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Developed India: Women Empowerment through Education in India and Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

Woman constitutes the family, which leads to society and Nation. Social and economic development of women is necessary for overall economic development of any society or a country. The position and status of women in any society is an index of its civilization and progress. In spite of having the potential and talent, women are deprived of opportunities, information and education. Literacy and general education form the base of the knowledge pyramid which is essential for a rapid and sustained development of the society in the 21st Century. Women empowerment is prominent goal for developed India vision 2020 and women empowerment is important for development of society because a developed society reveals developed state and a developed state works for developed nation.

This paper explains the concept and levels of empowerment and how education may help for women empowerment. This paper analyses the literacy status of women of Uttar Pradesh with respect to India, and the difference between male female literacy rates of Uttar Pradesh. It is concluded that the female literacy rate is low as compared to India which means a literacy gap is there. The difference between male female literacy is vast which shows that still gender inequality exists. Different educational programs are running for women empowerment yet they are not enough to reach the vision desired.

Keywords: women empowerment, education, developed India, literacy

Introduction

What makes a country developed? The obvious indicators are the wealth of the nation, the prosperity of its people and its standing in the international forum. There are many indicators regarding the wealth of a nation: the gross national product (GNP), the gross domestic product (GDP) but women empowerment may also play vital role in developed India and education is important factor for the women empowerment. Education is actually a key means of empowering women and is in itself a human right. Educated girls lead better lives. Education is especially central to women's empowerment in so far as it enables women to become more productive both inside and outside the household. Investments in women's general education, including literacy is considered one of the most important elements, complementary to income-generating activities that are considered essential for women's economic empowerment. Women are equally competent in running business but still lacks behind in spite of women empowerment movement in our country, there are social, cultural and economic hurdles in the way of women empowerment.

Education has long been identified as the decisive factor in bringing women and families out of poverty into financial stability in the middle class. In fact, investment in women and girl's educations is demonstrated to yield greater positive impact on the entire family's economic well-being because women literacy leads to increased life expectancy, reduced child mortality, and ultimately healthier and educated children which may help to promote growth of the nation.

Empowerment-Conceptual Framework

The origins of the concept of empowerment go back to the civil rights movement in the USA in the 1960. It has since then been interpreted differently and filled with new meanings and is today used in such different sectors as business, social work, development discourse and by advocates of very different political agendas.

Empowerment can be defined as a "multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power (that is, the capacity to implement) in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and in their society, by acting on issues that they define as important" (Page and Czuba, 1999).

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Different Levels of Empowerment

In line with most theorists on empowerment the one has to view empowerment as taking place on different levels and that change on all levels is necessary if the empowerment of women is really to occur. We have to relate empowerment at three levels: empowerment on the individual, group, and societal/ community- level and the interaction between these.

The individual level deals with individual women's abilities to take control over their lives, their perceptions about their own value and abilities, their abilities to identify a goal and work towards this goal.

The group level deals with the collective action and sense of agency that woman experience together, in a group.

The societal level deals with the permissiveness of the political and social climate, the societal norms and the public discourse on what is possible and impossible for women to do, how women should behave etc.

The different levels are seen as interconnected and mutually reinforcing, e.g. when empowerment on individual level occurs, this will have effect on the group and societal level. Women who are empowered on an individual level will most likely go on and affect the other levels. Empowerment on a group level e.g. women organizing around a particular need is likely to have effect on the individual empowerment of the women in the form of increased self-esteem and sense of agency.

Historical Background of Women Empowerment in India

The status of Women in India has been subject to many great changes over the past few Millennium. In early Vedic period Women enjoyed equal status with men. Rigved & Upanishads mention several names of women sages and seers notably Gargi & Maitrey. However later the status of women began to deteriorate approximately from 500 B.C., the situation worsened with invasion of Mughals and later on by European invaders. Some reformatory movements by Guru Nanak, Jainism, Rajaram mohan Rai, Ishwarchandra Vidya Sagar, Pandita Rama Bai and others did give some relief. Thing for improving the condition of women. Some laws were enacted such an "Abolition of practice of Sati", Widow Remarriage Act 1856 etc. The real change came after independence. Constitution of India guarantees equality to women (Article 14).

