

Spatial Pattern of Literacy in Manipur

Luckyson R. Panmei

Literacy is one of the important demographic elements, which is a good measure of human progress towards modernisation. It is an important indicator of the socio-economic development of an area. The literacy rate of Manipur has increased tremendously in the post-independent era. The provisional census data of 2011 shows the literacy rate of the state (79.85%) much above the national average (74.04%). However, the spatial pattern of literacy in the state varies from region to region. The present paper is an attempt to study the spatial pattern of the literacy levels prevailing among various sections of the total population in Manipur. It also discusses the male-female differentials and urban-rural differentials literacy rate of the state from 1951 to 2011. It is found that the overall literacy rate of the state has been increasing, while, the literate male population is higher than the literate female population. One important aspect of studying the urban-rural differentials in literacy rate of the state is that, the urban areas are mostly concentrated in the valley area, except some small urban areas and a census town in the hill districts. The literacy rate of the urban areas is higher than the rural areas. Less urban-rural differentials in literacy is the characteristic of areas marked by relatively high degree of urbanisation, educational facilities, medical facilities, transport accessibilities, etc.

Keywords: Literacy rate, Differential, Urban-rural, Male-Female, Manipur.

Introduction

Literacy serves as one of the most important demographic element, which is a good measure of human progress towards modernisation and an important indicator of the socio-economic development of an area. It is a primary step towards the educational achievement and acts as a leading factor for human resource development. The Population Commission of the United Nations defines literacy as “the ability of people to read and write a simple message in any language with some understanding”. As per the definition of the Census of India 2001 “any person above the age of 7 years, who can read and write with understanding in any language is considered as literate”.

Manipur had a very low literacy rate before India’s independence; it was only 0.93%

Luckyson R. Panmei is research scholar in the Department of Geography, Manipur University, Canchipur, Manipur.

in 1901 (1.86% for male and 0.04% for female), and increased to 11.41% in 1951. In the post independence era it has tremendously increased. The provisional census data of 2011 shows the literacy rate of the state (79.85%) little higher than the national average (74.04%). The literacy data for the state is inadequate prior to India's Independence. The present paper deals with the available data of literacy during the post-independence period. It is quite evident that the literacy rate has improved from 11.41 % in 1951, 30.42% in 1961 to 41.35% in 1981, and further rose to 70.50% in 2001 and 79.85 in 2011 (table no. 2). The rural areas of the state also experience increase in the literacy rate. It increases from 28.48% in 1961 to 37.37% in 1981, 53.16% in 2001 and 77.15% in 2011. Likewise, the urban literacy rate also increases from 50.76% in 1961 to 52.44% in 1981, 68.97% and 85.98% in 2011.

Manipur has experienced a considerable growth in literacy during the last few decades. It is interesting to note that literacy rate in the state is comparatively satisfactory as it is above the all India average since 1991. When literacy rate between the urban and rural areas of Manipur is compared, it is found that the progress in the rate growth is mainly concentrated in the urban areas, while the rural areas are lagging behind. The 2011 provisional census data for the state shows an increasing rate in the rural areas (77.15%) which is much above the all India level (68.91%). However, there are differentials between the urban-rural literacy rates in the state. The most important reason behind the increase in literacy is the new definition and concept of literacy in the census of 1991 which excludes population in the age groups of 0-6 years from the total population. In this way, the 1991 census uses the term Literacy rate in relation to the age group of seven years and above (Shafiqullah, 2011).

The present paper is an attempt to study the spatial pattern of literacy in the state with the existing available educational infrastructural facilities. The urban-rural differential from 1961-2011 has been critically studied and it highlights the district level rural-urban differential and male-female differentials in literacy based on 2011 provisional census data. One significant reason for considering the provisional census data of 2011 for the present study is that, the state has rural and urban population for each district.

Study area

Manipur is a landlocked state lying in the easternmost part of India with a total geographical area of 22,327 sq. km. stretching between 23°50'N to 24°41'N latitudes and 93°20'E to 94°47'E longitude. It supports a total population of 27,21,756 (2011) and shares 0.22 % to the total population of India. The state is a gate way to the Southeast Asia and shares an international boundary of 353 km. in length accounting for 41.21% of the total length of the border with Myanmar. The state is linked with the mainland India through road transport via NH 37, 150 and 7, and airways with only one airport in the capital city Imphal. A recent development in railways has just started which will be linked with the other parts of the country via Tupul-Jiri railways. The state is predominantly a hill region and ninth-tenth of the total area is hilly characterised by rugged terrain. The Manipur valley occupies only 2238 sq. km. lying at the centre of the state which acts as a service provider to its surrounding hilly regions. The state is well known for Polo game, Sangai deer, Loktak fresh water lake and rich blended culture of the

people settling in the region.

