

Gender Disparity in Literacy: District Level Analysis of Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

Literacy is the main key factor of development in the society. It creates an important input in overall development of individual and enables them to realize their socio, economic, political responsibility. In India, the overall literacy rate is 74.04 percent whereas male and female literacy rate is 82.14 percent and 65.46 percent respectively. It shows that more than one-fourth of the country's population is still illiterate and also highlights a slow rate of growth of female literacy compared with male literacy. The male female literacy gap is approximately 16 percent (Census, 2011). The problem of illiteracy, particular in women, is a big issue of concern not only in India but also across the world and this directly impact development efforts (Katiyar, 2016). There are huge disparities in the social, economic, cultural and schooling opportunities available to men and women in India. Amongst all states, Rajasthan is considered a state with low sex ratio and a huge gender disparity in literacy. It comprises 33 districts and the ISOCODE given by International Organisation for Standardization for this state is RJ. The population recorded according to the 2011 census stands about 68 million with sex ratio 921 per 1000. The literacy rate in Rajasthan, as per 2011 census is about 66.11 percent, whereas male and female literacy is 79.19 percent and 52.12 percent respectively. The average literacy rate at urban level is 79.68 percent, in which male and female literacy is 87.91 and 63.81 percent respectively. In addition, the rural average literacy is 61.44 percent, whereas male and female stood 76.16 and 42.20 percent respectively (Census, 2011). Literacy is a multidimensional concept and plays a very important role to eliminate gender disparity at all level. The present study is an attempt to investigate the gender disparity in literacy at district level in rural as well as urban areas of Rajasthan. Sopher's method (1974) is applied to find the district level rural-urban gender disparity in literacy index for Rajasthan. This study is considered unique in nature to find out rural urban gender disparity gap in literacy at district level. The results of the study may be supportive in formulation and operation of literacy programmes at district level in Rajasthan.

Keywords: Gender, Disparity, Literacy, Sex, Welfare etc

INTRODUCTION

“EDUCATION IS MOST POWERFUL WEAPON WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD”

Nelson Mandela

The importance of literacy need not be stressed. Literacy and schooling are important factors for economic growth (Barro, 2001) and women's education is essential for future growth (Klasen, 2002; World Bank, 2001). In society, literacy level is the principal determinant of adult outcomes and if women are deprived in education, that disadvantage shall move through the entire system of gender stratification (Hill & King, 1993). Literacy and educational attainment are powerful indicators of social and economic development in the society.¹ In general, high-literacy rates lead to lower infant mortality rates (Kingdon, 1999; World Bank, 1997), and enhance the status of women both in domestic life and society. Additionally, the women literacy status have significantly positive effects on the child's human capital attainment (Sengupta and Guha, 2002; Olclough, 1982) (Mitra A, 2008).² Literacy enlightens in variety of forms. For examples, Lipset's (1960) idea of working class authoritarianism maintains that people are anti- democratic until they are socialized by educational institute stressing democratic. Stouffer (1995) stressed on the relationship between

¹ Sundaram A and Vanneman R, (2008) “Gender Differentials in Literacy in India:

The Intriguing Relationship with Women's Labor Force Participation” World Development Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 128–143,

² Aparna Mitra(2008). “Trends in literacy rates and schooling among the scheduled tribe women in India” International Journal of Social Economics Vol. 35 No. 1/2, pp. 99-110.

education and tolerance. Borhek (1965) highlights the role of literacy in reducing prejudice and categorical thinking (Kane, 1995).³ The role of literacy considered as requirement for the acquisition of other skills and development of more realistic attitude is universally accepted. In technological society, the written word has become the dominant style of complex communication; those without the ability to read and write will be fated to the lowest role in the society. Literacy is increasingly being reorganised as a basic human right (Stromquist N.P, 1992)⁴. According to Gunar Mydral, “Asian Drama”, Literacy opens up avenues for communication skills which play a necessary role for human development. Literacy is a multidimensional concept. It is the first rung in the educational ladder (Katiyar S.P.2015)⁵

Literacy is the basic building block and an essential element in the development of intellect in human life. In the perspective of Indian society, which is essentially patriarchal, it is women and girls who bear because of low accessibility to education. In addition, gender becomes a crucial factor in determining the education level (India Human Development Report, 2011). In India, there is a large gender disparity in literacy; it is about sixteen percent between male and female (Census 2011). The difficulty of illiteracy, especially among women, is a vast area of anxiety not only in India but also across the world because it has adverse impacts on development efforts (Katiyar S.P.2016).⁶

EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA

In India, women face injustice at every stage of life in the society. They are not treated equally as a result their socio, economic, cultural, political status goes down in all most all sphere of life. The Constitution of India, talks about the importance of education for human development. The right to education is a fundamental right (FR) as well as directive principles of state policy (DPSP). The article 45 (DPSP) says that the state shall endeavour to provide, within a period of 10 years from the commencement of this constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. The aim of the constitution seems elusive even after five decades. The original period to achieve this aim was extended from 10 years to 16 years. In 1966, the education commission regretted on failure of achieving the said target and extended the date. The new target date was fixed i.e. 1985. Further in 1986, the date was extended by another 10 years and set the date at 2001. Despite the government failure in meeting the aim, a preliminary review of the year 2001 census data reveals that the last decade has seen a extraordinary increase in literacy rates in India, particularly for women (Ramachandran and Saihjee 2002 for a discussion) (Vaid D, 2004).⁷ In (1957-1959) The National Committee on Women’s Education, chaired by Smt. Durgabai Deshmukh prepared a strong recommendation for the education of women stating that literacy should be a main concern. In (1968), the national policy on education highlighted the importance of girl’s education for social transformation and removal of all types of disparities (1986). The national policy on education 1986 was modified in 1992 with eight UN Millennium Development Goals for gender equality. Empowering women by providing the equal participation of girls at all level especially education. In (2009), “the Saakshar Bharat Mission” was initiated by the government of India for absolute literacy among 365 districts, 26 states and UTs (Katiyar 2016).

The Constitution (93rd Amendment) bill proposed three separate amendment; (1) the insertion of new article 21-A (FR); (2) An amendment to article 45; (3) the insertion of new clause (k) to article 51(A). In addition, on December 12, 2002, the President of India assented to the constitution (86th Amendment) Act, 2002 and makes education a “Fundamental Right” for those between the ages of 6 and 14 years (Sripati V & Thrivengadam A.K, 2004).⁸ Further, article 14, 15(5), 41, 45, 46, 29 30, 350-A, 39, “The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009”, commonly known as the Right To Education (RTE) Act etc also emphasise upon importance of education for each one, without any discrimination, so that the actual welfare of the society could be achieved by eliminating all kinds of disparities.

Major Schemes for School Education (Centrally Sponsored) are started by the Government of India, these are; “Operation Black Board” launched in 1987 in pursuance of NPE-POA, to give minimum essential facilities to all primary schools in the country. The Education Guarantee Scheme also highlighted the value of education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiman (SSA) has been started since 2000-2001 to provide for a variety of interventions for worldwide access and maintenance, bridging of gender and social group gaps in elementary education and improving the quality of

³ Emily W. Kane, (1995), “Education and Beliefs about Gender Inequality” Social Problems, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 74-90

⁴ STROMQUIST N.P (1992), “Women and Literacy: Promises and Constraints” The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 520, World Literacy in the Year 2000, pp. 54-65.

⁵ Katiyar S. P. (2015), “Growth of Literacy in India – A Trend Analysis”, Indian Journal of Adult Education, Vol. 76 No.1, pp. 5-23.

⁶ Katiyar S.P (2016), “Gender Disparity in Literacy in India” Social Change, 46(1) 46–69 © CSD 2016

⁷ Vaid D. (2004), “Gendered Inequality in Educational Transitions” Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 39, No. 35 pp. 3927-3938.

⁸ Sripati V & Thrivengadam A.K (2004), “India: Constitutional amendment making the right to education a Fundamental Right” International Jnl of Constitutional Law, Volume 2, Issue-1, pp. 148-158

education (Ministry of Human Resource Development).⁹ Further, The Mahila Samakhyia programme was launched in 1988 to pursue the objectives of the National Policy on Education, 1986 and recognised an effective tool for women's empowerment (MHRD). District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched with an aim of achieving the objective of universal primary education and covered 272 districts in 18 states of the country.¹⁰ In addition, National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) launched in July 2003, for providing additional support for enhancing girl's education.¹¹ Padhe Bitiya Badhe Bitiya started by (U.P.) Government for BPL families for education of girls.¹² Scheme Major Schemes for Secondary Education, Quality Improvement in Schools (QIS) etc (Kumar J & Sangeeta, 2013).¹³

CURRENT LITERACY STATUS IN INDIA

The 15th official census was calculated in 2011. Literacy is the main foundation for social and economic growth. In 1947, when the British rule ended the literacy rate was just 12 percent. Over the years, India has transformed socially, economically and globally. After 2011 the Census of India, the overall literacy rate is 74.04 percent. Whereas the male and female literacy rate is 82.14 percent and 65.46 percent respectively. The state Kerala stood 1st rank with overall literacy 93.91 percent and male and female literacy are 96.11 and 92.02 percent respectively. Further, in Kerala the rural male and female literacy are 95.35 and 98.73 percent respectively whereas urban literacy shows 96.95 and 98.73 percent respectively. The state of Bihar is on the bottom with overall literacy 63.82 percent.