Women Empowerment

The Government of India had ushered in the new millennium by declaring the year 2001 as 'Women's Empowerment Year' to focus on a vision 'where women are equal partners like men'. The most common explanation of 'women's empowerment' is the ability to exercise full control over one's actions. The last decades have witnessed some basic changes in the status and role of women in our society. The ideology and practice of the empowerment policy of women in India constitutes its continued social, economic and social backwardness. Women make up 52% of our country's population. Hence there can be no progress unless their needs and interests are fully met. Empowerment would not hold any meaning unless they are made strong, alert and aware of their equal status in the society. Empowerment would become more relevant if women are educated, better informed and actively involved in entrepreneurial activities despite all the social hurdles, many women have become successful in their works. These successful women have made name & wealth for themselves with their hard work, diligence, competence and will power. Following is the list of few top Women Entrepreneurs in India:

Indra Nooyi

Indian born American, Indra Krishnamurthy Nooyi, born October 28, 1955 is the Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of Pepsi Co, one of the world's leading food and beverage companies.

Naina Lal Kidwai,

She was the first Indian woman to graduate from Harvard Business School. Fortune magazine listed Kidwai among the world's top 50 Corporate Women from 2000 to 2003. According to the Economic times, she is the first woman to head the operations of a foreign bank in India. HSBC)

Ekta Kapoor, creative head of Balaji Telefilms;

She is the daughter of Jeetendra and sister of Tushar Kapoor. She has been synonymous with the rage of soap operas in Indian TV, after her most famous venture '*Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi*' which was aired in 2000 on Star plus. Ekta dominates Indian Television. At the 6th Indian Telly Awards 2006, she bagged the Hall Of Fame award for her contributions.

Neelam Dhawan, Managing Director, Microsoft India

Leads Microsoft India. She is a graduate from St. Stephens College in 1980, passed out from Delhi's Faculty of Management studies in 1982. Then she was keen on joining FMCG majors like Hindustan Lever and Asian Paints, both rejected Dhawan, as they did not wish to appoint women for marketing and sales.

Importance of Women Education

Women education is important for the development of society and growth of the nation. Napoleon was once asked, what the great need of France was. He answered, "Nation's progress is impossible without trained and educated mothers. If the women of my country are not educated, about half of the people will be ignorant."

Women play three role in their life, firstly a daughter secondly a wife and thirdly a mother and if one is educated then only all parts will be played well. Education helps women to reduce maternal and infant mortality through improved nutrition. Yet the growth in literacy rate is superseded by females but the discrimination in male female literacy rate is there and it is the great obstacle in women empowerment.

The role and the new challenges

Despite the widely spread idea that man steers the economy women have made major achievements while taking top managerial positions or as policy-makers. They are now at the heart of economic life

- Women empowerment can contribute to economic growth and take a prominent role in the economy.
- Women are gaining more influence as a result of their increasing involvement in business.
- Women have good leadership qualities for the accomplishment of business goal.
- Indian women have to go a long way to achieve equal rights and position because traditions are deep rooted in Indian society.

Women in India are considered as Shakhti-meaning source of power.

- Effectively coordinating the available factors and resources.
- Efficient execution of decisions imposed on them.
- Clear vision and ambition on the improvement of family and children.

- Patience and bearing the sufferings on behalf of others and
- Ability to work physically more at any age.

Women Empowerment through Education

“The human race is a two-winged bird. One wing is female the other is male. Unless both wings are equally developed, the human race will not be able to fly. Now, more than ever, the cause of women is the cause of mankind.” -Boutros Boutros Ghali- erstwhile Secretary General of the United Nations.

Women Empowerment is a global issue worldwide. The concept of this came into being in the international women conference at NAROIBI in 1985. The National Commission of Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the right and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local level. Literacy rate had risen in India in which Uttar Pradesh rates below the National Average of literacy rate in respect to male and female both. Despite of importance of female education only One out of Four in the age of seven plus group is able to read and write. Different programs are running for Women education such as Sarva Siksha Abhiyaan (Education to all), Mahila Samakhya Program, Dalit Mahila Sikhsha Abhiyaan, Mid-Day Meal and many more.

