

Access To Education: A Case Study Of A Village

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ABSTARCT

Education, health and nutrition are the basic means for human resource development. The role of education in raising the consciousness is widely acknowledged in the contemporary world and hence UNDP has set one of the seventeen goals for sustainable development. Since the independence, government has been made many efforts to raise the level of literacy and education through various schemes, provisions and programmes. Due to these schemes and also many other reasons, like awareness among people, expansion & accessible information technology, globalization etc., overall literacy rate has been improved but not raised to the desired level, whereas regional disparities, inter-state as well as intra-state variations can be widely seen. Similarly, gap in literacy rates by residence and by gender are also exists.

On the basis of a brief survey of a village, this paper is trying to examine level of literacy and access to education of villagers. The results show that there is pitiable condition of villagers in education front and suggest that female education is of particular importance in rural areas of India. There is also need of higher and rural-technical institution in the villages.

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I. Introduction

Human capital is the most important factor in economic growth, so human resource development is the prime goal of the modern world. Education, health and nutrition are the basic means for human resource development. The role of education in raising the consciousness is widely acknowledged in the contemporary world. And also in this new era most of the occupations require particular type of skill, that can be gain through education. Besides, education not only helps in getting good job but also means to attain high social status. It gives platform to individuals to involve in development process through imparting of information, knowledge and skills. Thus, education is the backbone for overall development of every society or nation and even whole world. The role of education in facilitating social and economic progress is well accepted. So that UNDP has included Inclusive and Quality Education as one of the most important goals for overall sustainable development.

According to Human Development Report (UNDP, 1993) literacy is a person's first step in learning and knowledge building and as a result literacy indicators are essential for any measurement of human development. Correspondingly, the literacy is one of the most significant indicators of the human development. This is an important component, out of three components, of Human Development Index (HDI), which is single composite index of human development of every country and has been publishing by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) since 1990 as Human Development Report (HDR). Thus, literacy and basic education build fundamental structure for development of the country while higher education is recognized as a critical factor in inclusive and faster growth. Since the independence, government has been made many efforts to raise the level of literacy and education through various schemes, provisions and programmes. Likewise, National Literacy Mission (NLM), Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Operation Black-Board, National Policy Education (NPE), and now, Right of Children to Free & Compulsory Education (RTE) Act etc. Due to launching various schemes/programmes by the government (and also many other reasons, like awareness among people, expansion & accessible information technology, globalization etc.), overall literacy rate has been improved but not raised to the desired level, whereas regional disparities, inter-state as well as intra-state variations can be widely seen. Similarly, gap in literacy rates by residence and by gender are also exists.

On the basis of a brief survey of a village, this paper is trying to examine level of literacy and access to education of villagers.

Objectives

The objectives of this paper are as follows:

- 1- To know the level of literacy and education among villagers.
- 2- To examine access to education of rural population.
- 3- To know about thinking and efforts towards education of next generation in rural area.

Date and Methodology

This paper is mainly based on primary data gathered in a brief survey of village Dewatu. Selected village Dewatu is located in remote western Rajasthan and lies 100 km. far from its district hq. Jodhpur, connected with 17 km. asphalted road to the Jodhpur- Jaisalmer highway. Total population of village 6158 (according to Census 2011) is residing in 1079 households with 5294 hectare land of the village. Most of the working population of village is engaged in farming, mining stone (quarrying), building construction, MNREGS works as such as almost half of the households are depend on agriculture and ancillary works.

To get objectives, 210 respondents were interviewed from twenty percent sample households of the village. Stratified sampling procedure was used for selection of households. The respondents posses different age group, social, economic and family status. Collected information arranged accordingly, examined deeply, analyzed and then prepared this paper. The study is mainly analytical and descriptive in nature.

