26	0.13
Hoshiarpur	84.55	89.48	79.56	0.12
S.B.S.Nagar	79.72	85.94	73.32	0.16
Fatehgarh Sahib	78.56	74.03	73.42	0.01
Ludhiana	79.26	83.96	74.02	0.13
Moga	69.04	72.98	64.64	0.12
Firozpur	66.08	73.70	57.69	0.24
Muktsar	62.82	69.28	55.70	0.22
Faridkot	65.95	71.39	59.94	0.17
Bathinda	63.31	69.44	56.29	0.21
Mansa	58.99	64.74	52.47	0.21
Patiala	70.14	76.32	63.25	0.19
Amritsar	68.76	73.74	63.27	0.15
Tarn Taran	68.16	74.31	61.42	0.19
Rupnagar	81.95	88.23	75.15	0.16
S.A.S.Nagar	79.91	85.37	73.65	0.15
Sangrur	65.75	71.37	59.42	0.18
Barnala	65.89	70.09	61.13	0.14

Source: Census of India 2011, Provisional population totals, paper 1 and 2.

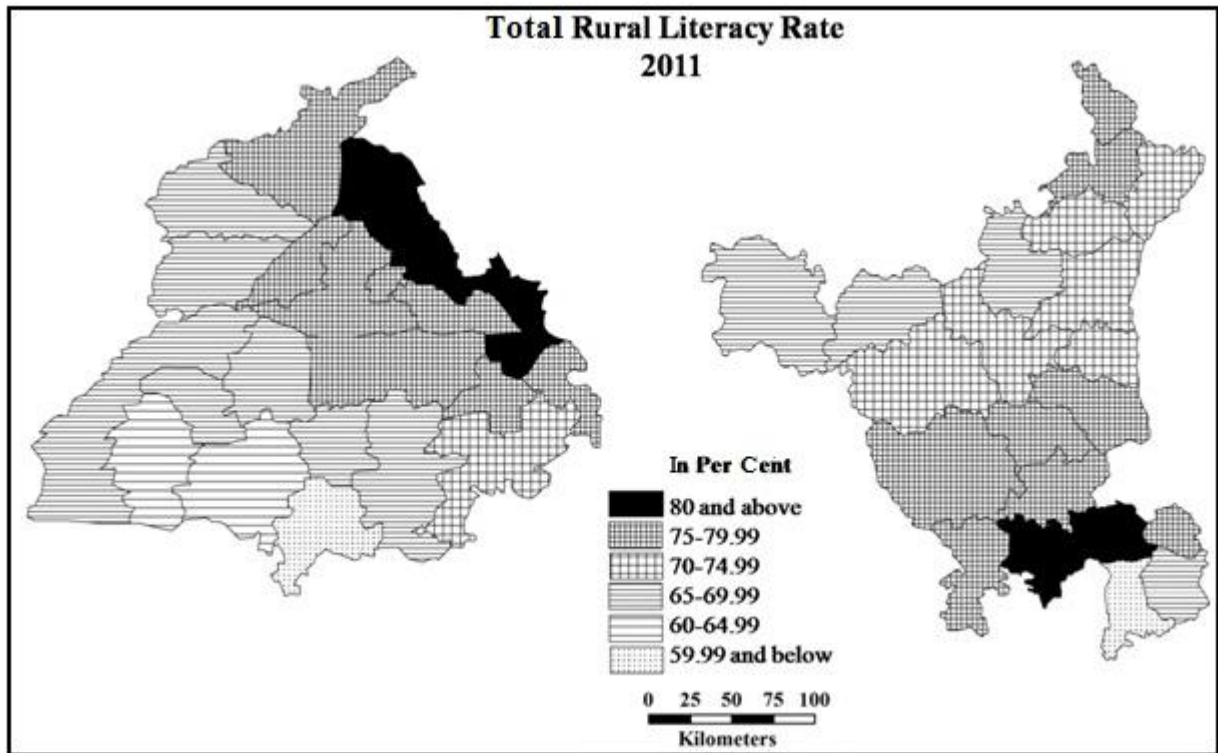


Figure 6

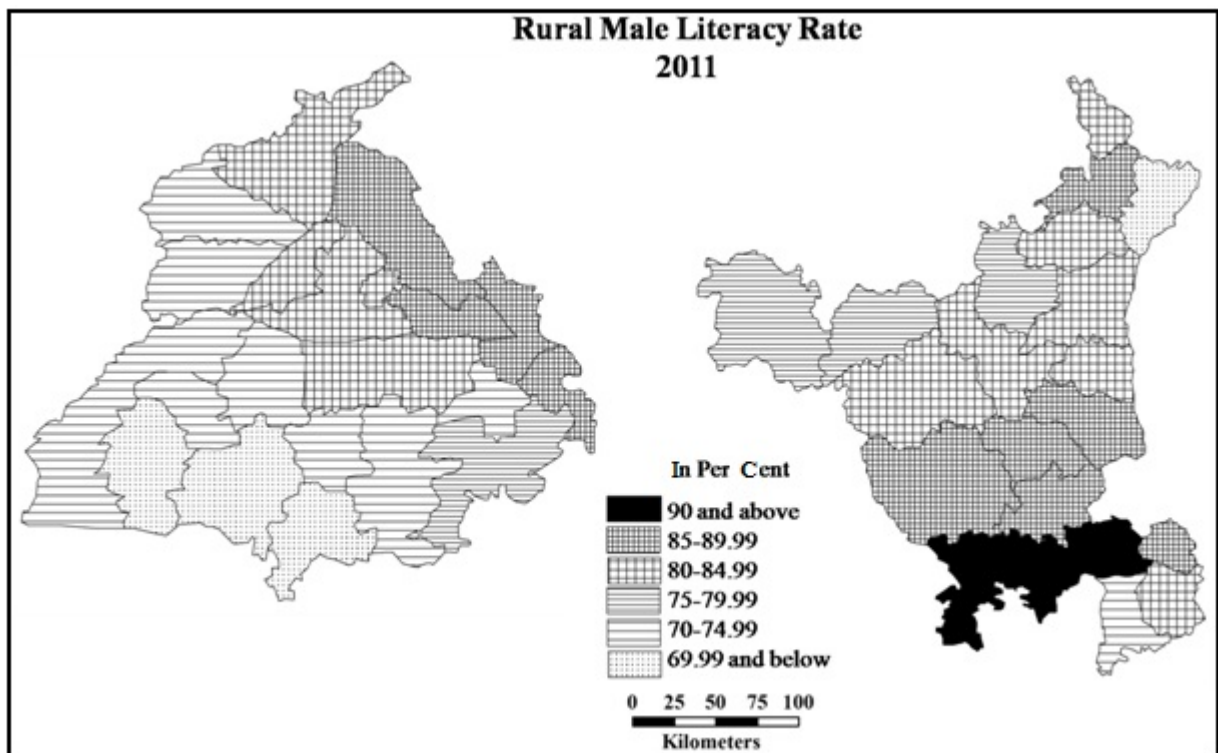


Figure 7

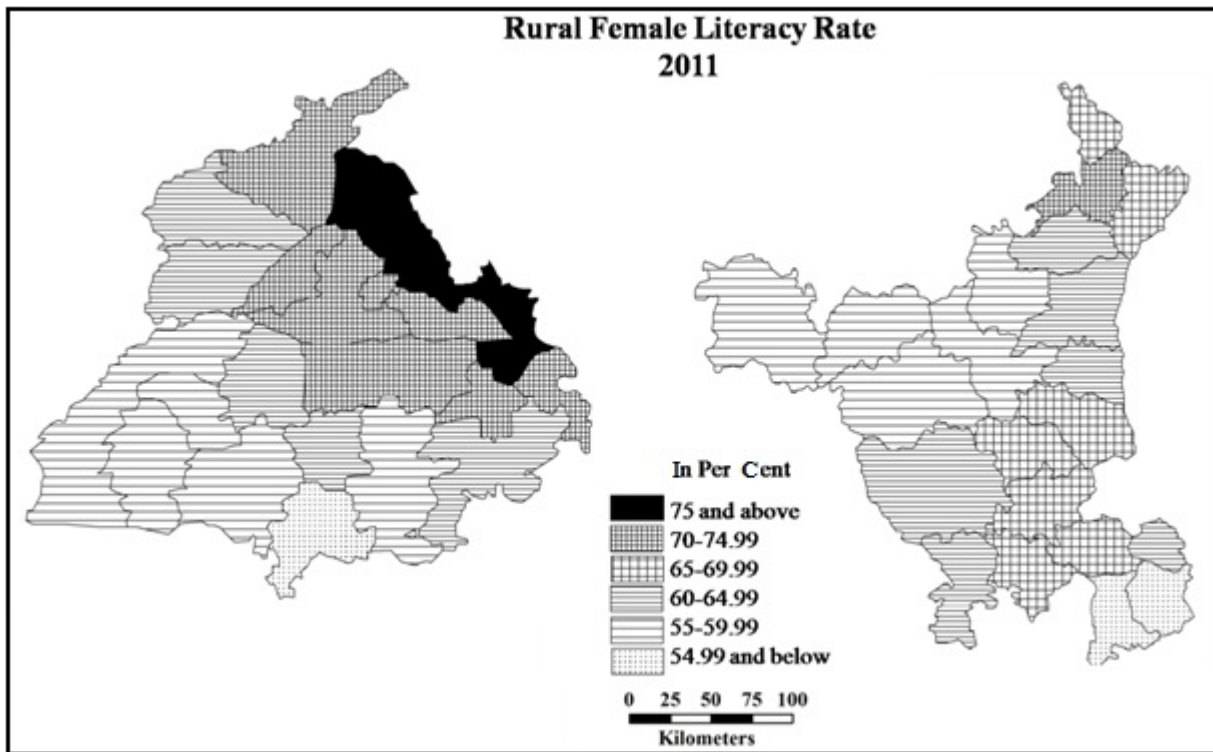


Figure 8

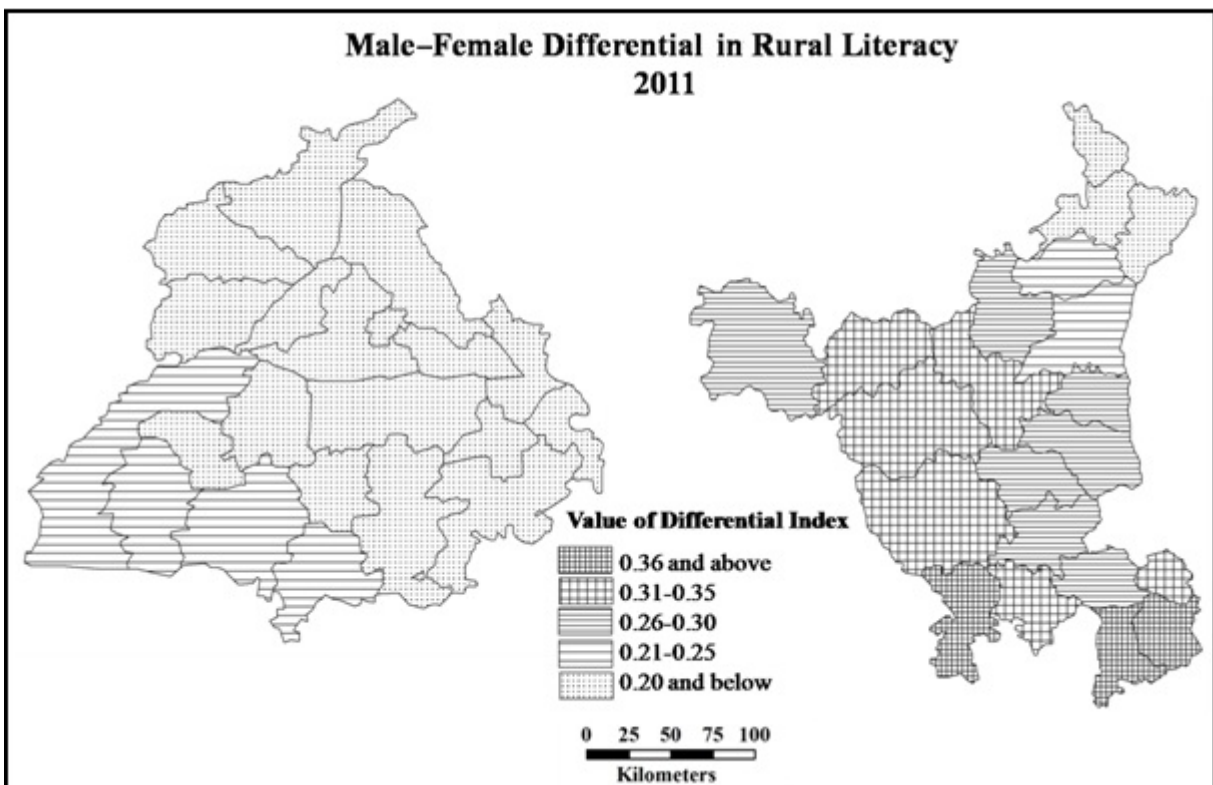


Figure 9

**Spatial Pattern of Total Literacy in Rural Area**

Rewari and Gurgaon districts of Haryana as well as Hoshiarpur and Rupnagar districts of Punjab have recorded very high literacy. South Haryana (except Mewat and Palwal) as well as Ambala and Panchkula and North-eastern part of Punjab also contain high literacy. Districts which are situated near to upper Yamuna river in Haryana (include Jind and Hisar) And Patiala district of Punjab contain