Table 1: Literacy Rate of Females in India As Compared To Females of Uttar Pradesh

Year	India	Uttar Pradesh
1901	0.7	NA
1911	1.1	NA
1921	1.8	NA
1931	2.9	NA
1941	7.3	NA
1951	7.3	4.1
1961	13.0	8.4
1971	18.7	11.2
1981	24.8	16.7
1991	39.2	24.4
2001	54.0	43.0
2011	65.46	57.2

Source: Different Sources

The above table shows that as before the difference between female literacy on overall basis is high as compared between India and Uttar Pradesh, as before 1951 no census was done for Uttar Pradesh as it was formed in 1950. Looking toward the difference it could be said that work on women empowerment and female literacy are carried are but yet they are not sufficient. When a female will be educated then only she will work for her empowerment and will be able to understand right and wrong things the only come up with an entrepreneurship work.

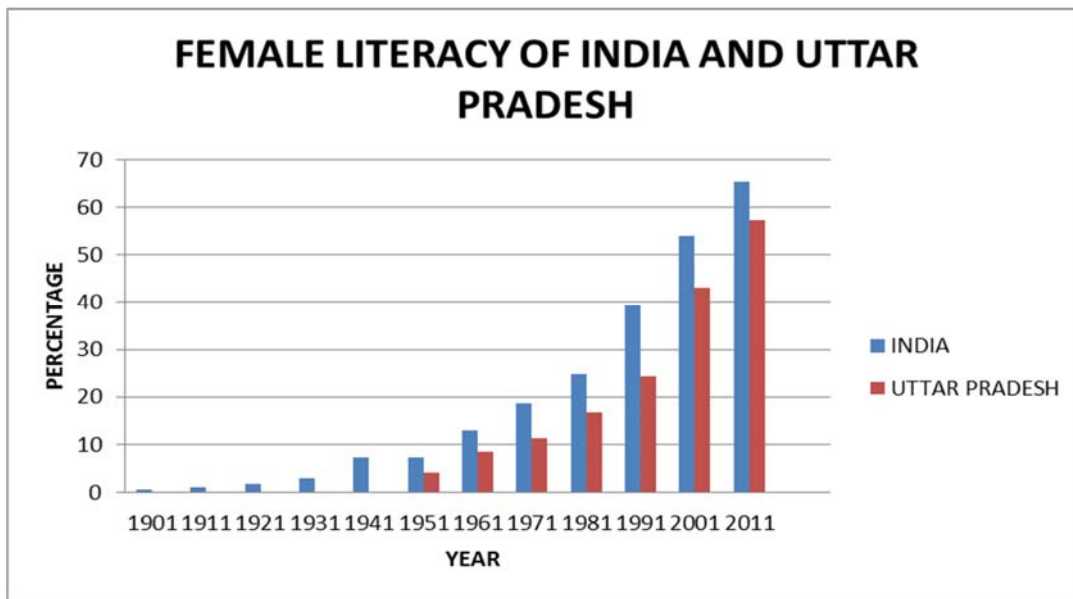


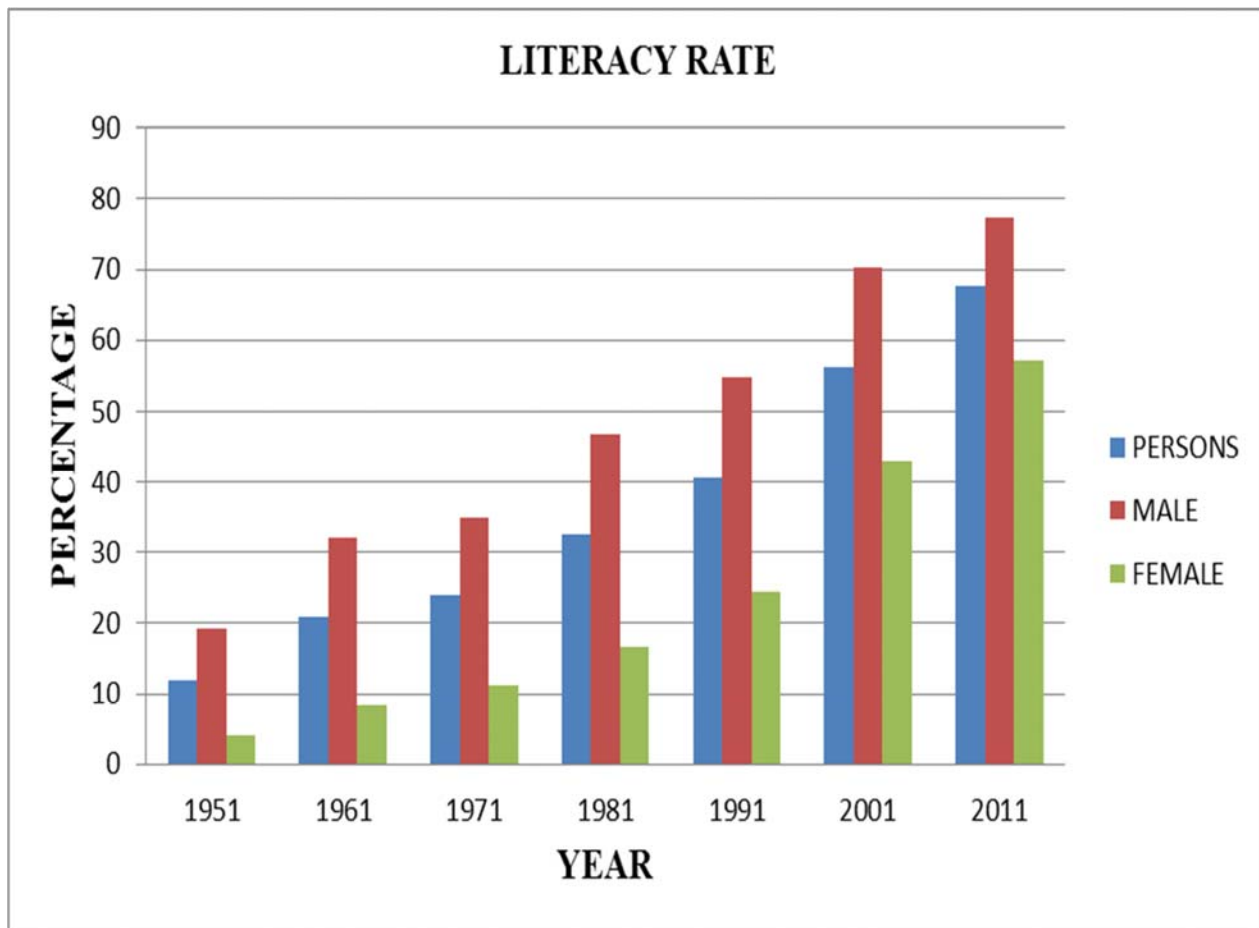
Table 2: Literacy Rate of Uttar Pradesh (Percentage-Wise)

Year	Persons	Male	Female
1951	12.02	19.2	4.1
1961	20.87	32.1	8.4
1971	23.99	35.0	11.2
1981	32.65	46.7	16.7
1991	40.71	54.8	24.4
2001	56.27	70.2	43.0
2011	67.68	77.3	57.2

- Source: 1) Census info India 2011
 2) <http://www.mapsofindia.com/india-demographics.html> dated: 12nd February 2014 at 3:34 A.M
 3) <http://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/uttar+pradesh.html> 12nd February 2014 4:10 p.m

Note: The literacy rate for year 1951, 1961 and 1971 was calculated for aged 5 year and above and from 1981 to 2011 it was calculated for 7 year and above.

The above Table shows that how the literacy rate had been increased from 12.2 percent to 56.27 percent which is nearly 5 times increment but yet it is not up to the mark. The increase in male percentage is just 4 times which as compared to female is low because female percentage has risen from 4 to 57 which is a good sign but yet its below male percentage. This shows that still many females are unable to go to school i.e. the thought of gender inequality is there. So education of women should be promoted so that they should be empowered. If women in empowered then only she would become an entrepreneur.



Education Equality

Beside there is huge difference in overall percentage of persons literate in Uttar Pradesh yet the difference between men and female is decreasing fast which proves that the education campaign are helping females to go to school. It is a

good symptom and this will lead to better societal setup as more females going to school so society will be developed soon and the National Planning commission parameters will be achieved fast.

