

Adult Education

Overview

Adult Education aims at extending educational options to those adults, who have lost the opportunity and have crossed the age of formal education, but now feel a need for learning of any type, including literacy, basic education, skill development (Vocational Education) and equivalency. With the objective of promoting adult education, a series of programmes have been introduced since the First Five Year Plan, the most prominent being the National Literacy Mission (NLM), that was launched in 1988 to impart functional literacy to non-literates in the age group of 15-35 years in a time bound manner. By the end of the 10th Plan period, NLM had made 127.45 million persons literate, of which, 60% were females, 23% belonged to Scheduled Castes (SCs) and 12% to Scheduled Tribes (STs). 597 districts were covered under Total Literacy Campaigns of which 502 reached Post Literacy stage and 328 reached Continuing Education stage.

2001 Census recorded male literacy at 75.26%, while female literacy remained at an unacceptable level of 53.67%. Census of 2001 also revealed that gender and regional disparities in literacy continued to persist. Therefore, to bolster Adult Education and Skill Development, Government of India introduced two schemes, namely Saakshar Bharat and Scheme for Support to Voluntary Agencies for Adult Education and Skill Development, during the 11th Plan. Saakshar Bharat, the new variant of earlier NLM, set following goals: to raise literacy rate to 80%, to reduce gender gap to 10% and minimize regional and social disparities, with focus on Women, SCs, STs, Minorities, other disadvantaged groups. All those districts that had female literacy rate below 50% as per census 2001 including Left Wing Extremism affected districts irrespective of literacy level are being covered under the programme.

Literacy scenario of India : Census 2011 revealed that Literacy in India has made remarkable strides. Literacy rate of India stands at 72.98%. Overall Literacy rate has grown by 8.14 percent points in the last decade (64.84% in 2001 & 72.98% in 2011). The male literacy rate has grown by 5.62 percent points (75.26% in 2001 & 80.88% in 2011) whereas female literacy rate 10.96 percent points (53.67% in 2001 & 64.63% in 2011). Number of illiterates(7+ age group) decreased from 304.10 million in 2001 to 282.70 million in 2011.

States reported with literacy rate greater than 90% : Kerala (94%), Lakshadweep (91.85%) and Mizoram (91.33%).

States with literacy rate between national average (72.99%) and below 90% : Tripura (87.22%), Goa (88.70%), Daman & Diu (87.10%), Puducherry (85.85%), Chandigarh (86.05%), Delhi (86.21%), A&N Islands (86.63%), Himachal Pradesh (82.80%), Maharashtra (82.34%), Sikkim (81.42%) Tamil Nadu (80.09%), Nagaland (79.55%), Manipur (76.94%), Uttarakhand (78.82%), Gujarat (78.03%), Dadra & Nagar Haveli (76.24%), West Bengal (76.26%), Punjab (75.84%), Haryana (75.55%), Karnataka (75.36%) and Meghalaya (74.43%).

Literacy rate in rural areas stands at 67.67% with rural male literacy rate 77.15% and rural female literacy rate 57.93%. Whereas **literacy rate in urban areas** stands at 84.11% with urban male literacy rate at 88.76% and urban female literacy at 79.11%.

Literacy rate of SCs stands at 66.07% (Male SCs 75.17% & Female SCs 56.46%).Whereas **Literacy rate of STs** stands at 58.95% (Male STs 68.51% & Female STs 49.36%).

Gender disparity in literacy rates declined by 5.34 percent points from 21.59 percent points in 2001 to 16.25 percent points in 2001-2011. There has been a continuous decrease in gender gap in literacy since 1991 (24.84 percent points).