Literacy Status of Women in Rajasthan

In addition, the northern state like Rajasthan also has a huge disparity in literacy. The overall literacy rate in Rajasthan is 61.44 percent whereas rural male and female literacy are 76.16 and 42.20 percent respectively. The overall urban literacy rate is 79.68 whereas urban male and female literacy are 87.91 and 63.81 percent respectively (Census of 2011).¹⁴ Rajasthan is beautiful state with pink city Jaipur. It is mostly a desert state but still attracts number of tourists every year. According to 2011 Census of India, the total population of Rajasthan is about 68 million. The state Rajasthan consists of 33 districts in which Hindi language is spoken. According to 2011 Census of India, the sex ratio of Rajasthan is 928 for each 1000 male. The urban sex ratio stands 914 females per 1000 male. Rajasthan is the state where about 75.13 percent population live in villages of rural area. The sex ratio in rural area is 933 per 1000 male. This is a big concern for Rajasthan in 21st century.¹⁵

Brief Facts of Women Literacy in Rajasthan

The state of Rajasthan has the 33rd most unpleasant literacy rate across India. In Rajasthan, there are a total of 109,189 schools. Of these, 77,833 are government schools and 29,766 are private schools. In addition, 1,590 schools are unorganised and 72,954 schools are in rural location. As a result, the male literacy rate for Rajasthan is not far behind the national average, which is a sign of progress. However, the literacy rate for women in Rajasthan is much inferior to the national average of 65.46 per cent at a very low 47.76 percent (Census 2011). In Rajasthan, the girl's education is very poor, due to low girl's enrolment in schools. In girl's education, Rajasthan has 9 of 26 most backward districts in India. In 2010-2011, the enrolment ratio is for 1000 boys 857 girls. This shows that the girls are lagging behind boys in school enrolment rate. According to ASER report, the girls who are 11-14 years old in 2011, 8.9 percent were not enrolled; the ratio has increased in 2012, to over 11 percent. This is a negative sign of girl's education (State Report Card of 2011-2012)¹⁶.

According to DISE, in 2010-2011, 80 per cent of children were enrolled in elementary school. This includes an enhancement in girls at the elementary level. Though, girls' give up rates in upper standards are quite high. Mainly for two reasons (1) child labour (2) child marriage (Gupta A. (CMS) 2013)¹⁷.

Methodology of the Study

⁹ <http://mhrd.gov.in/sarva-shiksha-abhiyan>

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarva_Shiksha_Abhiyan#cite_note-DPEP-EFA-3

¹¹ <http://www.teachersbadi.in/2013/11/npegel-programme-npegel-scheme-national.html>

¹² <http://risingcareer.blogspot.in/2012/10/pade-betiyaan-bade-betiyaan-scheme.html>

¹³ Kumar J & Sangeeta, 2013, "Status of Women Education in India" Vol 2, no. 4, ISSN :2320-009X.

¹⁴ <http://www.census2011.co.in/literacy.php> (visited on oct.12, 2016.)

¹⁵ <http://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/rajasthan.html> (visited on oct. 12, 2016)

In the present study, Sopher's method (1974) is apply for discovery of the district level rural-urban gender disparity in literacy in Rajasthan. According to Sopher's method, If X1 and X2 indicate the respective percentage value of variables of groups 1 and 2, then the disparity index (D) can be calculated by the following formula:

$$D = \log (X2/X1) + \text{Log} [(Q-X1)/ (Q-X2)]$$

Where $X2 \geq X1$ and $Q = 100$

This method reveals that the higher the value of D, the higher the extent of disparity and the lower the value of D, the lower the extent of disparity. In case there is no disparity (perfect equality); the value of D will be 0.

Data Sources and Indicators for the Present Study

The present study is mainly based on secondary data and district level data is taken from the Census of India 2011. The present research paper includes nine indicators namely (a) Total literacy of Rajasthan (b) Male literacy (c) Female literacy (d) Total literacy in rural areas of Rajasthan (e) Male literacy in rural area (f) Female literacy in rural area (g) Total urban literacy of Rajasthan (h) Urban male literacy (i) Urban female literacy, related to gender disparity in literacy in both rural and urban areas of Rajasthan.

EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table1: Overall, Rural, Urban “Gender Literacy Index Value” and “Ranks” of Districts of Rajasthan.

OVERALL GDI			RURAL GDI			URBAN GDI		
D	Districts	RANKS	D	Districts	RANKS	D	Districts	RANKS
0.274	Alwar	1	0.406	Ganganagar	1	0.368	Ganganagar	1
0.392	Ganganagar	2	0.445	Hanumangarh	2	0.395	Hanumangarh	2
0.433	Hanumangarh	3	0.480	Bikaner	3	0.408	Dhaulpur	3
0.442	Bikaner	4	0.496	Banswara	4	0.418	Bikaner	4
0.461	Kota	5	0.504	Churu	5	0.422	Jodhpur	5
0.479	Banswara	6	0.505	Dungarpur	6	0.423	Tonk	6
0.492	Pratapgarh	7	0.507	Pratapgarh	7	0.423	Banswara	7
0.496	Dungarpur	8	0.540	Udaipur	8	0.438	Jaipur	8
0.498	Udaipur	9	0.559	Barmer	9	0.456	Kota	9
0.499	Churu	10	0.560	Pali	10	0.484	Ajmer	10
0.532	Bhilwara	11	0.561	Bhilwara	11	0.498	Dungarpur	11
0.540	Jaipur	12	0.572	Bundi	12	0.500	Nagaur	12
0.542	Jodhpur	13	0.576	Sirohi	13	0.504	Bhilwara	13
0.547	Bundi	14	0.581	Jhalawar	14	0.506	Churu	14
0.549	Sirohi	15	0.586	Nagaur	15	0.514	Udaipur	15
0.551	Barmer	16	0.590	Jalor	16	0.520	Jhalawar	16
0.555	Dhaulpur	17	0.594	Dhaulpur	17	0.526	Sikar	17
0.555	Pali	18	0.596	Kota	18	0.526	Bharatpur	18

0.55	Jhalawar	19	0.59		0.53	Chittargarh	19
5			7	Baran	19	4	
0.56	Nagaur	20	0.60		0.53	Alwar	20
7			9	Chittargarh	20	6	
0.57	Ajmer	21	0.61		0.53	Bundi	21
3			4	Rajsamand	21	7	
0.57	Chittargarh	22	0.61		0.53	Baran	22
6			5	Jaisalmer	22	9	
0.57	Baran	23	0.62		0.54	Pratapgarh	23
8			2	Jodhpur	23	4	
0.58	Jalor	24	0.62		0.54	Karauli	24
6			3	Alwar	24	8	
0.59	Jaisalmer	25	0.63		0.55	Jaisalmer	25
2			9	Sikar	25	1	
0.59	Rajsamand	26	0.64		0.57	Jhunjhun	26
6			3	Jaipur	26	1	
0.60	Tonk	27	0.64		0.58	Pali	27
7			4	Jhunjhun	27	2	
0.61	Sikar	28	0.66		0.59	Barmer	28
3			4	Dausa	28	1	
0.62	Jhunjhun	29	0.66		0.59	Rajsamand	29
8			4	Ajmer	29	3	
0.65	Bharatpur	30	0.67		0.60	Jalor	30
0			0	Tonk	30	4	
0.65	Dausa	31	0.68		0.61	Sirohi	31
4			2	Bharatpur	31	6	
0.66	Karauli	32	0.68		0.63	Sawai	32
6			8	Karauli	32	1	
0.68	Sawai	33	0.71	Sawai	33	0.64	Madhopur
8	Madhopur		9	Madhopur		8	Dausa
							33

