

Empowerment of women in Haryana

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Abstract: The empowerment of women essentially refers to a feeling of awareness of one's own situation backed up with the knowledge, skills and information which could enable women to gain higher self-esteem and facilitate their role as decision makers in the current patriarchal society where women have always been subordinate to men. The position of women reflects the cultural, aesthetic, moral and spiritual attainments of a society. In spite of economically very developed state, the position of women in Haryana is miserable. In terms of sex ratio, they lag much behind with their counterparts males with 877 females per thousand males in 2011 census. In terms of work participation, only 17.8 % women are working in comparison of 50.4 % of males in 2011. The level of literacy rate is also low among females (66.77%) in comparison to male literacy rates (85.38%) The low level of women empowerment in Haryana is associated with lack of access to resources, harassment given to women in households, lack of finance, lack of support from community, poverty, child marriage, inadequate nutrition etc. The present paper is an attempt to analyze the status of women in Haryana with the help of sex ratio, women literacy and their work participation rate.

Introduction:

Women are integral part of society. They play an important role in determining the destiny of a country. Their greater involvement in socio- economic and political matters is very important. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process, which should enable women or group of women to realize their full identity and power in all spheres of life. It consists of greater access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision making to enable them to have greater ability to plan their lives, or to have greater control over the circumstances that influence their lives and free from shocks imposed on them by custom, belief and practice. Generally women empowerment is defined as an environment where women feel themselves independent to make their own decision for themselves as well as society. A strong desire to do something positive is an inbuilt quality of entrepreneurial women who is capable of contributing values in both family and social life. Swami Vivekanand has rightly said, "The best thermometer to the progress of a nation is its treatment of women." The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. Empowerment of women means developing them as more aware individuals, who are politically active, economically productive and independent and are able to make intelligent discussion in matters that affect them. Empowered women have autonomy to define their attitude, values and relation to their own real interest. They maintain equal mindedness and respond as equals and co-operate to work towards the common good. They use their talent to live fulfilling lives. They not only survive the harshness of their own subjugation but also transcend their subjugation.

The parameters of women empowerment are:

- a) Building a positive image of women in the society and recognizing their contributions in social, economic and political sphere.
- b) Developing ability among women to think critically.
- c) Fostering decision-making and collective action.
- d) Enabling women to make informed choices.
- e) Ensuring women's participation in all walks of life.
- f) Providing information, knowledge, skills for self-employment
- g) Raising self-esteem and self-confidence of women.
- h) Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and girl child.
- i) Building and strengthening partnership with civil society particularly women's organisations.
- j) Enforcement of constitutional and legal provisions and safeguarding rights of women.

Objectives:

The main objectives of the present study are to analyze the status of women in Haryana through the variables of sex- ratio, gender differences in literacy and women work participation rates.

Data base and Methodology:

The present study is entirely based on secondary data. The required data has been collected from Primary Census Abstracts of Haryana State, various census publications of India. For representation of data, tables are used. Male- female differentials in literacy have been calculated using the formula -

$$ID = \frac{M-F}{T}$$

Where ID= Index of male- female differential in literacy

M= % of literates in male population

F= % of literates in female population

T=% of literates in total population

Literacy rates have been calculated by formula

Literacy (%) = No of literates (Above 6 years)/total population×100

Study Area:

Haryana is a state in northwest India between 27° 37' to 30° 35' latitudes and between 74° 28' to 77° 36' longitudes. It was carved out of the Indian state of Punjab on 1st Nov. 1966. It is bounded by Uttar Pradesh in east, Punjab in west, Himachal Pradesh in north and Rajasthan in south with 1.37 percent of total geographical area of India. There are 21 districts, 74 sub districts, 80 statutory towns, 74 census towns and 6841 villages. In 2011, Haryana had 23353081 persons having 13505130 males and 11847951 females.

