

The Role of Privatization in Addressing Gender Inequality in Education: A Study of Haryana

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KEYWORDS <i>Gender inequality, Female Education, Haryana, Privatization, literacy Rate, Nuh district.</i>	ABSTRACT This paper gives extensive review of the study focused on gender inequality in education and role of privatization in addressing these disparities in Haryana. Haryana, like many other regions of India, grapples with the challenge of providing equal opportunities for girls and boys to access quality education. However, overall literacy rate increases from 26.89% in 1971 to 75.6% in 2011, but the state continues to struggle with deeply entrenched socio- cultural norms that limit girl’s access to education, especially in rural areas and district like Nuh (formerly Mewat). This review amalgamates previous literature ranging from 2015-2025 to evaluate the role of privatization on gender inequality..
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1. INTRODUCTION

“I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved.” – Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

This statement shows how important a girl’s education for a nation’s development. Haryana has always been a male-dominated state. In this state, people have always preferred boy’s education. Female literacy rate is 66.8% (2011 Census) in Haryana, while male-literacy rate is 85.4%. This gender disparity is not only an issue of social justice but also has far reaching implications for the overall development and progress of the state. In Haryana, the gross enrolment ratio is 91% at primary level, 101% at upper primary level, 90% at secondary level, and 66% at higher secondary level, which shows disparity in education at different levels. These disparities continue at districts level also, with areas like Nuh where literacy rate and female literacy rate both are less than 60%.

However, Haryana has seen significant expansion of private schools in recent decades, which aligns with the broader national trend towards privatization. Private sector participation increases from 42.6% (2001) to 65.2% (2015), challenges its involvement in either improving or worsening these gender inequalities.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Devi and Bishnoi (2023) studied the changes in literacy rates in Haryana from 1991 to 2011. According to their study, only four districts - Nuh, Bhawani, Palwal, and Fatehabad - have female literacy rates below 60% (2001) census. They collected data from secondary sources and government websites of India and Haryana, which includes statistical techniques such as graphs, tables, and percentages. According to this study, Nuh is the only district where the literacy rate and female literacy rate are less than 60% (Census 2011). In addition, the variation in educational status between males and females in the district is huge, exceeding 30%. Saha (2023) conducted a study to examine the barriers to women's education and the initiatives taken by the government to improve their conditions. According to the study, the government provides equal opportunities to girls, yet female literacy rate is low in rural areas. He analyzed through his research that women face many problems including lack of social awareness among them, shortage of female teachers, economic burden, non-availability of transport, etc. to further their education. To overcome these problems such schools, colleges, and institutions should be built which are only for girls. Kumar and Nabi Dar (2023) conducted a comprehensive study of rural-urban differentials across all districts of Haryana, finding the southern districts exhibit low differential index, middle-eastern districts show moderate levels, and western districts display moderate to high level of differential indexes. Singh (2023) examined growth pattern of male and female in Haryana based on decadal growth rate and male-female population. Government policies, food availability, educational attainment and per capita income are some of the factors that affect population growth rate. Nath (2022) in his research shows that teacher qualifications do not guarantee quality learning. Almost half of the population relies on public



education schools, but the government spends only 3.5% of GDP on education. The main drawback of our education system is the gap between demand and supply. Government does not provide enough funds to meet the needs of our public schools. Lack of funds is the main reason for the failure of government policies. The research suggests that simply increasing private sector involvement without addressing these systemic issues may not necessarily improve educational outcomes for girls. Kumari (2022) extends the temporal analysis by examining the spatial patterns and differentials of literacy in Haryana from 2001 to 2011, revealing both progress and persistent challenges. Her research indicates that while overall literacy rates improved during this decade, the gender gap actually widened in certain districts, suggesting that educational expansion did not automatically translate to gender equity. The study particularly highlights how urbanization and privatization of education created new forms of inequality, where families with limited resources are forced to make choices between educating sons and daughters, often favouring the former. Sangwan (2022) provides a contemporary perspective on the dwindling state of government schools in Haryana, examining how the rapid expansion of private education has affected public school systems. He critically