Source: Author's own calculation

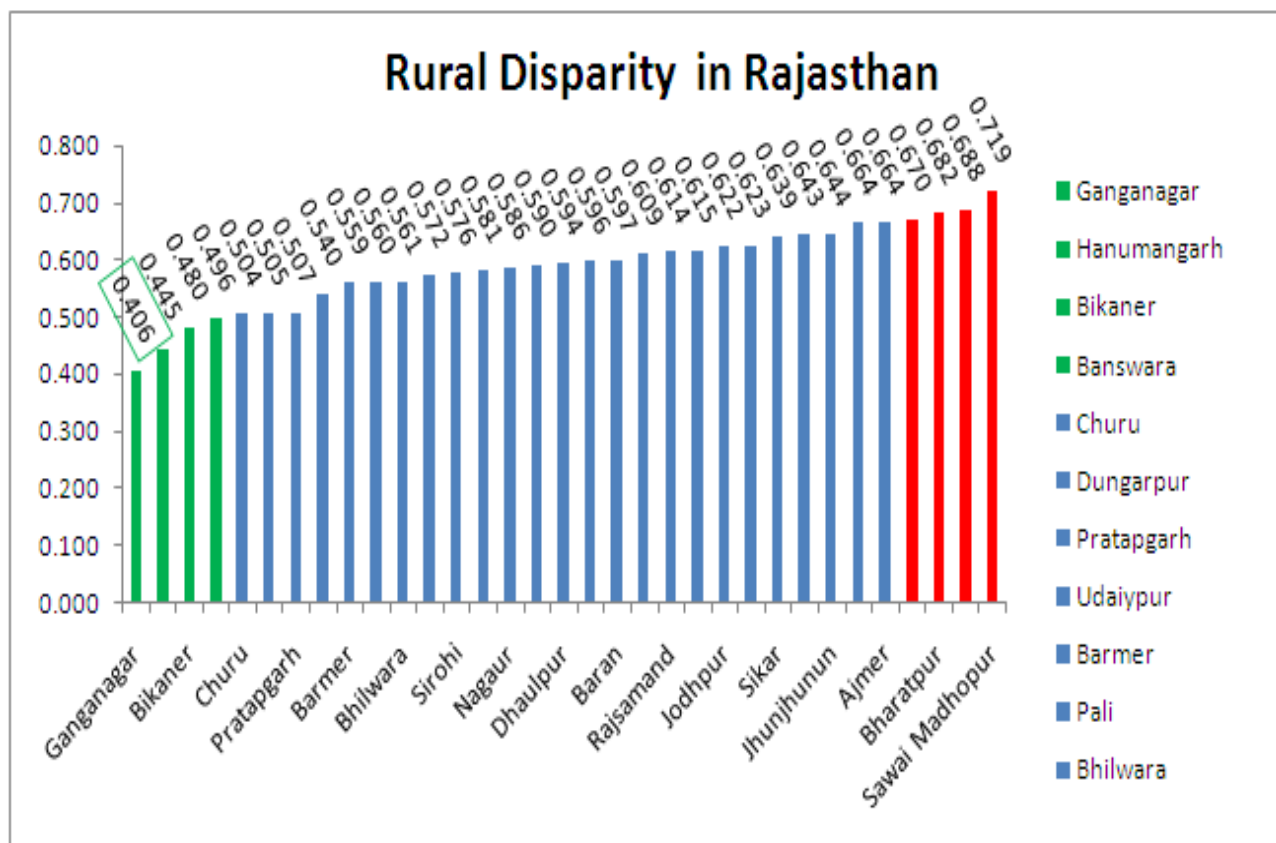


Figure 1: Rural Disparity in Rajasthan

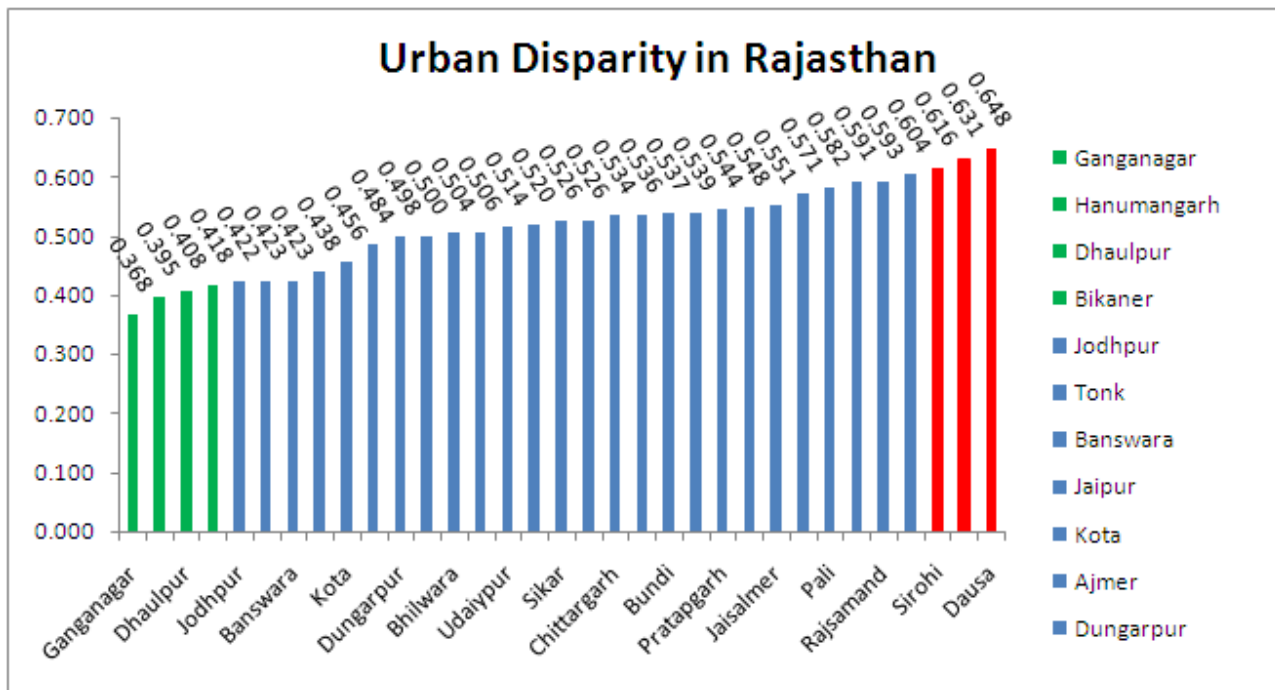


Figure 2: Urban Disparity in Rajasthan

Table-1 reveals the overall, rural and urban gender disparity index (GDI) value of 33 districts of the state of Rajasthan. The overall GDI value of district Alwar is 0.274, followed by Ganganagar, Hanumangarh, Bikaner and Kota with GDI value 0.392, 0.433, 0.442 and 0.461 respectively. Which is quite good sign of progress. But on the other hand the districts like Sawai Madhopur is on the top in overall disparity in literacy with GDI value 0.688, followed by Karauli, Dausa, Bharatpur, Jhunjhunu, Sikar and Tonk with GDI value 0.666, 0.654, 0.650, 0.628, 0.613 and 0.607 respectively. It shows that these districts are affected by high gender disparity in literacy by getting more than 50 percent GDI value. Further, the rural GDI value of district Ganganagar is 0.406 followed by districts Hanumangarh, Bikaner and Banswara with GDI value 0.445, 0.480 and 0.496 respectively. It shows that the GDI value of above mentioned districts are less than 50 percent, which is quite good sign of education growth. But on the other side, the district Sawai Madhopur is on the top in disparity in literacy at rural level with GDI value 0.719 followed by the districts Karauli, Bharatpur, Tonk, Ajmer, Dausa, Jhunjhunu, Jaipur, Sikar, Alwar, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Rajsamand and Chitrargarh with rural GDI value 0.688, 0.682, 0.670, 0.664, 0.644, 0.643, 0.639, 0.623, 0.622, 0.622, 0.615, 0.614 and 0.609 respectively. The results show that these districts are having more than 50 percent GDI value at rural level in