



## **Gender Inequality In Jammu & Kashmir State in context to Education, Health and Economic Activities**

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### **Abstract**

*When we use the term male and female, we commonly refer to the anatomical /biological differences between these two sexes-when we use the word gender, however we are going beyond anatomical/biological differences between male and female to their socially constituted roles and status. For example, when one uses the word femininity the social expectations of feminine qualities may be nurturing, caring, delicate, irrational initiative, submission, non-aggression etc. "The word gender" is often used as a synonym for "sex". Sex, refers to biological characteristics and features that make someone female or male. Gender has also been misused as a synonym for "women" or "female". For the present study, Jammu and Kashmir is chosen as unit of the study. The state of Jammu and Kashmir is one of the largest states of the India. It lies between 32°-15' and 37°-05' North latitude and 72°-35' and 83°-20' East longitude. The area of Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir is 101387sq.km and it comprises three natural regions viz., Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Various Data sources primarily include Census of India 2011 and supplemented with State Digest of Statistics and other published work wherever necessary. A most evident reflection of gender discrimination can be seen at the alarming decline rate in sex ratio, be it at the national level or to the matter the J&K state.*

*In case of J&K state, as depicted from various surveys, reports and census, gender inequality is clearly a matter of concern. Taking education as a starting point, there is nearly 27% gap between males and females in case of literacy rate. It clearly reflects the attitude of the society towards female education. Although, the literacy rate of education of females has increased from 9.28% to 49.12%, yet it is evident that gender gap has increased from 17.47 to 27.63. One of the greatest concern, so far as gender discrimination is concerned is that of male-female sex ratio. J&K is categorized in those states which have the worst sex ratio. Despite several steps taken state government or non-government organizations, it seems that they have failed to curb this social menace. J&K has shown 82 points decrease in census 2011 to 883.*

## **Introduction**

### *Concept of Gender*

When we use the term male and female, we commonly refer to the anatomical/biological differences between these two sexes-when we use the word gender, however we are going beyond anatomical/biological differences between male and female to their socially constituted roles and status. For example, when one uses the word femininity the social expectations of feminine qualities may be nurturing, caring, delicate, irrational initiative, submission, non-aggression etc. When women do not meet these social expectations of feminine attributes, she may be considered not female enough or transgressing her role either as daughter, mother or sister. These roles are socially conditioned and arise of structure of power. In patriarchal setup the entire system is geared towards keeping women at lower level. The tilt of power & status in such institutions differentiated clearly favour the male, with the establishment of asymmetric relationship of dominance.

In simple words, gender is the social behaviour of women and men in specific cultural context. Gender, therefore, not simply connotes men and women but the relationship between them and the way it is socially constructed. As it a relational term, it must include women and men. It is the analytical tool to understand social behavior, same as race, culture ethnicity, class and so on.

### **1. Gender and Sex**

"The word gender" is often used as a synonym for "sex". Sex, refers to biological characteristics and features that make someone female or male. Gender has also been misused as a synonym for "women" or "female". Development projects directed towards women's needs, for example, may mistakenly refer to gender needs.

**Sex** –Biological differences between men and women refers to sex they are universal. These sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive as there are individuals who possess both, but these characteristics tend to differentiate humans as males and females. Only a few are small proportion of the difference in the roles assigned by gender can be attributed to physical differences based on sex (such as pregnancy and childbirth, or differences in physiology and bodily functions).

**Gender** –In simple terms, Gender, can be reflection of socially constructed roles of men and women. Unlike ascribed they can be learned, changeable over, acquired time and space, very widely within and across cultures. We can say it is variable of socio-economic construct for responsibilities, analyzing roles, constraints, opportunities, and needs of men and women in a given context.

### **2. Gender Equality and Gender Inequality**

Gender equality' means both equality of treatment under the law and equality of opportunity. In addition, since these do not take structural inequality into account, it also includes substantive equality and equality of agency.

Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of both the similarities and differences between women and men, and the varying roles that they play.