Table: 1
Haryana: Sex Ratio, literacy rates and women work force, 2011

State/Districts	Sex Ratio	Male work participation rate (%)	Female work participation rate (%)	Male literacy rate (%)	Female literacy rate (%)	Male-female differentials in literacy (%)
Haryana	877	50.4	17.8	85.38	66.77	21.80
Ambala	870	53.5	9.8	88.47	76.64	12.60
Panchkula	882	55.0	17.8	88.65	77.48	13.37
Yamunanagar	877	52.9	8.3	85.06	71.99	15.36
Kurukshetra	889	52.6	15.0	83.46	69.18	17.11
Kaithal	880	51.3	16.1	79.33	60.69	23.49
Karnal	886	51.6	14.8	83.73	68.29	18.44
Panipat	861	50.8	15.0	85.45	68.23	20.15
Sonepat	853	50.1	19.8	89.40	70.88	20.72
Jind	870	51.7	25.0	82.49	61.58	25.35
Fatehabad	903	53.2	23.6	78.10	59.29	24.08
Sirsa	896	54.1	21.6	78.64	61.16	22.23
Hisar	871	52.4	25.0	82.79	62.31	24.74
Bhiwani	884	49.7	12.1	87.39	64.60	26.08
Rohtak	868	48.0	14.9	88.42	71.19	19.49
Jhajjar	861	48.6	17.2	89.44	70.96	20.66
Mahendergarh	894	47.9	24.3	91.96	67.25	26.31
Rewari	898	49.6	24.0	92.92	70.54	24.08
Gurgaon	853	53.0	16.1	82.60	56.40	13.99
Mewat	906	39.3	12.6	90.27	77.64	48.51
Faridabad	871	49.4	12.1	72.98	37.58	16.42
Palwal	879	43.5	13.9	89.94	75.17	31.72

Source: Census of India 2011, Primary Census Abstract, Haryana, Directorate of Census operation, Haryana, Chandigarh.

Sex Ratio in Haryana

In spite of economically developed state, sex ratio is not satisfactory in Haryana. After the formation of state in 1966, the sex ratio of Haryana was 867 females per thousand males in 1977 that reached to 861 females per thousand males in 2001, the lowest sex ratio among all the states of India. In 2011, although Haryana has shown an increase in sex ratio and it has reached to 877 females per thousand males, still, it is lowest in Indian states. Parents believe that son is the only person who take care of them in old age. Low sex ratio in Haryana is mostly because of killing of girl child in rural and illiterate communities and the low status of women (Gill and Madan, 2011). The male dominated society and patriarchal system discriminate against women in a variety of ways. People give preference to sons for a number of economic, social and religious reasons including financial support, property inheritance, dowry, family lineage, prestige and power, birth and death rituals and beliefs about religious duties (Bhardwaj, 2010). A female child is considered as a burden and drag on family and resources. This discrimination has given way to female foeticide with the advent of prenatal sex determination techniques (Hassan, 2005). The excessive female mortality beyond age group of female infanticide is directly related to neglect of female children in terms of health care, particularly

in north India (Dreze and Sen,2004). Urban areas display low sex ratio. Haryana emerged as an economically progressive state with a vibrant economy. The state had undergone significant changes since its creation in 1966. But the status of women in the state is and has been a cause of concern with low sex ratio and even lower child sex ratio, low female literacy, sex selective abortions, low economic participation, heavy burden of unpaid home care work, high child and maternal mortality rates, restrictions related to public space and low reproductive health status. The gender disparities in Haryana are visible in every sphere of life especially in political, economic, social and cultural aspects. In 1971 census, sex ratio was 853 and 870 for urban and rural areas. In 2011 census, the sex ratio for rural areas was 880 in contrast to urban areas. i.e. 871 (Table 2).

