

Poverty, Education and Human Capital in India: The Age Education Structure

Introduction: Human capital determined by the composition of the population by age, education, and labor force participation is considered as a key to economic growth of a country. The capability of a person to get employed is largely dependent on the education structure of a nation. Hence demographic dividend is not only about bulge of youth in total population but also the nation's aptitude to equip its youth with best possible assets, be it education or absorbing them in prolific employment. Education is considered as an important instrument that works bidirectionally by reducing poverty and accelerating economic growth. Also, while planning for the economic growth for a country like India which is the living epitome of religious diversity, along with education, religion is an important population aspect to be considered. Historically differences have been observed in the educational attainment between Hindus and Muslims. Muslims held back by their religion were less ready to seize any educational opportunity offered by western education creating a time lag between them and the other religious groups in the country. This time lag is assumed to be the root cause of many Muslim problems in India. This paper, tried to analyze state-wise differentials of Hindu and Muslim economical status, their education and work participation. **Methods:** The data used for the analysis of this paper is retrieved from Census 2011 and National Family Health Survey 2015-16. Cross comparison has been done through the paper to understand the differentials. For analysis purpose the population has been divided into four age groups, 20-24 years, 25-29 years, 30-34 years and 35+ years respectively according to their educational attainment. Hence using tools of multidimensional population dynamics the changing structures of educational attainment by age and sex has been constructed for Hindus and Muslims separately. **Results:** From figure 1 it can be seen that eastern states have higher percentage of poor population in both the religious groups, but the percentage of poor people is higher among Muslims belonging to north eastern region of India. Figure 2 and Figure 3 are the education and age pyramids for Hindu population of India, whereas Figure 4 and Figure 5 are the education and age pyramids for Muslim population of India. It can be seen that approximately more than half of the Hindu females aged 30+ were illiterate in 2001. Among the younger cohorts, the proportion of illiterate starts to slowly decline. Though decrease have been noticed in the proportion of illiterates from 2001 to 2011 there is no change in the proportion of women having access to primary education during the period between 2001 to 2011. But approximately double fold increase has been noticed in the proportion of women having higher secondary and above level of education from 2001 to 2011. For youth population of males, education levels are remarkably higher with only fewer than one fourth of all adult men are illiterate. The scenario is opposite for Muslim population. It can be seen that approximately half of the Muslim females and one fourth of the Muslim males aged 20-24 years were illiterates in 2001. And three fourth of female Muslim Population aged 35+ were illiterate during 2001. About 10% decrease in illiteracy was observed for Muslim population during the period between 2001 to 2011. Figure 6 illustrates the percentage of households with single literate members only. It can be seen that North-eastern states had higher percentage of household with a single literate member emphasizing the need for education policy to be targeted in the area.

