

## **Trend of literacy pattern in Ahmednagar District (Maharashtra)**

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### **Abstract**

Reduction of world disparity has become an important development strategy today. Literacy has been considered one of the most important attributes for social development. This study is based on acceptance of importance of education. The study aims to trace the spatial pattern of literacy for different tahsil in the district. The study finds out disparity in literacy in the district. Similarly gender still appears to be a major issue, female does show their critical condition in literacy during the past than present in the study area not only in the rural area but also in the urban area. Last decade growth of female literacy also satisfied due to changing social attitude about education of girls and government policy are responsible for increase the literacy in the Ahmednagar district.

*Key words* : General literacy, male-female literacy, rural-urban literacy, SC and ST literacy.

### **Introduction**

**P**opulation study is one of the major fields of human geography and scientific study of population with its quantitative and qualitative nature. Literacy has been considered one of the most important attributes for social development. It is seen as a prerequisite for economic growth, social mobility and political stability. Illiteracy, by contrast, has frequently been related to increased poverty in general. In terms of literacy there is marked regional variation as

well as different level of literacy between rural and urban area<sup>1-5</sup>.

Literacy has been defined differently by different sources. According to definition given by dictionary, literacy referred to capacity to read and write with certain level of education. Literacy is normally considered in terms of both reading and writing with understanding. In India right from the beginning census, literates were enumerated and literacy rates were calculated. It is not necessary that a person

who is literate should have received any formal education or should have addition to this for 1991 census, all children of age 6 years or less are treated as illiterate even they may be going to school and can read and write a few odd words. In earlier census, this limitation was up to the age of 4.

The trends in literacy are indicative of the pace at which the life and economy of a particular society are getting transformed. Literacy levels display differentials in region to region. The proportion of literates is different at urban-rural area, between male-female and also among different occupational and social groups. Large number of socio-economic factors such as nature of economy, levels of urbanization, standard of living, freedom and status of females influence literacy patterns. Therefore Ahmednagar district has choose for the study of literacy pattern. Literacy is essential for eradicating poverty and mental isolation, for cultivating peaceful and friendly international relation and for permitting the free play of demographic process<sup>6-7</sup> (Chandana and Sidhu).

#### *Objective :*

The main aim of the present paper is to understand literacy character of population in Ahmednagar district. This is viewed in the light of following specific objectives.

1. To study the spatial pattern of literacy rate in the study area.
2. To understand the male-female literacy rate in study area.
3. To study the spatial pattern of literacy rate of rural-urban area.
4. To understand SC and ST literacy rate in the study area.

#### *Methodology :*

The entire work is based on secondary data sources. In the present study, tahsil has been considered as a basic unit of investigation. Study of temporal changes of population character like literacy rate for the Ahmednagar district. It has been carried out for the year of 2001. With the help of simple statistical technique the values are computed in relation to percentage. The levels of literacy patterns are based on district average literacy rate and taluka wise literacy rate<sup>1-4</sup>.

#### *Study area :*

Ahmednagar district is generally central position in Maharashtra lying between 18° 10' and 20° 00' North latitudes and 73°30' and 75°37' East longitudes. The district is irregular in shape and resembles a slanting cross with a length of 200kms and a breadth of 210kms. While the area of the district accounts for 5.5 percent of the total area of the state, the district population constitutes 4.2 percent of the total population of the state (2001). Among the 35 districts of the state, the district rank first in terms of area, sixth in terms of population. The district is a part of western plateau with protruded hills, the micro level division of Deccan plateau. The district as a whole is an elevated tableland which has denuded by the Godavari and Bhima rivers basin. According to Census 2001, Ahmednagar district has a total population of 4,040,642 comprising of 2,083,053 males and 1,957,569 females. The Ahmednagar district reported 25, 98,597 persons as literates in 2001 census, they constituted 75.3 percent as literate's population (Excusing 0-6 age group) of the district. It is predominantly an agricultural district with about 75 percent of

its population living in rural area and depend upon agriculture and allied activities<sup>5-7</sup>.

### Discussion and Result

The imbalance of literacy rate in India has become an issue of concern since last two decades. Literacy rate is many times considered as a fairly reliable index of the socio-economic development of a region. The variation of literacy, many time, indicate the place of which the society is getting transformed. Level of literacy rate influences to a significant extent the socio-economic development of a region. Literacy rate also influences fertility, mortality, sex composition and economic structure of the population of a region. Without an analysis of literacy pattern, therefore, a study of the population geography of a region will not be complete<sup>1-7</sup>.

#### *General literacy pattern:*

Ahmednagar district reported 2,598,597 persons as literates in 2001 Census. They constitute 75.3 percent of the total population (excluding 0-6 age group) of the district. For the district as whole the literacy rates for males are substantially higher compared to females in both rural and urban areas. The tahsilwise breakup shows that Nagar tahsil has the higher literacy rate of 84.6 percent and Jamkhed tahsil has the lowest literacy rate of 67.8 percent. It is observed that the tahsils having urban centers have literacy rates higher than other, confirming the fact that urban have better infrastructure as far as education facilities are concerned male as well as female's literacy rate highest in Nagar tahsil *i.e.* 91.8 percent and 76.8 percent respectively and male as well as female literacy was lowest in Jamkhed tahsil

*i.e.* 80.7 percent and 54.3 percent and respectively. Four tahsils have literacy rate above the district average viz. Sangamner, Rahata, Shrirampur and Nagar and remaining ten tahsils have literacy rate below the district average viz. Akole, Kopargaon, Newasa, Shevgaon, Pathardi, Rahuri, Parner, Shrigonda, Karjat and Jamkhed.