examined the government school merger policy in Haryana through secondary data which includes statistical abstracts of Haryana, website of the Ministry of Education, Government of India. Data shows that school enrolment in private schools is higher in 2021, and most students in public schools come from poor families. This paper aims to explore the rationale behind the amalgamation policy of state schools. According to the study, government school merger policy is useful for teachers and for freeing up the infrastructure that is occupied earlier. However, it did not improve the quality of education. M and n (2022) studied the recent pattern of privatization in school education and the variation in private participation between states. According to their study, between 2003-04 (90.60%) and 2019-20 (82.56%), there is a decrease in the number of primary state schools. But the number of unaided private schools has increased from 2003-04 (6.50%) to 2019-20 (11.49%). The Pearson coefficient is used by researchers to calculate the relationship between the economic status of states and private sector participation. They analyse that poor countries have a smaller proportion of private schools. Chowdhury (2021) in their study examined the positive and negative effects of privatization in education. This is a review paper, and the pros and cons of privatization were discussed from the perspective of previous researchers. Main goals of privatization in Education are - quality education, meeting demand of students, reducing financial burden of the government, accessibility in all areas, and providing education at an international level. However improper monitoring by the government can lead to lower levels of education. Lamneichong, Lhungdim, and Hangsing (2021) explored the issues and expectations about private school education from the perspective of parents, teachers, and students through self-developed questionnaire. 79 schools out of 169 private schools were randomly selected and final sample size includes 40 parents, teachers, and students. They analyze that private schools have certain disadvantages, but the best part is the quality of education. This is the reason why the privatization of education is increasing day by day. Wanti (2020) in his study examined the disparities in upper secondary education in Haryana based on the 2011 census. According to the study, among all districts, women did not have more than 31.3% of secondary education attainment of the population. By comparing all the districts of Haryana, he finds inter-district differences in higher secondary Education. Among all districts, Nuh has a very low population (4.5%) of females in senior secondary Education and (6.7%) gender gap, which is one-third of male population in senior secondary Education. In Haryana, women were illiterate compared to men, except in Yamuna Nagar. Sharma and Kumar (2020) studied the factors that are responsible for the existing gender gap in Education. According to their study, Haryana state had a 75.55% literacy rate in 2011 but there was difference in male (69.97%) and female (36.60%) literacy rates. Although, disparity index decreased from 28.58 to 18.11 in Haryana (1971-2011) but it was very high in Mewat and Palwal districts. Unfairness in society, low enrolment in School's, high dropouts, illiterate parents, and traditions were few factors that affected female Education. Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to associate literacy and its determinants. Arora (2020) revealed merits and demerits of the private sector in education. According to the author, privatization had certain pros and cons, but still the literacy rate increased from 48.25 (1991) to 71.96 (2015). The author highlights the demand, advantages, and disadvantages of privatization in education sector. High fees, discrimination, and less qualified teachers are some disadvantages of privatization but quality of Education can be improved by privatization. To promote equality in education government should bear the costs of poor children in the private sector. According to Bhardwaj study (2019) half of the population of Mewat region is illiterate. The study revealed that enrolment of girl's students is equal to boys at primary level but less at higher level. The conditions of girl's education are worst in Mewat. Also, there are not so many institutions or colleges. Yadav (2018) explored level of educational development in Haryana based on 13 indicators. Her study shows disparities in different districts of Haryana. Mewat is the most underdeveloped district and Faridabad is the highly developed district in terms of education. There are only 9 colleges in Mewat and also, female literacy rate (37%) is very low. Kumar (2018) examined the correlation between sex ratio and literacy rate in Haryana. Mewat has the highest sex ratio but lowest literacy rate. There is negative correlation between sex ratio and literacy rate. According to Census (2011) Panchkula has highest and Mewat has lowest female literacy rate. Sangwan and Hooda (2018) attempted to examine the educational status of women in Haryana and the pattern of literacy rates by gender. The work showed an increase in the literacy rate from 1971 (26.89%) to 2011 (75.6%). They used secondary data collected from the Haryana Statistical Abstract, published and unpublished journals, books, reports, and articles. They analyze that overall literacy rate in Haryana was increasing but the difference in male and female literacy is decreasing from 1971 (22.4%) to 2011 (18.26%). The gender gap in primary, middle, and senior secondary schools was very high in 1966-67 but narrowed until 2010-11 and then widened at all levels. Yadav (2018) conducted an empirical study to explore the socio-economic status of Muslims and the issues faced by Nuh district.