Gender inequality is constructed both through society's formal laws and statutes and through unwritten norms and shared understandings. It is not only pervasive across all

societies but also the most prevalent form of social disadvantage within societies. It cuts across all other forms of inequality, such as class, caste and race. And because gender is key to the organization of production and reproduction, women are also “at the crossroads between economic growth and human development”. The argument for addressing gender inequality, therefore, is not simply that it exists in all societies but that it exists at all levels of society. It makes the effects of poverty worse for women and biases the form taken by economic growth.

### **3.Objectives:**

1. To explore the gender inequality in State of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. To study the gender inequality in Jammu and Kashmir in all relevant fields like education, health and family welfare.
3. To study the socio economic profile of the Jammu and Kashmir State.

### **4.Area of the study:**

For the present study, Jammu and Kashmir is chosen as unit of the study. The state of Jammu and Kashmir is one of the largest states of the India. It lies between 32°-15' and 37°-05' North latitude and 72°-35' and 83°-20' East longitude. The area of Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir is 101387sq.k m and it comprises three natural regions viz., Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The total population of the state is 12.5 million persons with sex ratio 883 (Census 2011) Jammu and Kashmir is the northernmost state of India, above Himachal Pradesh. It is a relatively small state that accounts for about 1% of India's total population.1 Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy (75% of the population depend on agriculture and allied activities) but the handicraft sector also provides considerable employment and foreign exchange.2 The proportion of the population below the poverty line is considerably lower than in India generally and while poverty rates remain higher in rural than urban areas, the discrepancy seems less in Jammu and Kashmir than elsewhere.3 However, the Human Development Index indicates a level of social development well below the all-India level, and the Gender and Development Index ranks 28th out of the 35 states and union territories for which the index was calculated in 2006. The state ranks 33 out of 35 on the Gender Empowerment Measure, which is based on political and economic participation and decision making and power over economic resources

### **5.Data Sources and Methodology:**

Various Data sources primarily include Census of India 2011 and supplemented with State Digest of Statistics and other published work wherever necessary. The present article is supported by research data and observation of my research. During my search on the same topic, it was observed that gender inequality exists in Jammu and Kashmir like other states of India.

#### **1.1.Gender Inequality & Education**

Parallel to elsewhere in the country, the picture of education of females in pre-Independence is quite dismal & depressing .In, the traditionaall Kashmir,women,in society were generally subjected to discrimination , oppression and inequality . The role women remained confined to domestic affaires and so they were debarred from education (Dabla,2007). People were highly conservative and realization of women education was totally lacking.



At the time of Independence, there were very few educational institutions in the state which were largely concentrated in the major towns. The state of affairs, as far as literacy is concerned, was such that the literacy rate of the state was only five per cent at that time. With the concerted efforts of the State Government, over the period, the education scenario improved in the State quite substantially.

**Table 1: Statement showing the Literacy Rate in J&K**

Census Year	Literacy Rate in J&K			Increase in literacy %age over the preceding census	
	Male	Female	Total	J&K	All India
1961	16.97	4.2	11.03	-	-
1971	26.75	9.28	18.58	07.55	6.15
1981	36.29	15.8	26.67	8.09	9.12
2001	66.60	43.00	55.50	28.83	21.27
2011	76.75	49.12	67.16	13.24	9.20

As from the above Table ,it is evident that gender differentiation exists both in rural and urban areas, but it is high in rural areas. This can be attributed to number of factors like social dogmas, stereotypes ,established order, culture, beliefs ,power structure ,engagement of girl child in agricultural/domestic work, preference of male child over female one.

At the National level , the gender gap in literacy has decreased from 25.06% in 1961 to 21.59% in 2001 and further to 10.68% in 2011. Contrary to this , the gender gap in literacy increased in the State from 12.71% in 1961 to 23,60% in 2001.