Table 3: District Wise Female Literacy in Uttar Pradesh as Per 2011 Census

Sl. No	District	Female Literacy
1	Saharanpur	63.30%
2	Muzaffarnagar	60.00%
3	Bijnor	61.45%
4	Moradabad	49.63%
5	Rampur	46.19%
6	Jyotiba Phule Nagar	53.77%
7	Meerut	65.69%
8	Baghpat	61.22%
9	Ghaziabad	81.42%
10	Gautam Buddha Nagar	72.78%
11	Bulandshahr	56.60%
12	Aligarh	57.48%
13	Mahamaya Nagar	60.79%
14	Mathura	58.93%
15	Agra	59.16%
16	Firozabad	64.80%
17	Mainpuri	68.35%
18	Budaun	41.76%
19	Bareilly	50.35%
20	Pilibhit	52.43%
21	Shahjahanpur	51.73%

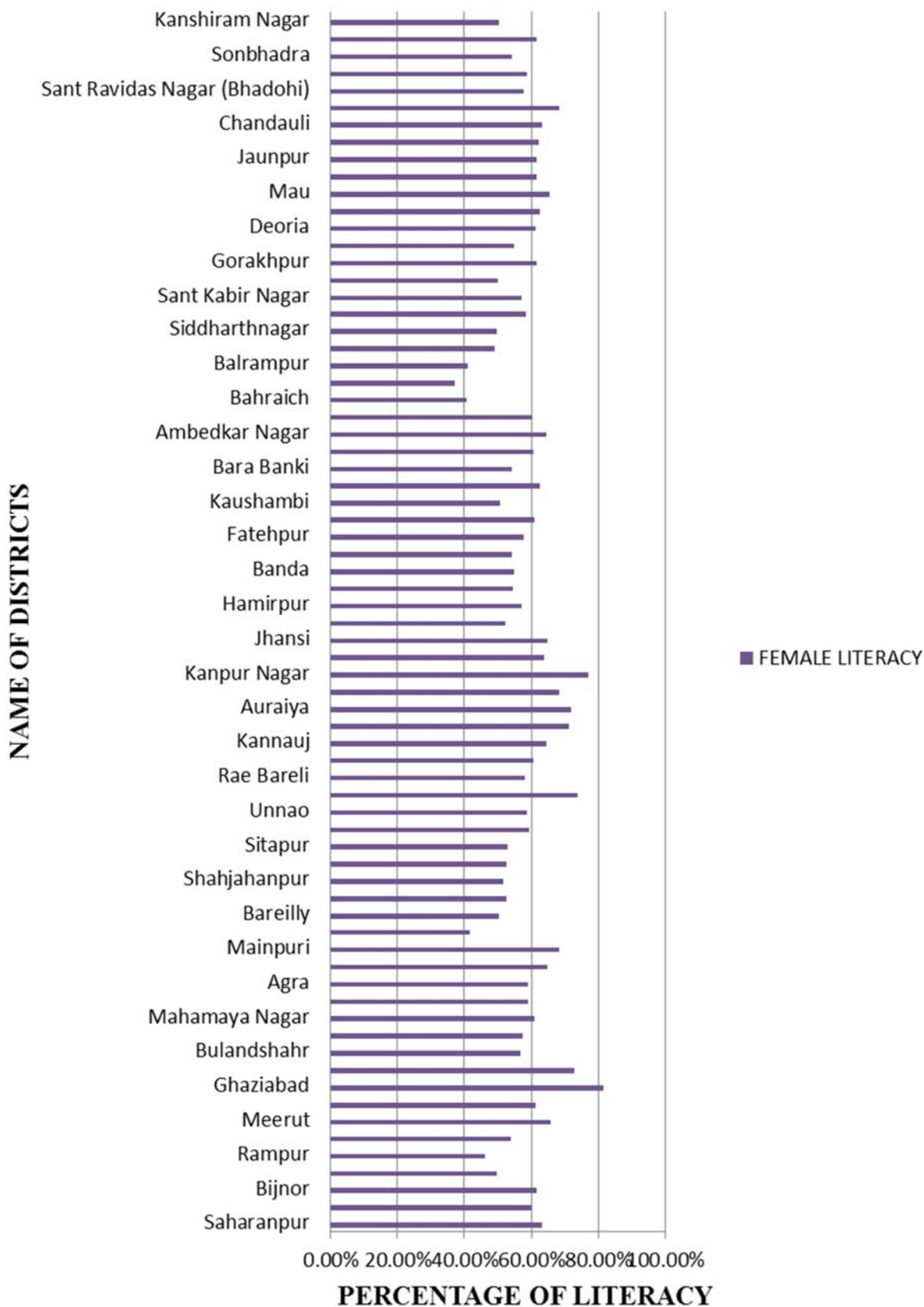
22	Kheri	52.62%
23	Sitapur	52.80%
24	Hardoi	59.17%
25	Unnao	58.54%
26	Lucknow	73.88%
27	Rae Bareli	58.06%
28	Farrukhabad	60.51%
29	Kannauj	64.46%
30	Etawah	71.16%
31	Auraiya	71.97%
32	Kanpur Dehat	68.48%
33	Kanpur Nagar	76.89%
34	Jalaun	63.88%
35	Jhansi	64.88%
36	Lalitpur	52.26%
37	Hamirpur	57.19%
38	Mahoba	54.65%
39	Banda	54.95%
40	Chitrakoot	54.03%
41	Fatehpur	57.76%
42	Pratapgarh	60.99%
43	Kaushambi	50.76%
44	Allahabad	62.67%
45	Bara Banki	54.10%
46	Faizabad	60.72%
47	Ambedkar Nagar	64.62%
48	Sultanpur	60.17%
49	Bahraich	40.76%
50	Shrawasti	37.07%
51	Balrampur	40.92%
52	Gonda	49.13%
53	Siddharthnagar	49.61%
54	Basti	58.35%
55	Sant Kabir Nagar	56.99%
56	Mahrajganj	50.14%
57	Gorakhpur	61.54%
58	Kushinagar	54.74%
59	Deoria	61.34%
60	Azamgarh	62.65%
61	Mau	65.59%
62	Ballia	61.72%
63	Jaunpur	61.70%
64	Ghaziपुर	62.29%
65	Chandauli	63.07%
66	Varanasi	68.20%
67	Sant Ravidas Nagar (Bhadohi)	57.79%
68	Mirzapur	58.77%
69	Sonbhadra	54.11%
70	Etah	61.72%
71	Kanshiram Nagar	50.20%