Data and methodology

The study is mainly based on the secondary sources of data obtained from various publications of the Central and State Government. The data have been further compiled to get the required figures for analysis. Districts are taken as the smallest study unit and have been divided into different categories on the basis of the variation in literacy level to show the spatial pattern and the differential of literacy in the state. The urban-rural differentials literacy rate for the state and the district is calculated by using the formula $ID = u-r/t$ (Krishna and Shyam, 1978).

Where, ID = index of urban-rural differentials in literacy,

u = percentage of literate in urban population,

r = percentage of literate in rural population,

t = percentage of literate in total population.

Spatial pattern of literacy

Literacy in Manipur accounts for 79.85 percent which is little higher above the national average of 74.02 percent (Table No. 1). The decennial growth rate of the state (9.35%) and of the national (9.2%) is the same between 2001-2011. For the year 2011, the spatial variation of the state in percentage of literacy ranges from the lowest 70.40% in Tamenglong district to the highest of 86.70% in Imphal west district. There are spatial disparities and differences of urban-rural and male-female literacy rate in the state for each district. On the basis of this variation and differences that we have obtained from the available data, the districts of the study region have been divided into four categories.

Areas having very high literacy rate (above 85%):

Imphal west district (86.70%) is the only district of the state which has a very high literacy rate. The district lies at the heart of the state in the valley areas and it is the most developed and urbanised region within the state. It also acts as the service provider to all the adjoining hill and valley districts. The literacy rate of rural and urban is high and there is a moderate male-female differential found in Imphal west district. There are numerous institutions facilitating a good all round education to the people residing in this region. Most of the state important offices, institutions, health facilities, and commercial centres are located in it. The urban population of the district is more than 60 percent, and it is obvious that the ratio of male-female literacy in total as well as rural and urban population is relatively high. Factors attributing to higher literacy rate in Imphal west district particularly in the urban areas are location of quality educational institutions and migration of rural literates for job opportunities and accessing better urban amenities. There are 23 colleges (including various professional and teachers training colleges), 2 central universities and a regional campus of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (IGNTU), which provide higher education in various professional courses and disciplines. There are 592

Table No. 1 Literacy rates and Male-Female differential in Manipur 2011

Districts	General			Rural			Urban			Male-Female differential		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
	Senapati	75.00	80.85	68.80	74.72	80.61	68.47	87.92	92.48	83.41	12.05	12.14
Tamenglong	70.40	76.74	63.76	68.12	74.74	61.18	88.50	92.76	84.09	12.98	13.56	8.67
Churachandpur	84.29	88.84	80.13	83.90	87.95	79.71	89.89	94.20	85.84	8.71	8.24	8.36
Bishnupur	76.35	85.52	67.29	74.13	83.75	64.46	80.16	88.63	72.05	17.95	19.29	16.58
Thoubal	76.66	85.90	67.57	74.39	84.75	64.07	80.73	88.00	73.74	18.61	20.68	14.26
Imphal West	86.70	92.93	80.71	83.02	90.36	75.73	88.92	94.53	83.64	12.22	14.63	10.89
Imphal East	82.81	89.86	75.92	79.31	87.49	71.07	87.79	93.36	82.57	13.94	16.42	10.79
Ukhait	81.87	86.05	77.47	80.58	85.04	75.85	89.52	92.24	86.78	8.58	9.19	5.46
Chandel	70.85	77.93	63.26	70.67	77.61	63.24	72.24	80.43	63.45	14.67	8.37	16.98
State	79.85	86.49	73.17	77.15	84.14	69.95	85.98	92.05	80.21	13.32	14.19	11.84

Source: Data compiled from 2011 provisional census data.

schools and other institutions ranging from primary school to higher secondary school imparting basic education. People from various parts of the state who could not afford to move out of the state for higher education migrated to Imphal.