He grouped indicators of development in categories and analysed. According to his research, Mewat was very low in education, health, electricity facilities, pucca houses, and roads. All the basic parameters on which we measure the development of the region were very low in Mewat. Literacy rate of women was very low and they had limited access to resources and facilities. Yadav (2017) analysed that overall literacy rate is 67.91% and the female literacy rate is 55.7% in Haryana (Census 2001). In which Panchkula district has the highest female literacy rate 68.98% while Fatehabad district has the lowest female literacy rate 46.4%. In 2011, the overall literacy rate was 76.6% and the female literacy rate was 66.8% (2011 census). Female literacy rate shows a positive change from 2001 to 2011. All 19 districts have shown a positive change in female literacy rate in 2011 compared to 2001. But in 2011 among 21 districts, only Mewat district falls under the category of very low female literacy rate (below 40%). The authors Kumar, Tyagi, and Rastogi (2017) conducted a study on women educational status in Nuh district. According to their study the condition of women was not very good here and female literacy rate was lowest from 2001 to 2011. Simple percentage technique was used to find female literacy rate. In this district women were illiterate, weak, backward and exploited. The study was based on secondary data, collected from district census hand books. The reasons were patriarchal society, few female teachers in schools, less colleges and distanced from these institutions. Jangra and Kaushik (2016) build upon this foundation by providing a comprehensive analysis of female literacy levels in Haryana, highlighting how the state's position as having the lowest sex ratio in India directly correlates with educational inequalities. Their study reveals that despite overall improvements in literacy rates, the gender gap remains persistently wide, with rural areas showing particularly stark disparities. The authors emphasize that the sex ratio imbalance creates a social environment where female education is systematically devalued, leading to lower enrollment rates and higher dropout rates among girls. Sharma and Tripathi (2016) conducted a comprehensive study examining factors affecting enrollment trends in government and private schools at the elementary level, gathering perspectives from both teachers and parents. Their research reveals that parental perceptions of school quality, teacher competency, and infrastructure significantly influence enrollment decisions, with these factors often leading to gendered choices about educational investments. A study of gender disparities conducted by Rana (2016) in the areas of education, health, marriage and nutritional status in 21 districts of Haryana. The fact revealed that there is inverse correlation between sex ratio and literacy rate. Mewat district has the lowest female literacy rate and highest gender disparity in literacy rate, along with early marriage of women (37.6%) and men (70.4%). Grewal (2015) in his article talked about the conditions of women in Mewat. He works on education, health issues and crimes against women. There is difference between sex ratio and the reason is the idea that men are more important than women. Also, the female literacy is 37.60% that indicates women don't have access to education. Saini (2015) examine the inequality of education in all districts of Haryana. literacy rate, number of students enrolled, number of institutions and number of teachers etc. are some of the criteria to examine the structure of the education sector. The study revealed that in some districts – Mewat, Palwal, Sirsa and Fatehabad, female literacy rate is low and enrolment is also low. According to the study, with appropriate distribution of resources, prioritizing the education of women, qualified teachers and sufficient equipment, inequalities in education can be eliminated. A comparative study of public and private schools based on survey data conducted by Sharma & Meena (2015). According to the study quality of education is almost same but the infrastructure is better in private schools. However, government schools received more funds from the government and NGOs but better infrastructure is not properly maintained. Public school teachers do not feel insecure about their work so they don't care about improving the education system and the result is bad quality of education.