Literacy and Education

Literacy (on the basis of Census data) - Literacy rate of the village has been increased many times from the independence and in last four decades it has grown up by almost three times. Only 18 women in 1981 and 28 women in 1991 were literate whereas in 2011, the figure gone up and tried to touch the thousand number. Male literacy rate also increased in this period from 39.01 per cent in 1981 to 75.97 per cent in 2011, the highest jump seen in the decade of 1991-2001. Expansion of education facilities, total literacy mission and other government schemes, spread awareness among villagers towards education etc. pushed up the literacy rate. In spite of these changes, the literacy rate of the village Dewatu is very poor and 16 points lower than that of the general national average as well as 10 points back than the rural literacy rate of India. Although, literacy rate of the village is close to the average rural literacy rate of the district Jodhpur but about four points behind to the State average rural literacy rate. Moreover, gender literacy gap is found at large scale; only 38.89 per cent females are literate as compare to the 75.97 per cent literate males in the village.

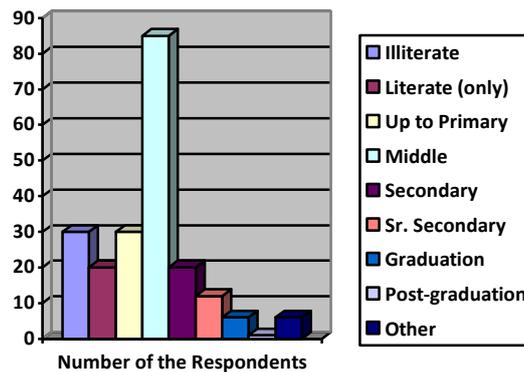
Survey Data : This part of the paper is trying to analyses the level of literacy and education among the villagers on the basis of data gathered in survey of the village. For this purpose, literacy and educational attainment across the generations has been taking into account and components i.e. respondents and their spouses' education, respondents' parent's education, and thinking and efforts of respondents towards education of next generation would be discussed.

Education of the Respondents: Table 1 presents data on the educational level of the respondents. Level of education categorized into nine steps in the table, viz. illiterates, literates, primary, middle, secondary, senior secondary, graduation, post-graduation and other above or equivalent technical/professional degree/diploma.

Table 1: Education of the Respondents

Level of Education	Number of the Respondents
Illiterate	30 (14.28%)
Literate (only)	20 (9.52%)
Up to Primary	30 (14.28%)
Middle	85 (40.48%)
Secondary	20 (9.52%)
Sr. Secondary	12 (5.71%)
Graduation	06 (2.86%)
Post-graduation	01 (0.48%)
Other Technical/ Professional Deg./Diploma	06 (2.86%) (05 B. Ed with UG/PG and 01 other course)
Total	210 (100%)

Chart 1: Education Of The Respondents



Note: Figures in parentheses are percentage to corresponding columns.

The data shows that 14.28 per cent respondents are illiterates while 9.52 per cent respondents are only literates, though, all the respondents are male and comparison should be made with the males' literacy. Here only literate means read and write a simple message with understanding in any language and not need any formal certificate. Interestingly, lot of respondents said that 'a person who know make their signature is literate'. The information shows that majority of the villagers are literate and educated but at the same time preponderance of the literate and educated population (64.29%) stayed under the level of elementary school, and highest percentage (40.48%) of them are comprises under eighth class level. Nevertheless, secondary and senior secondary level of education is minimum stage of education and is very common today; it is required for every entry level job or further higher and technical education. A very few of the respondents have crossed these levels of education i.e. 9.52 per cent and 5.57 per cent have respectively secondary and senior secondary education, though next generation is more conscious about the education that will discuss later. At the same time, a very few of the respondents have the education of graduation, post-graduation and other technical degree/diploma i.e. 2.86 per cent, 0.48 per cent and 2.86 per cent respectively. In order to get technical/professional education, generally training for teacher like B S T C or B Ed. is most prevalent; however, recently villagers are awaking towards special education for their children.

Due to lack of facility of institutions, economic backwardness of villagers and other reasons, most of the respondents left their education and dropouts. There were only one upper primary school (highest level of educational institute) and two primary schools in the village before 10 years ago and there were not any institute nearby villages. Hence, villagers stop their education after elementary education (eighth class) Today, one government secondary, one private senior secondary (also having affiliation for few distance courses) with many other primary and upper primary government as such as private schools are available in the village and also villagers have raised their capacity to educate their next generation.

