Chapter VI
LITERACY PATTERN IN LATUR DISTRICT

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Chapter VI
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6.1 Introduction:

Any person who is able to read and write, both with understanding in any language is regarded as a literate by the Indian census. In fact, literacy is a fairly reliable index of the socio-economic development of an area. Chandana observes “the trends in literacy are indicative of the pace at which the life and economy of a particular society are getting transformed”. The latest 2001 census reveals that Maharashtra has 68.53 percent literacy and the Latur district constitutes 54.52 percent literacy of the total populations.

As compared with other districts of Maharashtra State, Latur district ranks 28 in the list of the total number of the districts. The Latur district is located on the border of Maharashtra and Karnataka States. The improvement in literacy in the district has, however, to be viewed in the context of chronic scarcity conditions prevailing over a large part of the district and the consequent uncertainty of living conditions.

Human resources constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations. The principal institutional mechanism for developing human skills and knowledge is the formal educational system. Education is a key factor for the rapid development of a country. All countries have committed themselves to the goal of universal primary education in the shortest possible time. Education is not only the fruit of contemplation but an instrument of change also. Knowledge is linked with literacy and a formal education system. The spread of value and attitude can most effectively be achieved through education. Economic development calls for some changes in the traditional pattern of education. It is not enough to speak of the necessity of education; it is important to specify the type.
An industrially advanced society has more literacy. This is not accidental. A stagnant society has a traditionally stagnant scheme of education. In such a society, memory is given more value than inventiveness. But in a developing society, there is much greater orientation towards applied science in education.

Education is one of the important needs of life. A low degree of literacy is an obstacle to economic growth. Investment in education is a measure of the future development of a country. Formal schooling is a good index of a population’s educational attainment. The most basic minimum measurement of educational status is the degree of literacy. But it is very difficult to measure the degree of literacy in accurate terms.

The world data on literacy are not meaningfully comparable. Some countries publish their literacy data by taking into account the population below four years of age, while others exclude this category of children. Some other countries exclude the age below ten years for calculating literacy.

As a matter of convenience, literacy is defined as the ability to read and write one’s name in one’s own mother-tongue. A literate person is one who is able both to read and write. A person who can neither read nor write is called illiterate. A person who is able only to read but not to write may be called semi-literate. In India all those persons who can both read and write a simple message with understanding in any language are classified as literate. This definition is proposed by the United Nations Population Commission. Many countries follow different types of definitions of literacy. For example, in Hong Kong, the definition is most liberal, whereas the definition is very strict in Finland. Thus, there is no universally accepted common definition of literacy. This poses a very serious problem in the analysis and comparison of international literacy patterns.
6.2 Determinants of Literacy:

There are many determinants of literacy. Literacy mainly depends on three factors – the willingness to learn, the ability to learn, and the learning institution. Early malnutrition and disease can adversely affect a child’s ability to read, write and perform arithmetical operations and to think clearly and logically in school (his cognitive abilities). Children from poor families with low level of living are placed at a comparative disadvantage against the children of rich families. The following are the most important factors in the determination of a child’s capacity to learn: (i) family environment, including income levels, parents education, housing conditions, number of children in household, etc; (ii) peer group interactions, i.e., the type of children with whom a child mixes; (iii) personality, i.e., the child’s inherited intelligence and abilities; and (iv) early nutrition and health. If a child enters school deficient in all the above factors, the educational process will have little effect on him.

There is a positive correlation between the degree of economic progress and the degree of literacy. A civilized society will have a higher level of literacy than a tribal society. The rate of literacy diffusion, if low, can be an obstacle. Literacy and economic progress go hand in hand. But literacy is mainly the product of the socio-economic milieu. In this socio-economic matrix will come many factors such as the value system, development of communication and transport, degree of urbanization, status of women in the society, development of technology, ethnographic set up, public policy and so on.

It has been found that there is a high degree of positive correlation between the degree of economic diversification and the pattern of literacy in a society. In many societies, literacy is acquired for getting suitable jobs in the market. A positive correlation also exists between the proportion of workers engaged in agriculture and the literacy pattern. A
country which is mainly agricultural will have lower literacy than a
country which is predominantly industrial. In this respect, interesting
comparison can be made between less developed countries and the
developed countries.

6.3 Growth of Literacy: (1981-2001)

Growth of literacy is dependent upon several factors i.e. the
historical background, the economic condition, the social status and the
educational improvement of a particular region. The percentage of growth
of literacy in Latur district shows that it has increased more than ten times
in the span of hundred years (1981-2001), viz. 35.79 in 1981 and 60.30 in
2001 (Table No. 6.1).

Table No. 6.1: Literacy Percentage in Latur District (1981-2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Literacy Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>35.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>44.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>60.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gazetteers of Latur District.
If we consider Table No. 6.1 we find that there are three decades in the growth of literacy, viz. 1981, 1991 and 2001. First one decades (1981) show that the growth of literacy is almost doubled, i.e. 35.79 percent in 1981 and 44.14 percent in 1991 and 60.30 percent in 2001.