Areas having high literacy rate (80-85%)

Ukhrul district (81.87%) and Churachandpur (84.29%), and Imphal East (82.81 %) are the three districts having a high literacy rate in the state. Imphal East district, although located at the heart of the state adjacent to Imphal west district, has more rural character with a rural population of about 60%, and has a moderate male-female differential in the rural and urban areas but the literacy rate for the urban is higher. The district has 16 colleges and about 610 schools, from primary to higher secondary schools and other institutions. Churachandpur district has only 6.40% urban population and it has the highest urban literate person in the state. It ranks second after Imphal west district in the literacy rate. The male-female differential is found to be low. There are 476 schools (from primary to higher secondary level) and five colleges in the district imparting basic education to the people. Ukhrul district also has a low male-female differential variation. It has about 14.3% urban population which is found to be more literate. There are only one college (for both Science and Arts) and about 355 schools and institutions which contribute for the higher literacy rate in the district.

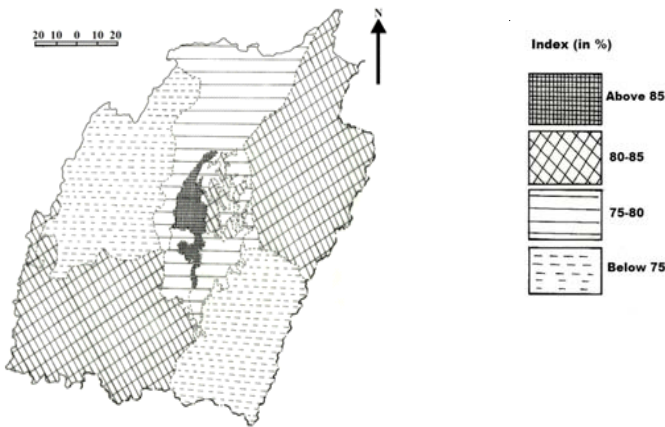
Areas having medium literacy rate (75-80%)

There are three districts having moderate literacy rate. Senapati district lying on the northern part of the state has a total literacy rate of 75%. The urban population is small and the literacy rate for the urban is higher than in the rural. The male-female differential is moderate in Senapati district. Various mission schools and colleges have contributed for providing education to the people besides other government institutions. There are six colleges and schools from primary level to higher secondary level. The other two districts which fall under this category are Bishnupur with 76.35 % and Thoubal with 76.66% literacy rate, situated in the valley region of the state. Bishnupur has a higher male-female differential literacy rate which indicates that there is a wide gap in literacy level between male and female in total as well as in the rural and urban. The district has eight colleges and about 284 other schools and institutions. The district of Thoubal also has a higher male-female differential, there are more male literate in total as well as in rural and urban. Despite the existence of several colleges, schools and other institutions in the district there is a wide variation of male and female literate population. There are 9 colleges and 480 schools from primary level to higher secondary level providing necessary basic education.

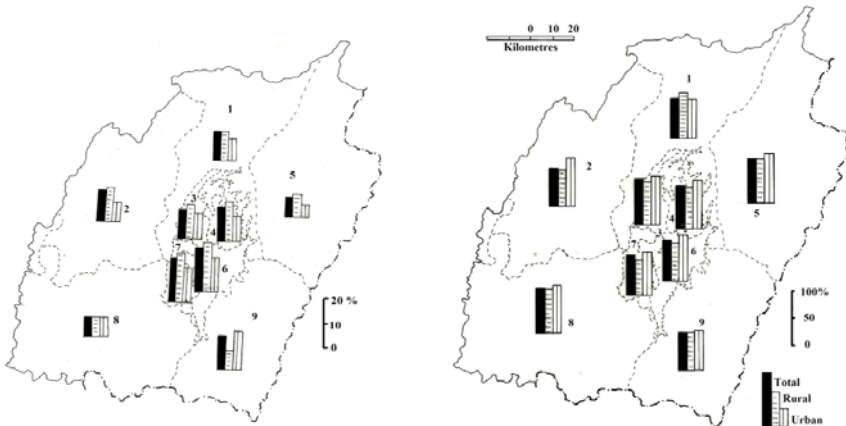
Areas having low literacy rate (below 75%)

Tamenglong, situated in the north-western part of the state with 70.40%, and Chandel districts, lying in the south-eastern part of the state with 70.85 %, are the two hill districts of the state having low literacy rate. Tamenglong district has only 11.22 urban populations and the urban literacy rate accounts for 88.50%. The male-female differential is found to be moderate in the urban as well as in rural. It can be noted that Tamenglong

is the least developed district in the state and one of the most backward district in the country. There is only one college (offering only arts and there is no other streams) and there are 329 schools from primary to higher secondary level with inadequate infrastructure and teacher. About 89% of the total population are rural, mainly depend upon agriculture and it has relatively lower literacy rate. Chandel district has a moderate male-female differential literacy rate, and the differential index for rural-urban also is very less. The urban population is only 11.74%, and the literacy rate for rural and urban remains low. There are 3 colleges and about 293 schools which give primary and fundamental education to the people of the district. It is a well known fact in the state that the hill districts are in need of adequate educational infrastructure and sufficient teachers to uplift the people. The improper functioning and management of the Government schools are a drawback particularly in the hill districts for lacking infrastructure.