moderate literacy. Mewat, Palwal Kaithal, Fatehabad and Sirsa districts of Haryana and entire western and southern districts of Punjab contain low literacy however; the situation of Mewat district of Haryana and Mansa district of Punjab are very backward in literacy.

### **Spatial Pattern of Male Literacy in Rural Area**

Gurgaon, Rewari and Mahendragarh districts of Haryana contain very high literacy. Southern districts of Haryana (except Mewat and Palwal) as well as Ambala and eastern frontier districts of Punjab also contain high literacy. Rest part of Haryana (except Mewat and Yamunanagar) and central part of Punjab (include Gurdaspur and Patiala) have moderate literacy. Mewat district of Haryana and western part of Punjab as well as southern districts which are connected to central part have low literacy. Yamunanagar district of Haryana as well as Muktsar, Bathinda and Mansa districts of Punjab contain very low literacy.

### **Spatial Pattern of Female Literacy in Rural Area**

North to south-east part of Punjab (except Patiala district) and Ambala district of Haryana have high literacy however; Hoshiarpur and Rupnagar districts of Punjab are the highest literate districts in both states. Entire southern districts (except Mewat and Palwal) as well as eastern districts of Haryana (include Panchkula and Yamunanagar) and mostly districts that are connected with high literate districts in Punjab, contain moderate literacy. Entire western and north-western Haryana (include Mewat and Palwal) as well as almost southern and south-west districts of Punjab contain low literacy however, Mansa district of Punjab as well as Mewat and Palwal districts of Haryana are very backward in literacy.

### **Spatial Pattern of Male-Female Literacy Differential in Rural Area**

Mewat, Palwal and Mahendragarh districts of Haryana have recorded highest differential. Almost western and central Haryana (include Rewari and Faridabad) has high differential. Districts of Haryana which are around to national capital (include Kaithal and Sirsa) contain moderate differential. Almost south-western districts of Punjab as well as Karnal and Kurukshetra districts of Haryana contain low differential while rest part of Punjab and Panchkula, Ambala and Yamunanagar districts of Haryana have very low differential.

## **5. Conclusion**

Punjab has recorded highest total literacy (except 2011) and female literacy as well as lowest gap between male-female literacy during the entire time period however, in 2011 census, total literacy of Punjab is remaining almost same to total literacy of Haryana. Haryana was backward in literacy at all levels (total, male and female) up to 1971 but after this period, Haryana has recorded much progress; total literacy of Haryana is remaining highest in 2011 census while male literacy is remaining highest in Haryana after 1971. Up to 1981, female literacy is remaining lowest in Haryana but after this, it has recorded lowest in India however; rapidly growth is recorded in female literacy but its status is not satisfactory especially; in Haryana and India. Gap between male-female literacy has recorded highest in Haryana during the entire time period. However, it is still high in Haryana and India.

Except Mewat and Palwal, southern side half part of Haryana (include Ambala district) as well as Districts of

Punjab which are situated north to south-east (except Patiala district) have very high literacy almost all levels.

Mewat district of Haryana and Mansa district of Punjab are very backward in literacy at all levels while Southern districts of Punjab such as Muktsar, Bathinda have almost same condition. Palwal, Kaithal, Fatehabad and Sirsa districts of Haryana as well as almost western frontier districts and the districts which are situated around to southern districts in Punjab, contain low literacy.

Value of male-female literacy differential index in Haryana (0.31) is almost double compare to Punjab (0.16). Entire western and southern districts of Haryana (except Kaithal, Sirsa and Gurgaon) have high differential however; Mewat, Palwal and Mahendragarh districts contain very high differential. South-west part of Punjab contains low differential while rest part of Punjab and Panchkula, Ambala and Yamunanagar districts of Haryana have very low differential. **So, we can say that Punjab has better situation than Haryana.**

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### Author Profile



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