Table 2: Educational Status of Spouse and the Parents of Respondents

Level of Education	Spouse*	Mother	Father	Parents (Jointly)
Illiterate	122 (61.31)	199 (94.76)	148 (70.48)	82.61%
Literate (only)	40 (20.10)	08 (3.81)	36 (17.14)	10.48%
Primary	21 (10.55)	02 (0.95)	13 (6.19)	3.57%
Upper-Primary	08 (4.02)	01 (0.48)	02 (0.95)	0.71%
Secondary/Sr. Sec.	08 (4.02)	--	08 (3.81)	1.90%
Graduation	--	--	--	--
Post Graduation	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	03 (1.43)	0.71%

Note: * - Total 199 respondents are married out of total 210 respondents.

Figures in parentheses are percentage to corresponding columns.

After having discussed the educational level of respondents it is important to present data on the level of education of the respondents' spouse, because prepare the next generation to gain education, life-partner play very important role. Table 2 explore the data, there is very high percentage (61.31%) of illiterate among respondents' spouse, while about one-fifth is only literate and just half of literates, one-tenth of the total, having

passed primary education level. A very least number, only 4.02 per cent has passed out middle as well as similar to has crossed the 10/+2 level of education whereas none of them having any type of degree/diploma of higher education. This is worst position, though all the spouses are females and generally gender gap in education at every stage is exists everywhere in India. Notwithstanding, it is narrowed over the period of time as well as across the generation we will see in the forthcoming discussion.

If we want to know progress in literacy rate and educational level across generation, it must require discuss on the education of before generation and then comparison in between. Table 2 provides information about the education of respondents' parents also. It is clear from the data that there is tremendous change has occurred in the educational level across two generation. From the table we find there is 82.61 per cent parents of the respondents were illiterates, where respondents are 14.28 per cent. It means illiteracy reduced by 45.45 per cent point, from 82.61 to 37.16 per cent (jointly of respondents and their spouses), and another point of view rate of literacy gone up from 17.39 per cent to 62.83 per cent in next generation. If we compare the data of literacy among respondents and their fathers, we find that illiteracy declined very fast with 56 per cent point, from 70.48 per cent to 14.28 per cent, similarly, literacy upwards equally.

In case of the fathers of the respondents, 70.48 per cent were illiterates, while 17.14 per cent were only literates. In the same way, only 6.19 per cent respondents' fathers have formal primary education with very little percentage (0.95) of elementary level educated, whereas 3.81 per cent fathers have the education up to secondary/senior secondary class. Besides, a very few of them (1.43%) have the certificates of other courses likewise, teacher training, nursing course etc. At the same time, in case of the mother's education, the data gives us picture that very high percentage (94.76%) among them was illiterate while a very little percent of them (3.81%) was only literate. Only 2 respondents' mothers have primary education while only 1 was passed elementary education level. None of them have had any type of education above that. Male-females' literacy gap as well as gap in educational attainment is again clearly shown. The implications of these findings are quite clear. If we compare two generations in terms of the education level, we find that tremendous change has taken place.

Position Regarding Education of Next Generation: So far we have discussed the education of respondents, their spouses and parents backgrounds, it is very important to know the thinking and efforts of the respondents' (and their family) towards education of next generation. Table 3 reveals the data about position and attitude towards education of children of selected families. It is generally says that every child has right to get education and to achieve this aim 'right to education act' has been implemented from 2010. To know the position of the children's education, the question raised to respondents that 'Are all children (age of school going children) of the family going to school or getting education?' Just more than three-fourth, 165 (78.57%) of the respondents answered yes, 30 (14.29%) said no and 15 (5.66%) did not say anything or not applicable for them (perhaps none of any child of concerning age group in the family). Generally, all parents want to educate their boy child today, while girl child may be keep away or possibly escaped from education, it is usually seen in rural areas, so that the question kept in the front of respondents to know the attitude towards girls' education that, 'Should girl child get education?' The reply came exactly same as found in earlier question, more than three-fourth have the opinion that every girl child has right to education as boys have.

