Abstract

This thesis assesses the correlates of Female Literacy in India using district estimates from the Census of India 2001. Though female literacy rates have increased across districts from census 2001 to census 2011 but there is hardly any homogeneity across districts and hence across the states. The statistical analysis like multiple regression and factor analysis are used to identify determinants of female literacy rate using a dataset of 593 districts. In this research, an attempt has been made to discuss gender disparities in literacy in districts of India and different states. The first task is to measure the extent of existing gender inequalities in education using Provisional Totals of 2001 and 2011, Census of India and then identify the lagging districts so that micro level planning can be initiated to correct the imbalances. This involves the following: evaluating the educational development among females, measuring inter-districts inequalities in female education and assessing the impact of various socio-economic and demographic variables on female literacy. The 11 districts Mewat of Haryana; Jalore of Rajasthan; Shravasti of Uttar Pradesh; Rayagada, Nabarangapur, Koraput, Malkangiri of Orissa; Dantewada, Bizapur of Chhattisgarh; Jhabua, Alirapur of Madhya Pradesh are having female literacy rate below threshold level of Economic Development of 40% and needs special attention for improvement in literacy among female. In this empirical study, the explanatory(Independent) variables used are Male Literacy Rate(MLR), Work Participation Rate of main and marginal female workers(FWPR), Mean Age of Marriage (MAM), Sex ratio, Percentage of People Below Poverty Line(BPL), Infant Mortality rate(IMR), Child Mortality Rate (CMR), Total Fertility Rate (TFR), Percentage of Urban Population (P_Urban), Percentage of Hindus(P_HIN), Percentage of Muslims(P_MUS), Percentage of Others (includes Christians, Sikhs, Jain, Buddhists and others)-P_OTR, Log of Gross District Domestic Product, Proportion of Families with High and Middle Standard of Living, Proportion of Families with Low Standard of Living, State Codes and District Codes. Multiple regression analysis run brings out the powerful influence of increasing Male Literacy Rate, Decreasing Total Fertility Rate, Decreasing Infant/ Child Mortality Rate, Family with high and middle standard of living, State Variation, Urbanization on female literacy rate at the district level whereas Hindus and Muslim population, Main and Marginal Female Force shows their quantitative weak impact in comparison. Further Factor analysis run reveal that Percentage of Others, Percentage of People Below Poverty Line, Total Fertility Rate, Percentage of Urban Population, Proportion of families with high and middle standard of living,
State Code, Infant Mortality and Child Mortality Rate and Male Literacy Rate contribute significantly for very high level of literacy development among females. Path analysis result tells that the total indirect effect of female literacy rate on total fertility rate is small and negative (-0.330) whereas the direct effect is positive and big (0.162) and thus, the total effect is -0.168.