Recognizing the same, number of steps have been taken to bridge the gap of male-female literacy. Steps were taken for promoting “Education for Women’s Equality” as laid down in the National Policy of Education (1986). The revised National Plan of Action(1992) strongly advocates education for women’s equality and empowerment. Motivation centered programmes with special inputs to promote self confidence and self sufficiency among women have been stressed under the new education policy.

The initiatives include National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary level (NPEGEL), Establishment of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalas(KGBVs), Free Text-Books/ Scholarships, Community mobilization, Establishment of Women ITIs and Women wings in the existing ITIs, reservation of half of the seats for females in the Medical Colleges, Focus on adult female illiterates under “*Saakshar Bharat Mission* (SBM) etc. As a result of these

measures, the State has been able to break this impasse and put a halt to the ever increasing trajectory of gender gap for the first time during the decade 2001-2011 when the gender gap got reduced to 20.25%. This was possible only due to higher rate of increase in the female literacy viz; by 15.01% as against 11.66% recorded for males during 2001-11.

**Table2: Statement Showing the Increase Rate of Literacy in J&K**

S.No.	Census Year	Males		Females		Gender gap in literacy
		Male literacy	Increase in Literacy %age over the preceding census year	Female literacy rate	Increase in Literacy %age over the preceding census year	
01	1961	16.97	-	-	12.71	
02	1971	26.75	9.78	9.28	5.02	<b>17.47</b>
03	1981	36.29	9.54	15.88	6.60	20.41
04	2001	66.60	30.31	43.00	27.12	23.60
05	2011	76.75	10.15	49.12	6.12	27.63

Ever since the launch of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) and initiation of host of steps like provision of free text-books, scholarships, various educational facilities at an easy reach etc, the State has been able to reduce the drop-out rate. The dropout rate in the State has declined to 11% in 2012-13. It is hoped that the dropout rate will certainly come down further and that too quite steeply in near future.

**“Beti Anmol”** The State Government rolled out *“Beti Anmol”* scheme during 2011-12 with a view to arrest post matric dropout rate of girl students belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) and enhancing their employment prospects. Under the scheme, an amount of ` 5000/- is to be given as incentive to the girl students of Educationally Backward Blocks, who pass their matriculation examination and get themselves enrolled in the 11th class. The incentive is given in the shape of a bank deposit the amount of which is en-cashable only after the students pass their 12th class examination. *Beti Anmol* scheme is presently catering to the girl students hailing from 97 educationally backward blocks of the State. The ultimate objective of this new initiative is to encourage the education of the girl students in the State. The Scheme is operative from academic session 2011-12 both for winter and summer zones and 2560 girls

students were provided incentive during the said year. During 2012-13, against the target coverage of 6439 beneficiaries, the achievement ending December 2012 is 2760.

**d)Society for Human Welfare and Education:**

This society was set up in 1941 and is one of the oldest social welfare organizations in Kashmir. Its primary objective is providing education to children from poorer families.

**e)Jammaati-Islami:**

Jammaati-Islami organization was established in 1944. The organization is running about 30 schools in the state (Alvi, 1997).

**1.2.Gender Inequality and Health & Family Welfare**

Health is the fundamental human right & necessary for individual well being at micro level, and indispensable prerequisite for economic growth & development in country /state at the macro level. Better health improves the efficiency & productivity of labour force , which ultimately contributes the economic growth & leads to human welfare.

**Table 3.**

General Context	Population (2011)	% key Minorities 2001			% Urban (2011)	Women Headed Households %
		SC Muslims	ST Muslims			
Jammu & Kashmir	12.5 M	7.6	10.9	67.0	27	8.2
All India	1,210.2 M	16.2	8.2	13.4	31	14.4

**Table 4.**

Sex Ratio	All Ages,Census 2011 (No. of Females per 1,000 Males)				Age(0-6),Census 2011		
	Sex Ages	All	Change since,2001	Sex Ratio Rural	Sex Ratio Urban	Sex Ratio	Change since 2001
Jammu & Kashmir	883		-9	899	840	859	-82
All India	940		+7	947	926	914	-13