Again 30 respondents replied no, they don't like educate the girls while 15 didn't give any answer. When asked to 30 respondents who gave answer no of both questions, 'why do you think as such?' They said girls are the '*paraya dhan*' (go to other house after marriage) and girls help in the house work and, it is also, compulsory to girls have efficient in house work. Tradition and some other reasons also bound to girl at home and keep away from education. To check the theory (notion) and practice of respondents, other question raised that 'Are all girls (age of school going girls) of your family get/got education?', answered again exactly same as above, yes the 78.57 per cent of the respondents, while 14.29 per cent said no and rest of 7.14 per cent not gave any answer. None of the gap found between saying and doing (notion and practice).

Table 3: Information regarding Children's Education of the surveyed families

Information/Query	Position	Total
(A) Are all children (age of school going children) of the family going to school or getting education?	Yes	165
	No	30
	N A	15
(B) Should girl child get education?	Yes	165
	No	30
	N A	15
(C) Are all girls (age of school going girls) of your family get/got education?	Yes	165
	No	30
	N A	15
(D) Children go to school/ type of attending school	Government School	98
	Private School	40
	Some Govt.-some Private School	58

	N A	15
(E) Expenditure on Private school going children (per annum - amount in Rs.)	Up to 3000	02
	3001 to 6000	55
	6001 to 9000	20
	9001 to 12000	06
	12001 & above	17

Private schools have been rising very fast in urban as well as rural areas in the privatization era; similarly the trend of admission of children in private schools has emerged among most of the citizens, though it is lesser in the villages than the cities. The question asked to the respondents relating to children's school where they getting education or which type of school children attending, for the purpose to know emerging this new trend of education and importance of government school. We got answer that half of the selected families' children are getting education from the government schools, in addition with about more than one-fourth families trying to send some of their children (generally boys) to private school and others go to government schools, while near about one-fifth have made efforts and admitted their all children in private schools, however, annual expenditure on per child in private school is not too much in villages or not so as in cities. This shows that similar trend emerged in rural areas also. Fifteen respondents didn't reply again or the question was not related to them. The information also obtained regarding per annum expenditure required on education of per child in private schooling. Seventeen families (8% of the total) is able to spending more than twelve thousand rupees per child every year on their education while highest 55 respondents (just more than one-fourth of the total) said that on an average three to six thousand rupees requires for every student's education per year. At the same time, twenty families making expenditure on a child rupee six to nine thousand annually while only six families have made expenditure on their children's education on an average nine to twelve thousand rupees per annum. Only two respondents answered that they were spending very few amount, only up to three thousand rupees per child every year.

As clear from the above discussion, level of literacy and education has been increased over the period of time as such as across the generation but still very low in spite of so many schemes time to time launched by the government to raise the literacy and educational attainment. Today, every white collar job either government or private, requires high level of education, even class III or IV requires minimum qualification secondary or above. The data show that only some respondents having education class X and above while most of them have passed only primary and middle class, and in the modern time, up to primary or elementary educated person treat as 'only literate'. Only just read and write a simple message or learn own sign, does not solve the much problem. To interact with the modern world, to take benefit of the government's schemes, constitutional provisions, and grow up the social status and equality especially for weaker section of the society and villagers, education attainment is must required.

II. Conclusions:

Conclusions drawn from the study are as follows:

1. Level of literacy has been increased over the period of time in the village and close to the average rural literacy rate of the district Jodhpur but about four points behind to the State average rural literacy rate as well as far below than the nation's average level.
2. Gender literacy gap is found at large scale.
3. Educational attainment among the villagers is very poor; only one-fifth of the respondents educated above the secondary level with a very few of them having higher education, while largest number of respondents are concentrated up to elementary stage.
4. Drop-out after elementary education is common in the village.
5. Main reason of low level of education and drop-out is lack of educational institutions in the village and nearby villages. Due to lack of education facility it has been hard to access to education for the villagers.
6. Awareness towards education has been rising among villagers. They are very conscious towards their children's education.

Notwithstanding, so many schemes launched by the government, level of literacy has improved but not as desired level. Access to education is still far for the villagers, especially after secondary education. Females and some social groups are still lagged behind in education front. Therefore, government should take appropriate steps to ease to access to education for the villagers, especially those who are lagged behind and women to get hopefully results. There is also need of higher and rural-technical institution in the villages.

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