The percentage of the literacy is increased rapidly due to introduction of the scheme of compulsory education after 1947. It might have helped to raise the level of literacy through the nation and the study region itself.

The growth of literacy is appreciable in spite of scarcity conditions prevailing over a large part of the district and the consequent uncertainty of living conditions.

6.4 Literacy Distribution at taluka Levels (2001):

The distribution of literacy rate is not uniform throughout the study region. It varies from taluka to taluka. The Latur taluka has the highest literacy rate (63.69%) while Renapur taluka has the lowest literacy rate (55.91%) as compared to the district average (60.30%). Table No. 6.2 shows the literacy distribution in Latur district.

Table No. 6.2: Talukawise Literacy Percentage (2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Taluka</th>
<th>Literacy Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Latur</td>
<td>63.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Udgir</td>
<td>62.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ahmadpur</td>
<td>60.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nilanga</td>
<td>57.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ausa</td>
<td>57.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Renapur</td>
<td>55.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jalkot</td>
<td>56.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Chakur</td>
<td>59.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Deoni</td>
<td>59.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>S. Anantpal</td>
<td>60.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total District</td>
<td>60.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by Author from primary census Abstract, Maharashtra Series – 12

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The Table No. 6.2 reveals that Latur, Udgir and Ahmadpur talukas have higher literacy rate while Nilanga, Ausa, Renapur and Jalkot talukas have lower literacy rate as compared to the district average literacy rate (60.30%). Especially, Latur (63.69%), Udgir (62.73%), Ahmadpur (60.80%) and S. Anantpal (60.26%) talukas have highest literacy rate; Chakur (59.37%) and Deoni (59.80%) talukas have moderate literacy rate while Nilanga (57.69%), Ausa (57.43%), Renapur (55.91%) and Jalkot (56.05%) talukas have low and very low literacy percentage respectively as compared to the district average (60.30%).

Map No. 6.1 shows that the highest literacy rate talukas are located in the North-West part of the district, moderate literacy rate talukas are located in the Central and East part of the district while low and very low literacy rate talukas are located in the North-East and South part of the district.

Latur, Udgir and Ahmadpur talukas have the highest literacy rate due to the following important causes:
i. More urbanization is one of the important causes for the literacy growth. Latur 61.19% urban population because Latur city, located in this taluka, is the famous urban centre not only in the study region but also in the Maharashtra State. While, Udgir taluka has 18.75% urban population of the total population of the taluka. While Ahmedpur, Nilanga and Ausa talukas has 20.06% urban population of the total population of the taluka.

ii. Educational facilities are large in number. Latur taluka has 43% degree colleges, 44 percent junior colleges, 18 percent secondary schools and 23.81 percent primary school while Udgir and Ahmedpur talukas has 25 percent degree colleges, 11.53 percent junior colleges, 16.31 percent secondary schools and 11.52 percent primary schools as compared to total education facilities of the district.

iii. Better occupational structure is one of the important causes for the literacy growth in the study region. Latur taluka has 19.06 percent primary, 45.73 percent secondary and 34.51 percent tertiary occupational structure. While, Udgir and Ahmadpur talukas has 76.70 percent primary, 9.13 percent secondary and 4.87 percent tertiary occupational structure as compared to district average i.e. 70.52 percent primary, 14.60 percent secondary and 14.88 percent tertiary.

On the contrary, Nilanga, Ausa, Renapur and Jalkot talukas have low and very low literacy rate respectively. The Renapur and Jalkot talukas have the lowest literacy rate due to following important reasons:

i. Less urbanization is an important cause for the low literacy level. Renapur taluka has only 0.00% urban population of the total population of the taluka. While Jalkot taluka is without urban population. Nilanga has 22% urban population while
Ausa has 13.22 percent urban population of the total population of the talukas respectively.

ii. Low educational facilities are also an important cause for the lower literacy rate in the given talukas. Nilanga taluka has 3 percent degree colleges, 7.30 percent junior colleges, 9.62 percent secondary schools and 10.57 percent primary schools, while Ausa taluka has no 2 percent degree colleges, 7.33 percent junior college, only 7.00 percent secondary schools and 5.97 percent primary schools. In the case of Renapur taluka, 2 percent degree colleges, 1 percent junior colleges, 8.36 percent secondary schools and 5.90 percent primary schools, while in the case of Jalkot taluka, 1 percent degree colleges, 6 percent junior colleges, 9.25 percent secondary schools and 8.56 percent primary schools have provided education facilities.

iii. Agrarian occupational structure is an important cause for the lower literacy level. Nilanga has 68.3 percent, Ausa has 68.25 percent, Renapur has 66 percent while Jalkot has 66.2 percent working population engaged in primary occupations especially agriculture, whereas the district average is 60.52 percent.

iv. There is another interesting observation that in these talukas we find higher proportion of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes population of total population, i.e. Nilanga has 21.50, Ausa 18.48 percent and Renapur 17.71 percent while Jalkot has 19.45 percent. In this category ‘Mahar’ and ‘Mangs’ are the predominant groups in the population. After independence the percentage of literacy among the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes has increased but there is still a striking gap in the educational levels of the scheduled caste and general population of the Latur district.
6.5 Male – Female Differentials:

Sex-wise study of literacy pattern reveals that there is a striking inequality in the literacy rates of males and females. Female literacy rate is comparatively lower than that of male. The Table No. 6.2 shows that the study region has 69.79 percent male and 50.15 percent female literate population. It signifies that the process of literacy has been operating largely in the context of its functional or occupational value which explains the greater emphasis on male education (Map No. 6.2 & 6.3).