**Table 5.**

Sex Ratio at Birth & Infant Mortality rate	Sex Ratio at Birth 2005-06	IMR ,2009 (Deaths per thousand live births Age(0-6),Census 2011
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	<b>At Births</b>	<b>At last births</b>	<b>Rural Male</b>	<b>Rural Female</b>	<b>Urban Male</b>	<b>Urban Female</b>
Jammu & Kashmir	912	770	43	53	31	39
All India	920	756	54	50	32	35

**Table 6.**

	<b>MMR (2007-2009)</b>	<b>Total Fertility Rate (2010)</b>	<b>Crude Death Rate(2011)</b>
Jammu & Kashmir	160	2.0	5.5
All India	212	2.0	5.5

**Table 7.**

<b>Under Age Marriage</b>	<b>% Girls below 18,2007-08</b>		<b>% of Boys age below 21,2007-08</b>	
	<b>Total Fertility Rate (2010)</b>			
	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Urban</b>
Jammu & Kashmir	8.5	0.6	11.2	3.4
All India	26.7	11.0	28.4	12.6

**Table 8.**

<b>Development Indexes, 2006</b>	Human Development Index (HDI), Human Development Index, reflecting health, literacy, earnings	Gender Development Index (GDI) Gender and Development Index, based on HDI but adjusted to reflect gender inequality	Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), based on political and economic participation and decisionmaking and power over economic resources
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Jammu & Kashmir	.590 (Rank 27 out of 35)	.580 (Rank 28 out of 35)	.355 (Rank 33 out of 35)
All India	.605	.590	.497

The paragraphs below highlight a number of gender equality issues in Jammu and Kashmir, in many cases drawing on the data from the charts above. These are all issues that arise in many if not most other states in India. However, there is considerable variability among states (and sometimes within states) on the specific details. For example, sex ratios are low throughout India, but even lower in some states; maternal mortality ratios are high across India but some states have made more progress than others in reducing them. The paragraphs below generally compare Jammu and Kashmir with the all-India situation to provide a context.

***The undervaluation of women is evident in the imbalance in the sex ratio.*** The low sex ratio—the number of women per 1,000 men—is a key indicator of gender inequality in India. It reflects the strong son preference that affects the number of girls that are born and the number that survive. National census data show a decline in the sex ratio for children under age 7 from 945 in 1991 to 927 in 2001, with a further decline to 914 in 2011. The trend in the sex ratio at birth is also downward, reflecting widespread use of sex-selection tests. While these trends are worrying in most areas of India, they are even worse in Jammu and Kashmir, where the sex ratio for children under age 7 was found to be 859 girls per 1,000 boys in 2011, a very steep decline from 941 in 2001 (a decline of 82 girls in ten years). State-level survey data from 2005-06 on sex ratios at birth are also disturbing—this was low for all births (912 girls for every 1,000 boys) and very low for last births (770 girls per 1,000 boys), both indicators of the continuing importance of achieving at least one son in family planning decisions.<sup>4</sup> Infant mortality rates are also significantly higher for girls than boys in both urban and rural areas.

***High maternal mortality ratios (MMR) also reflect discriminatory practices in families and society, as well as inadequate health services and facilities for antenatal and obstetric care.*** Factors contributing to the high risk of maternal death include early marriage, women's limited power of decision over family planning and use of health care services, poor nutrition, poor health knowledge, domestic violence, and poor health services, including basic and emergency obstetric services. All these contribute to the “three delays” that put women at risk—delays in seeking health care, delays in reaching an appropriate facility, and delays in receiving care.<sup>5</sup> State level maternal mortality data is not available for Jammu and Kashmir (it is among several with populations too small to allow for reliable estimates).