Source: <http://updateox.com/india/district-wise-male-female-literacy-rate-in-india-2011-census/> 12nd February 2014 time: 8:16 P.M

According to the Table-3 the female literacy rate of each and every district of Uttar Pradesh is shown clearly and the table shows that Ghaziabad district has the highest female literacy rate i.e. 81.42 percent and the lowest female literacy rate in noticed in Shrawasti district with 37.02 percent. The change in female literacy from 43.0 percent to 57.2 percent i.e. 14.2

percent increase which is appreciable yet it is the lowest according to the National Planning commission. To increase female literacy yet many programs are running in state and proper look up should be there because as many females would be literate a better society could be made and female could work out for their empowerment.

FEMALE LITERACY RATE DISTRICT -WISE OF UTTAR PRADESH



Conclusion

India is working for the vision of developed nation till year 2020, to reach that position lot of work is to be done, means different programs has to be executed so that literacy level is increased and if literacy is increased one could work for development of society which leads to women empowerment. According to the Country Report of the Government of India, "Empowerment means moving from a weak position to execute a power." Education is the important tool for the development of females in society and if females are literate they will be able to understand each and every change in society and then would be able to build up her own business and bring up an educated society which would be helpful for developed India vision 2020. The Table illustrated in the paper shows that the most populated state of the country is lagging behind in the race of literacy as compared to that of India. Different women education programs are also running in state for development of women and for proper fulfillment of that books, uniforms, mid-day meals and other facilities are also provided educated women will lead to empowerment of self and will be able to face all issues and come up with all miss happenings. An empowered woman makes a developed society and developed society reveals developed state and a developed state works for developed nation.

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