Latur, Udgir, Ahmadpur and S. Anantpal talukas have higher male and female literacy rates. While remaining six talukas have comparatively lower literacy rates. The female literacy is low mainly due to (i) general backwardness of female in different spheres of social life and discriminatory treatment given to them in schools. (ii) traditional jobs or agricultural labours; women are working in their traditional jobs as agricultural labourers for which literacy or education is hardly essential, (iii) the low economic conditions of the study region do not permit female education, particularly when they can, otherwise, augments the life income; (iv) social insecurity : female does not get much mobility for education. (v) Division of labour: to earn the bread and butter for family is the responsibility of a male while to rear the children is the responsibility of a female.

6.6 Rural – Urban Differentials:

Though both the rural-urban literacy percentage of Latur district is comparatively low with the average literacy rate of the Maharashtra state, there is a striking gap in between the rural and urban literacy rate within the district as well as in the state itself. Generally, urban areas have comparatively high literacy percentage than that of rural areas. It is due to the following factors:
LATUR DISTRICT
TALUKAWISE MALE LITERACY RATE (2001)

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Above 70%</th>
<th>Below 70%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Map No. 6 2
i) Urban people are socially and economically more awakened than their rural counterpart.

ii) Educational facilities are available more in urban areas than the countryside.

iii) Since educated persons in rural areas tend to migrate to urban areas in search of jobs, this process increases the number of literate persons in urban areas but it adversely affects the literacy percentage in rural areas.

iv) Inadequate income compels people to go through educational process in hope of earning bread in urban areas.

In the case of Latur district, urban area has 80.10 percent literacy rate whereas rural area has 68.90 percent literacy rate. Literacy rates vary from place to place. The following table shows the literacy rates in urban area and rural area in Latur district at taluka levels.

**Table No. 6.3 Urban and Rural Literacy Rates in Latur District (2001)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Taluka</th>
<th>Literacy rate (%)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Latur</td>
<td>80.69</td>
<td>70.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Udgir</td>
<td>81.40</td>
<td>69.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Ahmadpur</td>
<td>79.34</td>
<td>68.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Nilanga</td>
<td>72.42</td>
<td>67.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Ausa</td>
<td>74.90</td>
<td>67.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Renapur</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>66.40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Chakur</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>68.40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Jalkot</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>66.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Deoni</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>68.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>S.Anantpal</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>71.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by the author from primary census abstract.
Table No. 6.3 shows that the urban literacy is higher in Udgir talukas as compared to district average urban literacy rate 81.40. There are total five urban centres in the study region. Among these only Nilanga urban centres have low literacy rate i.e. 72.42.

In the rural areas, S.Anantpal and Latur talukas have higher literacy rate than the district average 60.30, while Renapur, Jalkot, Ausa and Nilanga talukas have lower literacy percentage. Remaining talukas have moderate literacy rates around district average.

The Latur rural area is located on the periphery of the city as 'Latur' as well as it is surrounded by the industrial centres like cotton mills, sugar factory and other industrial units.

6.7 Summary:

Latur district exhibits a lower percentage of literacy among its population than the state literacy percentage. This lower percentage is due to poor agricultural development as well as poor industrial development. It may be pointed out that more than one and half of the total population of Latur district is illiterate.

As with the general population of the state, so also with the study region population the degree of industrialization runs parallel with the degree of literacy. In all the places where the degree of industrialization is high the literacy rate is also high.

It is noteworthy that there are striking disparities in the rate and pattern of the literacy of the district caused by residence and sex. The percentage of urban literate persons is nearly one and half time greater than that of rural literacy. The male literacy rate is almost double than that of the female. Similarly the difference in the percentage of literates in agricultural areas and non-agricultural areas is also well marked.
In the case of taluka level distribution of literacy Latur, Udgir, Ahmadpur and S. Anantpal talukas have the highest literacy rate while Nilanga, Ausa, Renapur and Jalkot talukas have lower literacy rate as compared to district average literacy rate. Chakur and Deoni talukas have moderate literacy rate upto district average.

Spatially, the areas with higher degree of urbanization and industrialization have high literacy rate, the areas having higher concentration of educational institutions and the areas characterized by in-migration of literate workers have high literacy. By contrast, the areas were the scheduled tribes and scheduled caste people are engaged in their traditional occupations, where the number of schools is limited and where the developmental activities are at a standstill due to unfavourable topography, lack of communication and lack of transport, show low literacy.
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1. Govt. of Maharashtra (1991): Primary Census Abstract; Maharashtra, part II B.