S.NO.	Research Objectives	Reviews Mapped
1)	To analyze the impact of privatization on access to education in Haryana.	6
2)	To assess gender disparities in education across Haryana district	8
3)	To study female literacy patterns and their socio-economic determinants	7
4)	To examine spatial disparities in literacy and education development in Haryana	6
5)	To evaluate inter-district educational development and disparities	6
6)	To understand the influence of socio-cultural and demographic factors on education	5
	Total Literature Reviews Referred	38



3. FACTORS THAT EFFECTS GENDER EQUALITY

Male-Dominated Culture: Kumar, Tyagi, and Rastogi (2017) mentioned male dominated culture as a major factor in rural areas for gender inequality in education. This system inherently values male children over female children, leading to differential investment in education.

Gender Role Stereotyping: Grewal (2015) noted that the prevailing idea that "men were more important than women" directly impacts educational decisions, with families viewing female education as less essential than male education.

Cultural Traditions and Customs: Jangra and Kaushik (2016) attributed low literacy rates in tehsils like Nuh, Hathin, Punhana, Palwal, and Ferozapur-Jhirka to "old customs and backwardness," indicating how traditional practices continue to limit female educational opportunities.

Early Marriage Patterns: Rana (2016) documented that in Mewat district, 37.6% of women and 70.4% of men marry early, with early marriage for girls being significantly more common and directly impacting their educational continuation.

Educational Discontinuation: Early marriage forces girls to discontinue their education, creating a vicious cycle where less educated mothers are less likely to prioritize their daughters' education.

Lack of Awareness: Saha (2023) identified "lack of social awareness among women" as a significant barrier, suggesting that communities may not fully understand the importance of female education.

Generational Transmission: Sharma and Kumar (2020) noted that "illiterate parents" contribute to the gender gap, indicating how educational disadvantage is transmitted across generations.

Economic Burden: Saha (2023) explicitly identified "economic burden" as a barrier to women's education, while Saha and Datta (2020) found that "poor people cannot afford education in private schools due to high tuition fees."

Opportunity Cost: The literature suggests that families facing economic constraints often prioritize boys' education over girls', viewing male education as having higher economic returns.

Resource Allocation: When families have limited resources, cultural biases lead to preferential allocation of educational resources to male children.

Industrial Development Correlation: Kumari (2022) found that "areas that were industrially developed and economically healthy were more literate than others," with Gurugram having the highest literacy rate (84.7%) compared to economically backward Mewat (54.1%).

Rural-Urban Economic Divide: Kumar and Dar (2023) noted that Mewat has both the "lowest level of urban literacy rate (71.70%) and lowest level of rural literacy rate (54.01%)," reflecting the compound effect of economic underdevelopment.

Less Availability of Women Teachers: Saha (2023), Kumar, Tyagi, and Rastogi (2017) mentioned "less availability of female teachers in rural areas" as a major obstacle in girls' education.

Shortage of Educational Institutions: Many researchers found that shortage of academic institutions is also responsible for low literacy rate. Yadav (2018) & Bhardwaj (2019) identified that there is shortage of educational institutions in Mewat district.

Poor Educational Facilities: Kumari (2022) identified "poor educational facilities and lack of awareness" as reasons for low literacy levels.

Less Transport Facilities: Non-availability of transport facility is identified by Saha (2023) as one of the factors for low female literacy rate.

Distance Barrier: Distance from institution is another barrier faced by girl's students to continue their education.

Educational Standards: Nath (2022) noted that "teacher qualifications do not guarantee quality learning," highlighting systemic quality issues in the education system.

Lack of Funds: Nath (2022) analysed that almost half of the population relies on public schools and the government spend only 3.5% of GDP on education.

