



## THE RELATION BETWEEN FEMALE LITERACY AND FEMALE WORK PARTICIPATION RATE IN DIFFERENT STATES OF INDIA

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**Abstract**

*The status of female literacy rate and women employment have been the cause of serious concern among the policy makers since after the inception of planning. The female literacy rate and the work participation rate for women have been very low, especially as compared to male. This paper shows the female literacy rate and the female work participation rate across different states of India in 2011. It also tries to find out whether there is any relation between the two.*

**Key Words:** *Literacy, Work Participation Rate, Census, Male, Female, Rural, Urban, State.*

**1. Introduction**

The concept of women empowerment is very important in modern socio-economic situation. Literacy and employment are two very important indicators of women empowerment as they help a woman to become economically independent and personally self-reliant. Over the years, India has changed socially, economically, and globally. After the 2011 census, female literacy rate in India was found to be 65.46%, 58.75% in rural areas and 79.92% in urban areas. The female Work Participation Rate (WPR), which is defined as the percentage of total female workers to the total population, is 25.5 % as per the 2011 Census, whereas it is 30.02% in rural areas and 15.44% in urban areas. Female literacy rate and women work participation rate also varies across different states of India.

**2. Objective of the study**

- a. To analyse the female literacy situation and female WPR across different states of India
- b. To find the degree of correlation between female literacy and female WPR in India

**3. Data and Methodology**

This paper is based entirely on secondary data. Census is the main source of literacy data. For employment data, it is obtained from office of the Registrar General, India. As a methodological tool, simple Pearson’s correlation coefficient method has been used.

**4. Female literacy situation across different states of India**

In a country like India, literacy, and specifically the female literacy, is the main foundation for social and economic growth. **Table: 1** shows some facts about different states female literacy rate, Kerala has the highest female literacy rate. It is followed by Goa, Tripura, Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, and Maharashtra, Sikkim. The lowest female literacy rate in India is seen in the state of Bihar.

**Table: 1 Rate of Female literacy in different states of India in 2011**

Sl no.	States / UTs	Female literacy rate (%)
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	82.34
2	Andhra Pradesh	59.15
3	Arunachal Pradesh	57.70
4	Assam	66.27
5	Bihar	51.50
6	Chandigarh	81.19
7	Chhattisgarh	60.24



8	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	64.32
9	Daman and Diu	79.55
10	Delhi	80.76
11	Gujarat	69.68
12	Goa	84.66
13	Haryana	65.94
14	Himachal Pradesh	75.93
15	Jammu and Kashmir	56.43
16	Jharkhand	55.42
17	Karnataka	68.08
18	Kerala	92.07
19	Lakshadweep	87.95
20	Madhya Pradesh	59.24
21	Maharashtra	75.87
22	Meghalaya	72.89
23	Manipur	70.26
24	Mizoram	89.27
25	Nagaland	76.11
26	Orissa	64.01
27	Puducherry	80.67
28	Punjab	70.73
29	Rajasthan	52.12
30	Sikkim	75.61
31	Tamil Nadu	73.44
32	Tripura	82.73
33	Uttarakhand	70.01
34	Uttar Pradesh	57.18
35	West Bengal	70.54

Source: census 2011

The literacy rate is low here in India compared to other developed countries because the population in India is very high. Being the 7th largest country its population stands 2nd in the world after China. There are over 130 crore people in India. People, especially in rural areas, do not send their girl children to school as they prefer to engage them in household work and get them to be married early. Though child marriage has been lowered to very low levels, it still happens. Many families, especially in rural areas believe that having a male child is better than having a baby girl. So the male child gets all the benefits.

##### 5. Female work participation rate across different states of India

The work participation rate for female in India is very low although it is different across different states. There is also high gender gap in this respect. In 2011, the highest work participation rate for female is found in Himachal Pradesh (44.80%) followed by Nagaland,



**Table: 2, Female work participation rate in different states of India in 2011**

Sl no.	States / UTs	Female WPR (%)
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	17.80
2	Andhra Pradesh	36.20
3	Arunachal Pradesh	35.40
4	Assam	22.50
5	Bihar	19.10
6	Chandigarh	16.00
7	Chhattisgarh	39.70
8	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	25.30
9	Daman and Diu	14.90
10	Delhi	10.60
11	Gujarat	23.40
12	Goa	21.90
13	Haryana	17.80
14	Himachal Pradesh	44.80
15	Jammu and Kashmir	19.10
16	Jharkhand	29.10
17	Karnataka	31.90
18	Kerala	18.20
19	Lakshadweep	11.00
20	Madhya Pradesh	32.60
21	Maharashtra	31.10
22	Meghalaya	32.70
23	Manipur	38.60
24	Mizoram	36.20
25	Nagaland	44.70
26	Orissa	17.20
27	Puducherry	17.60
28	Punjab	13.90
29	Rajasthan	35.10
30	Sikkim	39.60
31	Tamil Nadu	31.80
32	Tripura	23.60
33	Uttarakhand	26.70
34	Uttar Pradesh	16.70
35	West Bengal	18.10

**Source: Office of the Registrar General, India**

Chhattisgarh, Sikkim Manipur. The lowest female work participation rate is found in Delhi and it is as low as 10.60%

## 6. Findings

The Pearson's correlation coefficient between female literacy rate and female work participation rate is very low and it is only 0.06. Therefore, literacy rate for women has no significant impact on the work participation rate for female. The major finding of the paper is that the WPR of women is not increasing with the rise in level of literacy. Even in the states where female literacy rate is very high, the WPR for women is miserable. Kerala and Delhi are the best examples for this. Kerala is well known for its literacy rate. Here the female literacy rate is as high as 92.07% whereas the female WPR is only 8.20%. In Delhi, the literacy rate for women is almost 81% but the female WPR is only 10.60%. This situation exists for almost all the states.



## **7. Conclusion**

The literacy rate and the women work participation rate in India have always been a matter of concern but many NGO initiatives and government ads, campaigns and programs have been held to spread awareness amongst people about the importance of literacy and employment. The situation is still not very satisfactory. It is also seen that only increase in the literacy rate cannot guarantee high level of WPR for women. It is believed that high level of education and vocational training for women workers is necessary for improving their level of productivity and enabling them to move into non-agricultural sectors. Women should be given autonomy and freedom to move, and to join self-help groups, affects their ability to access resources and improve productivity.

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