Female work force in Haryana

The female labour force participation is a driver of growth and thus participation rates indicate the potential for a country to grow more rapidly; (ii) in many developing countries, participation of women is a coping mechanism which arises in response to economic shocks that hit the household; and (iii) participation is an (imperfect) indicator of women's economic empowerment. Haryana emerged as an economically progressive state with a vibrant economy. The participation of women in the labour market varies greatly across countries, reflecting differences in economic development, education levels, fertility rates female employment in last few decades has increased, but there has not been an improvement in outcomes (Chandna,2011). World Bank (2012) highlighted that women and men tend to work in very different parts of the "economic space," with little change over time, even in high-income countries. Women are engaged in low -productivity activities. They are also more likely to be in wage or unpaid family employment or work in the informal wage sector. In agriculture, women operate smaller plots of land and farm less remunerative crops. They tend to manage smaller farms and concentrate in less-profitable sectors. And in formal employment, they concentrate in "female" occupations and sectors. These patterns of gender segregation in economic activity change with economic female work participation rate. Haryana record is not very discouraging as its female participation rates are low compared to other states. Not only that, the state has slipped to 27th position in 2011 from 18th position in 2001 decreasing to 17.8 percent from 27.2 percent during the period (Labour Bureau, 2014, p.12). Work participation rate of female workers in rural areas was higher which stood at 20.8 percent as compared to the work participation rate of 12.1 percent in urban areas in 2011. The rate has declined significantly from 33.91 percent in 2001 for rural areas although it has increased for urban areas from 10.55 percent in the state. Spatially, south and southwest districts Bhiwani, Mahendergarh, Rewari, Hisar, Sirsa, Fatehabad and Jind has shown significantly higher female work participation rates whereas northern and eastern districts have low female work participation rate. The gender inequalities are more in southern part of the state and they are increasing. Work participation rate of female workers in rural areas was higher which stood at 20.8 percent as compared to the work participation rate of 12.1 percent in urban areas in 2011. The rate has declined significantly from 33.91 percent in 2001 for rural areas although it has increased for urban areas from 10.55 percent in the state. Even in government employment, we found wide gender gaps. Out of 4763 class-1 officers in Haryana only 1061(22.3 percent) are women. Similarly women are only 28 percent of the class-II officer and 21.4 percent of class-III officers (Statistical Abstract of Haryana-2013-14). In some of the departments, women's representation is alarmingly low. For example irrigation, PWD(B&R) and PWD(Public

Health) departments have 140, 101 and 84 male class-1 officers but no female class-I officer. Similarly other department such as Panchayati Raj (27 males), Industrial Training & Vocational Education (22 males), Industries and Commerce (20 males) have no female. Female Workforce participation rate for Haryana has declined from 27.8 percent in 2001 to 17.8 percent in 2011.

Table 2
Haryana: Sex Ratio and Literacy Rates, 1971-2011

Census Year	Sex Ratio			Literacy rates (%)		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Male	Female
1971	867	853	870	25.71	38.90	10.32
1981	870	849	876	37.13	51.86	20.04
1991	865	868	864	55.85	69.10	40.47
2001	861	847	866	68.59	79.25	56.31
2011	877	871	880	76.64	85.38	66.77

Source: .Census of India, 2001 and 2011

Literacy in Haryana

The administrative neglect which Haryana seems to have suffered till its formation in 1966 handicapped the state’s socio-economic development. Among other things, the literacy rates have remained lower. Haryana is economically very developed state, still the progress of literacy is not satisfactory. Table 2 shows that total literacy rate was 25.71 % in 1971 which increased to 37.13 % in 1981, 55.85 % in 1991 and has gone upto 68.59 % in 2001 census. In the latest census (2011), Haryana ranks 15th position in India with 76.64 percent literacy rate. As compared to economic status, the low level of literacy is associated with prejudices against females, less educational facilities ,poverty and low status of women. The attitude of people towards education is governed by the value system of society. Here, less socio-economic awakening has also been responsible for low level of literacy. A large proportion of population is engaged in agricultural activities for which education is not a necessity.

Male-female differential in literacy

Gender differentials in literacy rates exist in total population as well as in urban and rural areas. In 2011, the male literacy rate is 85.38 percent while female literacy is 66.77 percent with a differential of 13.23%. However, the gap has been narrowing down from 23.24 % in 2001 to 18.61 % in 2011 census. The inequality in literacy by sex is the outcome of traditional prejudices against female education. Women position in society is still far from satisfactory. Many social and religious taboos may hinder them to participate in mixed groups and their busy domestic schedules may limit the time and opportunities to participate in literacy programmes. For most of the parents, female education has a little economic value since there are strong prejudices against their employment. Female children suffer a relative neglect and same is the case with their education. For many parents, allowing girls to go schools creates unnecessary risk that may later damage the marriage-bargaining