There is a significant difference in literacy rates between male and female in the total areas of the district. In literacy rate females are lagging behind male in all tahsils, however the gap varies from tahsil to tahsil<sup>3-7</sup>.

#### *Female literacy pattern :*

In case of female literacy rate for five tahsil have above the district average viz. Sangamner, Rahata, Shrirampur, Nagar and Rahuri tahsils and remaining nine tahsils have female literacy rate below the district average viz. Akole, Kopargaon, Newasa, Shevgaon, Pathardi, Parner, shrigonda, Karjat and Jamkhed tahsils. There were significant differences literacy rates between male and female and the total areas of the district. In rural areas of the district literacy rate was 72.9 percent with male literacy having 84.2 percent and female literates accounting for 61.1 percent. Nagar tahsil has the highest literacy rate of 78.9 percent the corresponding male and female literacy rate were also high in this tahsil *i.e.* 88.7 percent and 68.5 percent respectively. The lowest literacy rate was note in Jamkhed tahsil the corresponding male and female rates are 78.6 and 50.0 percent respectively. The female literacy rate in urban area was 77.3 percent. The difference between male-female literacy in urban area varies from 11.1 to 23.4.

Table Percentage of general literates by tahsils (Census-2001)

Name of Tahsil	Total /Rural Urban	Number of literates			Percentage of literates			Gap in Male-female literacy rate
		Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	
Akole	Total	1,56,267	92,654	63,613	70.0	82.1	57.6	24.5
	Rural	1,56,267	92,654	63,613	70.0	82.1	57.6	24.5
	Urban	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sangmner	Total	2,83,172	1,64,646	1,18,526	75.5	85.8	64.7	21.1
	Rural	222415	130935	91480	73.0	84.2	61.2	23
	Urban	60757	33711	27046	86.4	92.4	79.9	12.5
Kopergoan	Total	175305	103304	72001	74.6	85.2	63.3	21.9
	Rural	126907	75578	51329	72.9	84.2	60.9	23.4
	Urban	48398	27726	20672	79.5	88.0	70.4	17.6
Rahata	Total	193003	110655	82348	78.3	87.5	68.5	19.0
	Rural	161761	92799	68962	77.7	87.2	67.8	19.4
	Urban	31242	17856	13386	81.3	89.5	72.5	17.0
Shriram pur	Total	171911	98625	73286	78.0	87.7	67.8	19.9
	Rural	108112	63330	44782	75.3	86.2	63.9	22.3
	Urban	63799	35295	28504	82.9	90.5	75.0	15.5
Newasa	Total	204270	120244	84026	73.8	84.7	62.3	22.4
	Rural	204270	120244	84026	73.8	84.7	62.3	22.4
	Urban	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shevgoan	Total	120879	73029	47850	70.1	83.1	56.5	26.6
	Rural	120879	73029	47850	70.1	83.1	56.5	26.6
	Urban	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pathardi	Total	128495	77456	51039	70.4	83.3	57.1	26.3
	Rural	12287	68114	44173	69.0	82.4	52.2	27.2
	Urban	16208	9342	6866	82.1	90.6	72.7	17.9
Nagar	Total	446391	253670	192721	84.6	91.8	76.8	15.0
	Rural	156167	90121	66046	78.9	88.7	68.5	20.2
	Urban	290224	163549	126675	88.1	93.6	82.0	11.6
Rahuri	Total	190444	110724	79720	75.6	85.5	65.1	20.4
	Rural	146844	85688	61156	75.1	85.4	64.2	21.1
	Urban	46600	25036	18564	77.4	86.1	68.1	18.0

Parner	Total	151302	88560	62742	71.5	83.9	59.2	24.7
	Rural	151302	88560	62742	71.5	83.9	59.2	24.7
	Urban	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shrigonda	Total	174359	101797	72562	73.4	83.6	62.8	20.9
	Rural	15085	91457	64628	72.8	83.1	61.8	21.3
	Urban	18274	10340	7934	79.9	87.8	71.5	16.3
Karjat	Total	125720	74829	50891	71.2	82.2	59.5	22.7
	Rural	125720	74829	50891	71.2	82.2	59.5	22.7
	Urban	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jamkhed	Total	77079	46836	30243	67.8	80.7	54.3	26.4
	Rural	58263	36152	22111	64.5	78.6	50.0	28.6
	Urban	18816	10684	8132	80.4	89.1	71.2	18.0
District Total	Total	2598597	1517029	1081568	75.3	85.7	64.4	21.4
	Rural	2007279	1183490	823789	72.9	84.2	61.1	23.1
	Urban	591318	333539	257779	84.7	91.4	77.3	14.1

Source: Census handbook

#### *Rural literacy pattern:*

It was seen that 72.9 percent of the population was literates in rural Ahmednagar district. Among the males, it accounts for 84.2 percent, while for females the literacy is substantially lower 61.1 percent. The highest literacy rate among males was seen in Nagar tahsil 88.7 percent and the lowest was in Jamkhed tahsil 78.5 percent, Nagar tahsil was also leads in female literacy *i.e.* 68.5 percent and Jamkhed tahsil was lowest literacy level in females *i.e.* 50.0 percent.