Policy-Practice Gap: Saha (2023) noted that despite government providing "equal opportunities to girls," female literacy rates remain low, indicating implementation challenges.

School Consolidation Effects: Sangwan (2022) found that "government school merger policy is useful for teachers and for freeing up the infrastructure" but "did not improve the quality of education."

Reduced Access: School mergers may have inadvertently reduced educational access, particularly affecting girls who face greater mobility constraints.

District-Level Disparities: Devi and Bishnoi (2023) identified specific districts (Nuh, Bhawani, Palwal, Fatehabad) with female literacy rates below 60%, indicating geographic concentration of gender inequality.



Spatial Patterns: Kumar and Dar (2023) found that "Southern-district has low, middle-eastern district has moderate and western districts has moderate to high level of differential index."

Urban-Rural Literacy Gap: Jangra and Kaushik (2016) documented "gap between female literacy rate in rural and urban areas," with rural areas showing significantly lower female literacy.

Accessibility Patterns: Kumari (2022) noted that "women in urban areas are also more literate than in rural areas," reflecting differential access to educational opportunities.

4. RESEARCH GAPS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

4.1 Identified Research Gaps

The comprehensive review of existing literature reveals several critical research gaps that warrant further investigation:

Temporal Limitations: Most studies rely on Census 2011 data, which may not reflect current educational realities, particularly in the context of rapid privatization and policy changes over the past decade.

Insufficient Analysis of Privatization's Gendered Impact: Despite extensive documentation of both gender inequality and privatization trends, limited research specifically examines how privatization affects gender parity in education.

Regional Specificity: The unique case of Nuh district, consistently identified as the most disadvantaged region, requires more focused analysis to understand the specific mechanisms perpetuating educational inequality.

4.2 Future Research Priorities

Based on the identified gaps, several research priorities emerge:

Contemporary Data Analysis: Comprehensive studies using post-2011 data to assess current gender disparities and the impact of recent policy interventions.

Analysis of Privatization Impact: Analysing the role of privatization and its impact on gender inequality.

In- Depth Regional Analysis: In-depth analysis of regions where female literacy rate is still low, to know the factors that affects these disparities.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Theoretical Considerations

The connection between gender inequality and the growth of privatization in education in Haryana can be explored through various theories. According to the human capital theory education should be seen as an investment based on future benefits, but social norms that favour one gender over another can change these views, leading to less support for girl's education. The capabilities approach sees education as essential for personal development, shoeing how differences between men and women hold back the whole society from moving forward.

Market failure theory helps to explain how privatization affects different groups. Even though markets can make things more efficient and better quality, they can also leave people who can't afford to pay behind. This might make inequality worse. Also, when it comes to deciding how to invest in education, gender plays a role. This means privatization doesn't affect everyone same, especially in places where there's a cultural bias towards educating boys more than girl's.

6. CONCLUSION

This extensive review discloses gender disparity in different districts of Haryana. Previous researchers explored literacy rate, women's educational status, gross enrolment ratio, and many more factors in 22 districts of Haryana. Although much progress has been made in recent years, Haryana continues to struggle with deeply entrenched socio- cultural norms that limit girl's access to education. Among 22 districts in Haryana, Nuh is the only district where literacy and female literacy rate both are less than 60%.

The quick expansion of private schools along with ongoing social and economic challenges that prevent girl's from getting an education, shows that relying only on market solutions isn't enough to fix gender inequality. The rapid growth of private education, coupled with persistent socio-economic barriers to female education, suggests that market-based solutions alone are insufficient to address gender inequalities. Instead, a comprehensive approach combining targeted public investment, effective regulation of private providers, and interventions addressing underlying socio-cultural barrier is necessary. A better way is to use a mix of focused public funding, strong rules for private schools, and efforts to change the cultural attitudes that hold women back.

The research gaps identified in this review, especially the lack of recent data and limited analysis of how privatization affects gender inequalities, show important areas that need more study in the future.

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