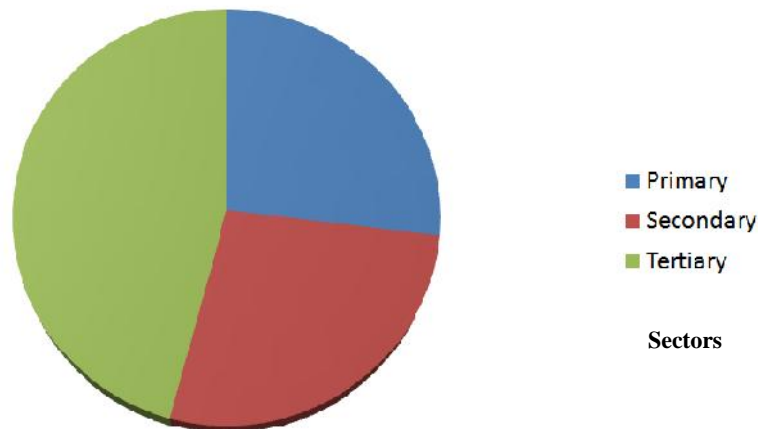
### **1.3. Gender Inequality in Economic Activities**

Employment and gender empowerment can go hand in hand, the idea is that once the women become economically independent, they can get equal chance in the decision making, can contribute equally for the socio-economic betterment of the family & finally can enjoy an equal respect in the society.

#### **Economic Scenario of J&K**



**Contribution to GSDP**



	Male	Female
J&K	64.49%	28.61%
Marginal Workers	39.56%	60.44%

**Unemployment Ratio in J&K**

Rural+Urban	Male	Female
UPS	3.6%	17.1%
CWS	3.6%	7.1%
CDS	4.2%	11.1%

UPS: Usual Principal Status; CWS: Current Weekly Status; CDS: Current Daily Status

\* : Unemployment rate per 100 persons

According to 2001 census, the number of total workers in J&K stood at 37.54 lakhs of which the main workers constitute 26.09 lakhs (69.49%) and the number of marginal workers constitutes 11.45 lakhs (30.51%). The share of main and marginal workers in the total work force has remained by and large constant during the last two censuses (1981 and 2001).

Female workers constituted 28.61% of the total work force. The share of female in the Main workers is only 14.63% as against 60.44% in marginal workers category in J&K.

<b>Unemployment Rate as per Usual Principal Status in J&amp;K State in comparison with the neighbouring States//All India as per 66th Round of NSS (2009-10)</b>			
	Male	Female	Persons
<b>J&amp;K</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>5.3</b>

<b>H.P</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.8</b>
<b>Punjab</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>4.5</b>
<b>Haryana</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.6</b>
<b>Delhi</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.7</b>
<b>All India</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>2.6</b>

As per the 66th Round of NSS (2009-10), based on Usual Principal Status (UPS), J&K has the highest Unemployment rate of 5.3% in comparison to its neighbouring States viz. Punjab (4.5%), H.P (2.8%), Delhi (2.7%), Haryana (2.6%). All India figures for Unemployment rate stood at 2.6% only. Unemployment rate for Males in J&K was 3.6% only whereas that of females was 17.1% which is far too high when compared to the neighbouring States viz Punjab (11.7%), Haryana (2.8%), Delhi (2.8%), H.P (2.5%). The problem of unemployment amongst females is predominant in J&K based on Usual Principal Status has revealed as the gap between

Unemployment rate of females in J&K (17.1%) and that of All India level (3.6%) is huge.

The paragraphs below generally compare Jammu and Kashmir with the all-India situation to provide a context.

**Low participation of women in higher-growth sectors.** Women's recorded labor force participation rates are low in India compared with other countries. Women's participation rates tend to be much higher in rural than urban areas: the rural rate of 30% is twice the urban rate of 15%. Generally in India, women's representation in industry and services, the higher-growth sectors in recent years, is much lower than in agriculture.<sup>6</sup> A very high proportion of rural women is engaged in agriculture (84% of women, compared with 67% of men in 2007-08) and the shift to other sectors is slower for women than men (comparable data for 1977-78 was 88% and 81% respectively).<sup>7</sup> Women's share of wage employment in the non-agricultural sector is one of the MDG gender equality indicators—it shows the extent to which women are able to move into employment with higher returns on their labor. In Jammu and Kashmir women have only 11% of non-agricultural wage employment, much lower than the national figure of 19%.