The literacy rate for male was higher than that of district level for tahsil of Rahata (87.2 percent), Shrirampur (86.2 percent), Newas (84.7 percent), Nagar (88.7 percent) and Rahuri (85.4 percent) and for females

Sangamner (61.2) Rahata (67.8 percent), Shrirampur (63.9 percent), Newas (62.3 percent), Nagar (68.5) and Rahuri (64.2 percent) and Shrigonda (61.8) percent.

#### *Urban literacy pattern:*

The total literacy rate in district urban area was 84.7 percent. The male literacy rate was 91.4 percent. While females literacy rate was 77.3 percent. Ahmednagar has the highest percentage of literates among the all urban centers of the total population, it was also above the district urban average (84.7 percent), these were Sangamner, and Ahmednagar M.C and Ahmednagar C.B. are above the district average and remaining was viz. Kopergoan, Rahata, Shrirampur, Pathardi, Rahuri, Shrigonda and Jamkhed were below the district urban average.

Table Percentage of Schedules Castes and Schedules Tribes literacy by tahsils (2001)

Name of the tahsil	Percentage of Schedules Castes literacy rates			Percentage of Schedules Tribes literacy rates		
	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
Akole	71.7	84.3	59.0	59.4	73.4	45.3
Sangamner	72.6	84.7	60.0	51.7	65.3	37.5
Kopergaon	67.3	81.2	52.7	43.3	57.0	29.0
Rahata	73.0	85.1	60.5	48.8	61.8	35.7
Shrirampur	70.2	82.6	57.5	46.3	60.2	32.3
Newas	69.1	81.0	56.6	49.1	61.5	36
Shevgaon	63.8	77.9	49.3	51.5	64.1	38.7
Pathardi	66.2	79.4	52.7	54.4	66.3	42.5
Nagar	77.5	87.5	66.9	52.7	63.6	41.4
Rahuri	73.1	84.0	61.5	51.1	63.7	38.2
Parner	72.8	85.5	60.0	44.8	58.9	30.4
Shrigonda	67.0	79.3	53.9	45.2	56.4	33.7
Karjat	66.7	79.4	53.4	53.1	64.3	41.6
Jamkhed	58.2	73.3	42.9	48.4	64.4	33.0

Source: census handbook

#### *Literacy pattern of Scheduled Castes:*

According to 2001 census, it was seen that 69.8 percent of the Scheduled Caste in rural area of Ahmednagar district were literates. While among the males the literates constitute 82.1 percent. The rate among the female is substantially lower (56.9 percent). Within the district the highest literacy was seen in Nagar tahsil (77.5 percent) and lowest in Jamkhed tahsil (58.2 percent). The highest literacy among the male was seen in Nagar tahsil (87.5 percent) and lowest was seen in Jamkhed tahsil (73.3 percent), while the highest literacy among female was in Nagar tahsil (66.9 percent) and lowest was in Jamkhed tahsil (42.9).

#### *Literacy pattern of Scheduled Tribes:*

It was seen that 53.4 percent of the Scheduled Tribes in rural areas of the district were literates. While among males the literate constitutes 66.8 percent, the rate among females was substantially lower 39.6 percent. Within the district the highest literacy rate was seen in Akole taluka (59.4 percent) and the lowest in Kopergaon (43.3 percent). Akole tahsil also leads in male literacy (73.4) as well as female literacy (45.3 percent). Lowest male literacy rate was seen in Shrigonda tahsil (56.4 percent) and lowest female literacy rate was seen in Kopergaon tahsil (29 percent).

#### **Conclusion**

Important factor influencing variations in spatial pattern of proportion of literates rate

to total population in different parts of the district. A peculiar social set up found in the district, where female education get low priority, results in relatively low proportion of literates among females as well as attitudes of rural people about the female is very poor. So, their impact on the literacy rate of female in the district. In the study area lowest literacy rate was in Jamkhed tahsil i.e. 67.8 percent. Male literacy rate was also lowest (78.6percent) while the female literacy rate in rural Jamkhed tahsil was only 50.0 percent. The gap between male and female literacy rate was highest in Jamkhed tahsil, it was 28.6 percent. Within the district of Schedules Castes the highest literacy was seen in Nagar tahsil (77.5 percent) and lowest in Jamkhed tahsil (58.2 percent). Gap between male and female literacy rate of Schedules Tribes was higher in the Jamkhed tahsil. But the lowest literacy rate was in the Kopergaon tahsil (43.3 percent). Male literacy rate was lowest in the Shrigonda tahsil (56.4), while female literacy rate was

lowest in the Kopergaon tahsil.

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