Figure 1: Percentage poor by religion and states, INDIA, 2015-16

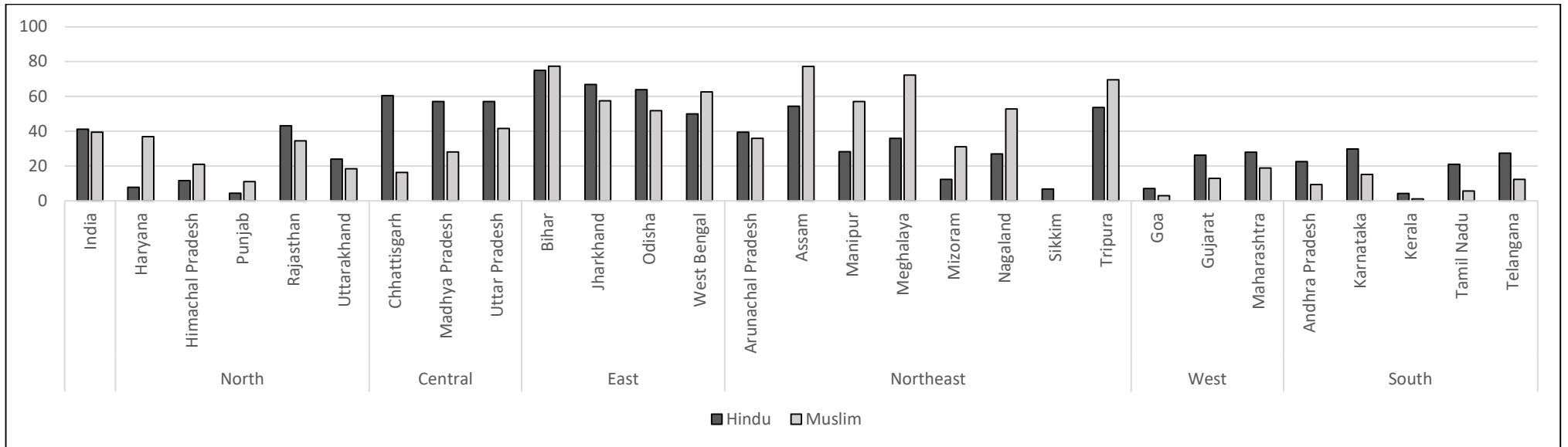


Figure 2: Educational attainment by sex (%), Hindu, INDIA, 2001

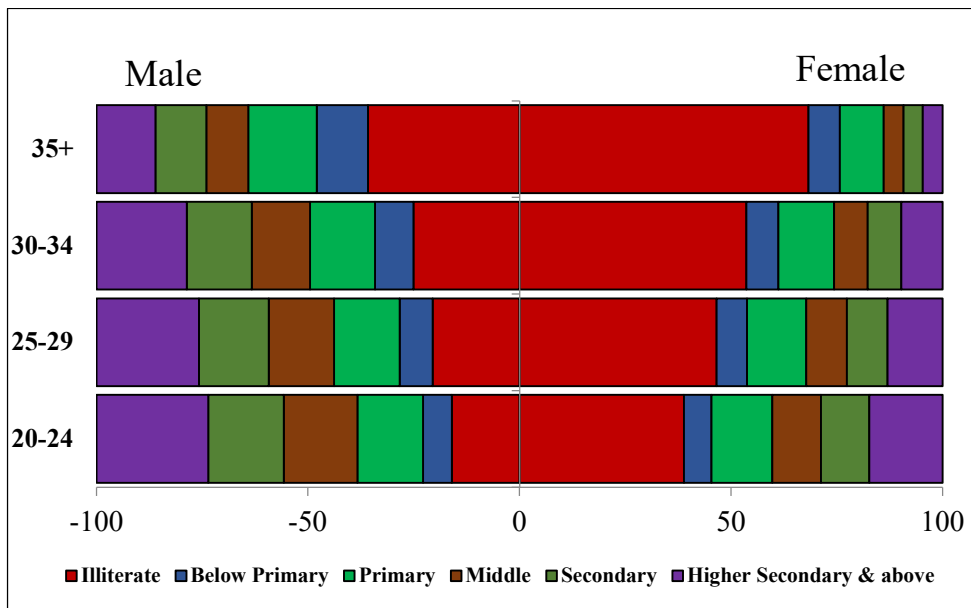


Figure 3: Educational attainment by sex (%), Hindu, INDIA, 2011

