

A Geographical Assessment of Gender Inequality of district Kathua, J&K

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Abstract: *Despite various constitutional provisions, the problem of gender inequality still prevails in all spheres of life. In reality, majority of Indian women are facing the problem of inequality and discrimination. The present paper is an attempt to analyze the status of gender inequality in the Kathua district of Jammu & Kashmir state based on both primary and secondary data. The study reveals the inequality between women and men of the region in terms of sex ratio, access to education and employment both at the district and state level. Interestingly, Kathua is better off than the state as a whole. The study concludes with an observation that the root cause of gender inequality is patriarchal system of society where men are the primary authority figures and women are subordinate. Moreover access to education and employment are only the enabling factors that may not guarantee the achievement towards the goal, which however, largely depends on the mindset of the people.*

Key Words: *Gender, inequality, disempowered, patriarchal.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The gender inequality refers to inequalities between male and female. Today, gender inequality is major problem in developing countries because there is wide gap between male and female in terms of sex, literacy and employment. In 1990, United Nations Development Programme introduced human development index in a simple statistic of life expectancy, literacy and standard of living. Promoting gender equality and empowering women is one of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by United Nations and it is on public policy agenda of almost every country of the world because inequality on the basis of gender cannot be justified on any ethical or philosophical basis. Gender inequality can be observed in almost all developing countries and even in the developed world [1]. United Nations Fund for Population Activities (2009) define following definition of gender equality: "Equality between men and women exists when both sexes are able to share equally in the distribution of power and influence; have equal opportunities for financial independence through work or through setting up businesses; enjoy equal access to education and the opportunity to develop personal ambitions, interests and talents; share responsibility for the home and children and are completely free from coercion, intimidation and gender based violence both at work and at home" [2].

India ranks 132 out of 186 countries on the gender inequality index – lower than Pakistan (123), according to the United Nations Development Programme's human development report 2013 [3]. India has been placed in the 101st position among 136 countries in gender gap index in the World Economic Forum 2013 [4]. Malala Yousafzai a 17-year-old Pakistani girl is now internationally known for her campaign for the education of women and equality. J&K is moving toward a better space to living, but society does not provide the equal opportunity to all. Number of studies indicates that J&K in general and Kathua in particular are still facing wide gender gap in terms of education, sex and occupation. The female population of the study area don't represent good picture in the above mentioned indicators.