process. Parents often fear that education will make a girl less attentive to household chores and less willing to obey her parents. Females are also not permitted much mobility and may not be sent to a school even in an adjoining village. However, the conditions are changing and female literacy is making a considerable progress. Spatially, the male-female differentials are found high in Mewat (48.51%), Palwal(31.72%), Mahendergarh(26.31%), Bhiwani(26.08%) due to high proportion of Muslim population, less educational facilities and socio- economic backwardness(Table 1).On contrast, developed districts such as Panchkula (12.60%), Ambala (13.37%), Gurgaon (13.99%), Yamunanagar (15.36%) display less male- female differential in literacy . In these areas, both male and female literacy rates are high on account of highly diversified economy, more educational facilities and less prejudice against females. The gender gap in literacy among rural population is far greater than that in urban population on account of extremely deplorable rural female literacy rates (Singh, 1998).

The average figure of 66.77 % literate population hides striking spatial disparities in female literacy rates in Haryana ranging from 77.48 % in Panchkula to 37.58% in Mewat (Table 1). Highest female literacy rate is found in Panchkula(77.48%) followed by Gurgaon (77.64%),Ambala(76.64%),Faridabad(75.17%), Yamunanagar(71.99%), Rohtak(71.19%) on associated with highest degree of urbanization, high status of females, better economic conditions and developed means of transportation and industrial development. Here both male and female literacy rates are also high i.s. above 80 % and 70 % respectively (Table2). On contrast, Mewat display lowest female literacy rate is on account of the economic backwardness and social conservatism of people. Agriculture which is of highly subsistence nature absorbs an overwhelming majority of people. Urbanization is also low and an environment to growth of literacy did not exist. A number of schools have been opened but response is unmatching. Districts Palwal(56.40%), Fatehabad(59.29%),Sirsa(61.16%),Hisar(62.31%),Jind also display low female literacy on account of backward economy and less socio- economic development, overwhelming rural population and more dependence on agricultural. The size of landholding is large. Due to intensification of agriculture, demand for labour to work has increased and it keeps children of scheduled castes away from schools. Yamunanagar (78.93%), Panipat (68.23%), Bhiwani (64.60%), and Kurukshetra (69.18%) show moderate literacy rates among females.

Problems in women Empowerment in Haryana

There are a number of problems that acts as obstacle in women empowerment. Some of them are society attitude towards women, less education in some region ,lack of awareness among people , fear in parents mind towards empowerment, more focus on monetary incentives ,lack of trained staff, lack of awareness about the government scheme for women empowerment ,less role of Panchayats and local institutions , schemes limited to paperwork, inadequate schemes ,lack of local promotional activities for schemes, no compulsion in implementing such schemes, family responsibility of women , intermediates role in monetary aid , man dominance , no strict laws ,fear of insult, social boundations, poor administration of such schemes.

Programmes for women empowerment

To raise the status of women, many constitutional safeguards and exclusive programmes have been started by centre government for women empowerment. A few of them are Integrated

Child Development Scheme, National Rural Health Mission, Janani Suraksha Yojana Integrated Child Protection Scheme, Public Distribution System (TPDS), Antyodaya Anna Yojna (AAY), Ujjawala—A Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Reintegration, Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG), Working Women Hostel, STEP (Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women), Swarn jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and Women empowerment policy, 2010.

In Haryana, many schemes such as Kishori Shakti Yojna, Apni Beti Apna Dhan, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Dhan Lakshmi scheme for rural adolescent girls, Devi Rupak, Ladli scheme, Ladli social security allowance scheme and state level award for improvement in sex- ratio have been stated for welfare of women.

Conclusion:

The status, employment and work performed by women in society are indicators of a nation over all progress. In Haryana, low sex ratio, less work participation rate among females indicates that there is a male dominant society. Although in recent years, there has been improvement in sex - ratio, still the situation is not satisfactory. Women have less social and economic values and they are confined to only household activities. In terms of education, there conditions are very poor due to many social taboos. Although many schemes and programmes have been started for empowerment of women, but the results are not satisfactory due to ineffective administration, corruption in organizations, dowry system, harassment given to women in household, lack of finance etc. The need of hour is to find out loopholes in empowerment of women. There should be strict enforcement of legal provisions. There should be more stress on women education to enable them economically independent.

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