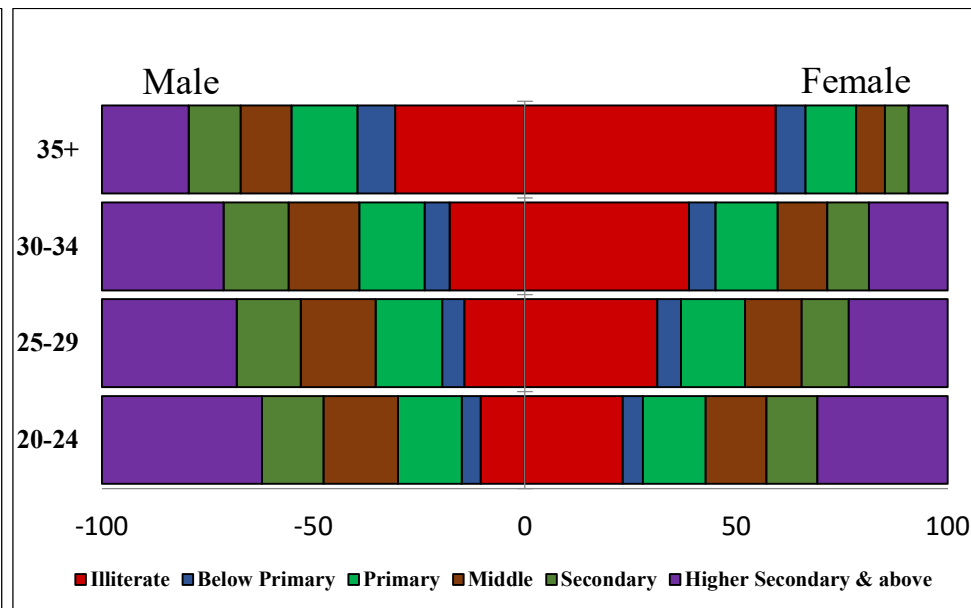


Figure 5: Educational attainment by sex (%), Muslim, INDIA, 2011

Figure 4: Educational attainment by sex (%), Muslim, INDIA, 2001

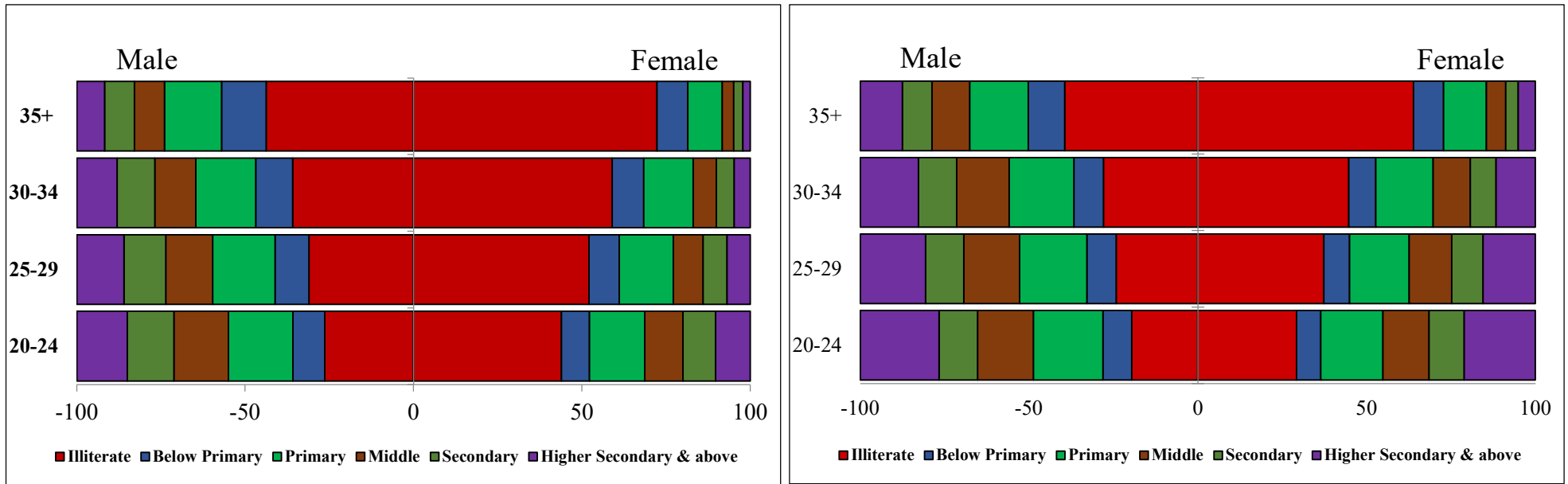


Figure 6: Percentage of households with single literate member by religion and states, INDIA, 2011