**Gender biases in the labor force are evident in the gaps between male and female wages.** In Jammu and Kashmir in 2007-08, wages of women who were casual workers (by far the largest category of workers) were 70% of men's wages in rural areas (although almost the same in urban areas). Among wage employees, women's wages were as low as 40% those of men in rural areas (and 90% in urban areas). Among the many factors in the persistence of such discrimination is the perception that women are secondary earners and that lower wages for them are therefore justified. In addition, many women are unaware of minimum wage standards and laws against employment discrimination.<sup>8</sup>

**Constraints on access to key resources: to freedom of movement, media and information, money and credit.** In Jammu and Kashmir, only 70% of adult women report being allowed to go alone to the market, and only 55% report that they can go outside the community on their own. The number that could go alone to a health centre was somewhere between these two figures, and only about half could go along to all three places. Women's participation in household decision making show that less than half of adult women are involved in household decisions about their own health care, major or daily household purchases and visits to family,

which are proportions much lower than elsewhere in India. Both women and men have higher access to television and radio than is the case in the country overall, and a surprising 64.5% of women (slightly more than men) watches televisions at least once a week. However, as many as 17.6% of women are not regularly exposed to any media (compared to 12.8% of men). Only 55.4% of women have money they can decide how to use, and only 21.9 have a bank account that they themselves use. Fewer women than elsewhere India are aware of microcredit programs and only 0.2% had taken a loan from such a program. These are indicators of the constraints and challenges women face, and also factors to be taken into account in devising effective strategies to reach women and support women's increased participation in public life and economic activity.

***Increasing proportion of households headed by women, which are more likely to be economically vulnerable than households headed by men.*** Nationwide the proportion of households headed by women increased by over half, from 9% to 14% between 1992/93 and 2005/06; the figure in Jammu and Kashmir is much lower: 8.2%, but this still represents a large number of households. National data show that women who are household heads are on average older and less educated than male household heads (and less educated than the average woman). They are also over-represented among the poorest 20% of the population. These households have therefore been identified as meriting specific attention in poverty reduction initiatives.

### **Conclusion**

Gender inequality is a global phenomenon having its offshoots in different spheres of society. It has its reflection in social, economic and political spheres to name a few. India being a primarily an agrarian society with patriarchal social setup is male dominated. Though, India has witnessed structural change in its economic setup yet gender inequality has shown its offshoots in it. Although, at the policy level of the State, gender sensitive issues have been raised with new concepts emerging from reservation of women in political sphere to gender budgeting at the planning level, yet a lot needs to be done. A most evident reflection of gender discrimination can be seen at the alarming decline rate in sex ratio, be it at the national level or to the matter the J&K state.

In case of J&K state, as depicted from various surveys, reports and census, gender inequality is clearly a matter of concern. Taking education as a starting point, there is nearly 27% gap between males and females in case of literacy rate. It clearly reflects the attitude of the society towards female education. Although, the literacy rate of education of females has increased from 9.28% to 49.12%, yet it is evident that gender gap has increased from 17.47 to 27.63. One of the greatest concern, so far as gender discrimination is concerned is that of male-female sex ratio. J&K is categorized in those states which have the worst sex ratio. Despite several steps taken state government or non-government organizations, it seems that they have failed to curb this social menace. J&K has shown 82 points decrease in census 2011 to 883. Despite the J&K state has witnessed an emerging trend in its economic sphere, yet the percentage of females as main workers is just 28% and added to it, so far marginal workers of the state is concerned it much higher i.e 60% to that of females.

In sum up, it can be said that lot of steps at policy level of different organization, be it state or non-state have been taken, but much more is to done, so that we reach to that level where our society will be described as egalitarian.



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