literacy. This is a big sign of concern. In addition, the urban GDI value of district Ganganagar is 0.368 followed by districts Hanumangarh, Dhaulpur, Bikaner etc with GDI value 0.395, 0.408 and 0.418 respectively. This is less than 50 percent of its GDI values. On the opposite side, the district Dausa contains highest urban GDI value i.e. 0.648 followed by districts Sawai Madhopur, Sirohi and Jalor etc with urban GDI value 0.631, 0.616 and 0.604 respectively. It reveals that these districts are having highest urban GDI value which is above 60 percent.

CONCLUSION

This paper presents the empirical analysis of gender disparity in literacy at rural and urban level of Rajasthan. The result of RDLIV (rural disparity in literacy index value) shows that the districts Ganganagar, Hanumangarh, Bikaner, Banswara etc are having a huge gender disparity in literacy, where as the result of UDLIV (urban disparity in literacy index value) highlights that the districts Ganganagar, Hanumangarh, Dhaulpur, Bikaner are more effected urban areas. The government of Rajasthan should focus and take proactive actions on above mentioned districts at rural as well as urban level to eliminate disparity in literacy. In addition, the Ganganagar, Hanumangarh, Bikaner is the common districts of rural and urban area of Rajasthan where a large disparity in literacy can be seen. The state government should also take some effective steps regarding these districts, so that the disparity gap could be reduced. It is not only the duty of state government to take effective steps but an individual should also be conscious regarding the value of education, only than disparity in literacy can be removed completely and we may reach to the welfare state.