

A Study of Status of Women by Incorporating Literacy and Employment in India and Some Selected States

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Abstract : Gender equality and women's empowerment is one of the components of eight Millennium Development Goal (MDG). Literacy and employment are the parameters which reflect the empowerment of women. But in a developing country like India, literacy and working status among the females are not satisfactory. Both literacy and employment technically can be measured by Literate Life Expectancy (LLE) and Working Life Expectancy (WLE). One can also combine both the factors literacy and working to get a better new measure. The proposed indicator can be called literate-working life expectancy (LWLE). LLE gives an average number of years a person lives in a literate state under current mortality and literacy conditions while WLE defined as average number of years a person lives in a working state if current mortality and working condition prevails. Similarly, LWLE gives number of expected years by a person living under both literate and working state. The situation of females cannot be figured out without comparing both the sexes. In the present paper an attempt has been made to estimate LLE and WLE in India along with some selected states from various zones of India namely Assam from the North-East, Gujarat from the West, Kerala from the South, Rajasthan from the North, Uttar Pradesh from the Central and West Bengal from the East respectively for both the sexes based on 2011 census. Furthermore, we have also developed a formula for a new indicator namely Literate-Working Life Expectancy (LWLE) and the proposed index has been applied in India and the selected states mentioned above for both males and females. Data has been extracted from SRS (Sample Registration System) based Abridged Life Table and Census of India. The computation of LLE follows the method developed by Lutz while WLE has followed the method developed by Saw Swee Hock. By combining both the factors literacy and employment, the new indicator LWLE also follows the method like LLE and WLE. Contrasted results have been found in different parts of India. The result shows that LLE at birth is highest (lowest) in the state Kerala (Uttar Pradesh) with 61.66 (39.51) years among the males. A similar situation is also observed among the females with 62.58 years and 25.11 years respectively. But male WLE at birth is highest (lowest) in Rajasthan (Kerala) with 37.11 (32.64) years. Highest female WLE at birth is also observed in Rajasthan with 23.51 years and the lowest is concentrated in Uttar Pradesh with 11.76 years. It is also found that Kerala's performance is exceptionally good in terms of LWLE at birth while the lowest LWLE at birth prevails in the state Uttar Pradesh among the males. Female LWLE at birth is highest (lowest) in Kerala (Uttar Pradesh) with 19.73 (4.77) years. The corresponding value of the index increases as the number of factors involved in the life expectancy decrease. It is found that women are lagging behind in terms of both literacy and employment. Findings of the study will help the planners to take necessary steps to improve the position of women.

Keywords : life expectancy, literacy, literate life expectancy, working life expectancy

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