Total



Male-Female differential

Rural and Urban

- 1. Senapati 2. Tamenglong 3. Ukhrul 4. Imphal East
- 5. Imphal West 6. Thoubal 7. Bishnupur 8. Churachandpur
- 9. Chandel

Trends of differential in literacy in Manipur

The urban-rural differential index in literacy rate of Manipur gradually narrowed down from 0.73 point in 1961 to 0.36 point in 1981 and 0.22 point in 2001 and 0.11 point in 2011 (Table No. 2). The rural literacy has also gradually increased from 24.48% to 77.15% in 2011. In the all India level too, there has also been a remarkable reduction in the differential index in the same period, from 1.13 point in 1961 to 0.72point in 1981, 0.33 point in 2001 and further to 0.21 point in 2011. The narrowing down of the differential index is associated with the increasing degree of rural-urban interaction in socio-economic functional values of education in the countryside, improving standard of living and increasing facilities for schooling in the countryside (Shafiqullah, 2011).

Table No. 2
Literacy rate and urban-rural differential index, Manipur, India, (1951-2011)

Census year	Age group	Manipur				India			
		Total areas	Urban areas	Rural areas	DI	Total areas	Urban areas	Rural areas	DI
1951	5 yrs & above	11.41				18.3	34.6	12.1	1.23
1961	5 yrs & above	30.42	50.76	28.48	0.73	28.3	54.4	22.5	1.13
1971	5 yrs & above	32.91	53.24	29.82	0.71	34.5	60.2	27.9	0.94
1981	5 yrs & above	41.35	52.44	37.37	0.36	43.6	67.2	36.0	0.72
1991	7 yrs & above	59.89	59.47	46.26	0.22	52.2	73.1	44.7	0.54
2001	7 yrs & above	70.50	68.97	53.16	0.22	64.8	79.9	58.7	0.33
2011	7 yrs & above	79.85	85.98	77.15	0.11	74.04	84.98	68.91	0.21

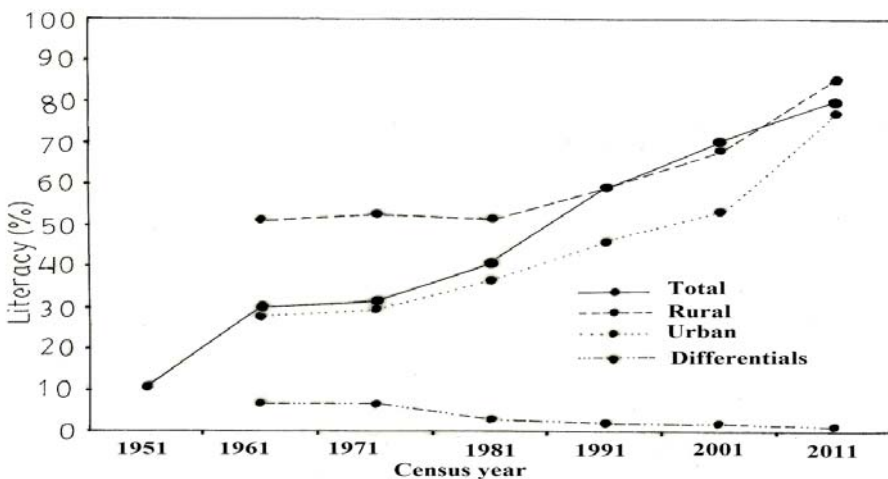


Figure-1. Literacy rate and urban-rural differentials of Manipur, 1951 to 2011.

Urban-rural differential

The urban-rural differential in literacy is marked with notable variations in various districts of Manipur. It varies from 0.28 in Tamenglong district to 0.02 in Chandel district with the state average of 0.11 in 2011 (Table No. 3). The variation in the urban-rural differential index in literacy of the state can be grouped into four grade such as low, moderate, high and very high for each district. The Imphal west and Chandel district fall under the low differential grade (0.06 and below), which differential index is much lower than the state. Chandel has a very low differential index of 0.02 and Imphal west, (0.06).

Table No. 3 District wise Literacy Rate and Urban-Rural Differentials in Literacy, Manipur, 2011

Sl no.	District	All area	Rural area	Urban area	Differential index
1	Senapati	75.00	74.72	87.92	0.17
2	Tamenglong	70.40	68.12	88.50	0.28
3	Churachandpur	84.29	83.90	89.89	0.07
4	Bishnupur	76.35	74.13	80.16	0.07
5	Thoubal	76.66	74.39	80.73	0.08
6	Imphal West	86.70	83.02	88.92	0.06
7	Imphal East	82.81	79.31	87.79	0.10
8	Ukhrul	81.87	80.58	89.51	0.10
9	Chandel	70.85	70.67	72.24	0.02

The possible reason for Chandel district having a very low differential index is that, it has a low literacy level in total as well as in rural and urban. A small section of urban population is seen for Chandel, and the literacy rate for urban (72.24%) and rural (70.67%) do not have much difference. Whereas, the Imphal west district, which rank the highest literacy rate in the state, has higher rural (83.02%) and urban (88.92%) literate population. More than 60 percent of the population are in urban area and as a result the increasing rural-urban interaction supported by better standard of living and presence of better educational institutions reduce the differential.

There are five districts which are graded under the moderate (0.07 to 0.12) group. The valley districts, Imphal east (0.10), Thoubal (0.08), Bishnupur (0.07) and the hill districts, Churachandpur (0.07) and Ukhrul (0.10) have a moderate urban-rural differential index which is still lower than the state differential index. The three valley districts of the state have more urban population than the two hill districts. Thoubal and Bishnupur have lower literacy rate in total and the rural and urban literate population are also low, and we found lower differential between the urban and rural in literacy level. Imphal east district has about 40% urban population, the literacy rate for urban and rural are also higher and we found moderate urban-rural differential index in literacy rate. Churachandpur and Ukhrul districts have majority rural population with high literacy rate and the small portion of urban population found in both the district also have a higher literacy rate which results in moderate urban-rural differential index. But the type

of rural-urban interaction cannot be considered the same in the hill and the valley because the location of urban areas in the hills is negligible when compared with the valley districts in the state. Senapati (0.17) is the only district that has a high urban-rural differential index in literacy and falls under high grade (0.13 to 0.18). The urban population is small and the total literacy rate is also lower than the state average. However, the urban literacy level is found higher than the rural. But, as the region is more rural in character, and the urban-rural differential index is found to be high. Tamenglong district falls in the very high urban-rural differential index grade (above 0.19). It can be noted that, it is the district with lowest literacy (70.0%) rate in the state. The literate person in the urban area (88.50%) is higher than in the rural (68.12%). The district has the highest urban-rural differential index at 0.28 point. In the earlier discussion also we have mentioned the conditions of the district that it is the least developed district of the state and there is lack of good educational institution in the district.

From the above discussion we observe that, the districts which have higher rural-urban differential index have lower degree of urban-rural interaction. Most of the hill districts have low urban population compared to the valley district of the state and the type of interaction between the rural and urban would be limited to some small area encompassing the urban region. Whereas, the valley area is more homogeneous in

Figure-2. Manipur urban-rural differentials index in 2011



topography and it has better urban-rural interaction within the region. The region has better transport facilities, better socio-economic life, better educational institutions and better modern amenities.

Conclusion

The literacy rate of the state is higher than the national average, but when we examine the district wise literacy level, some variations, disparities and differentials have been noticed. We have discussed the spatial pattern of literacy and some factors for the existing pattern of literacy rate in the state and also highlight the differentials that we find in the urban-rural and male-female of the state. The urban-rural differential for the state has narrowed down tremendously and if progress is made at the same rate in the coming decades as well, it would be possible to remove illiteracy in the state. The urban-rural differential is high where there are few urban location and population, particularly among the hill districts of the state. Less differential indicates higher urbanisation level, literacy rate, educational facilities, etc. Majority of the urban people are socially more aware and financially more capable of bearing the expenses on their children's education. A male-female differential can be seen in most of the district and found to be higher in the rural area. The low level of female literacy may be attributed to poverty, social traditions and lack of awareness and opportunity prevailing in the rural areas. The spread of education and its awareness with proper management in schools and institutions in the rural areas particularly in the hill districts will help in increasing the literacy rate, and it will also uplift the socio-economy and living standard of the people.

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