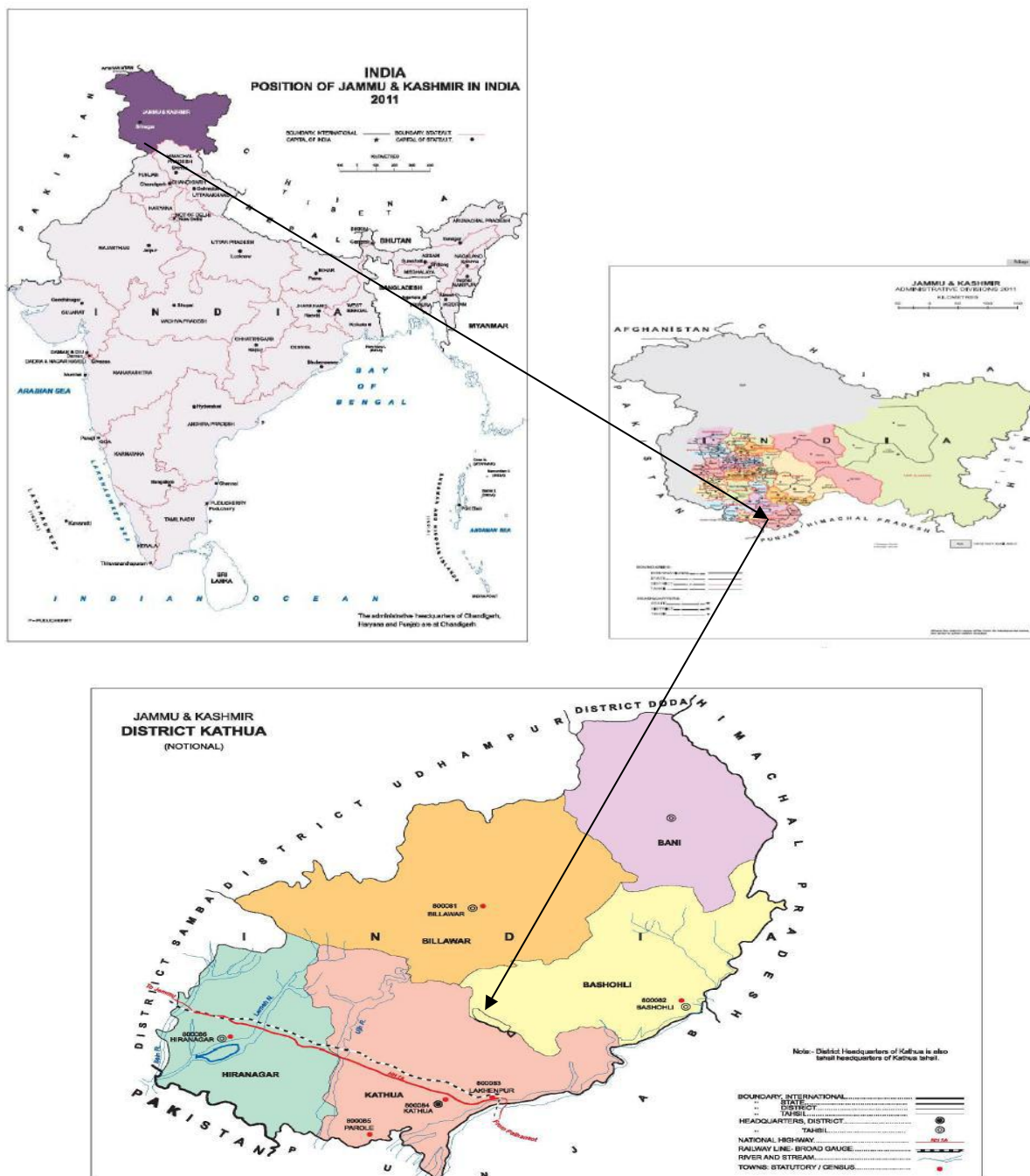
2. OBJECTIVES:

- To identify the existing gender inequality in education of the study area.
- To identify the existing gender inequality in sex-ratio of the study area.
- To identify the existing gender inequality in employment of the study area.

3. STUDY AREA

Kathua district is situated between 32° 17' to 32° 55' North Latitude and 75° 70' to 76° 16' East longitude. The District is surrounded by Himachal Pradesh in North-East, Punjab in the South-East, Udhampur and Doda in North-West and North, Pakistan in the South-West and Samba district in the West with an area of 2651 Sq kms and population of 6.15 lacs.

LOCATION MAP OF STUDY AREA



Source: Census of India

4. METHODOLOGY:

The present study is based on secondary and primary data. The information of the indicators like education, sex-ratio and employment have been collected from the District Census Handbook, District planning and Statistical Department, Chief Education Office Kathua and Census of India. Primary data was collected randomly with the help of well designed questionnaire. Simple stratified random sampling method has been used to collect the information of the study area. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) was used for collecting the female to male ratio at school level. The literacy rate is calculated by number of literate persons divided by total population (excluding 0-4 age group in 1981 and 0-6 age group in 2001 and 2011) and multiplied by 100. The *sex ratio has been calculated by number of females per thousand males.*

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

5.1. Gender Inequality and Education

Women education is a key to the development of any country. It not only helps in the development of half of the human resources, but also improves the quality of life at home and outside. Half of the world's population represent women but they suffer from oppression, discrimination and status denial. They have been subject of exploitation and discrimination resulting gender inequality in all sphere of life. In study area the main task of women

to fulfil domestic duties and education becomes secondary for them whereas it is considered to be important for men.

Table 1: Literacy Rate of District Kathua (percent)

Census Year	Total/Rural/Urban	Person	Male	Female	Gender Gap
1981	T	31.91	41.67	21.25	20.42
	R	29.12	39.01	18.37	20.64
	U	53.56	62.10	44.00	18.10
2001	T	65.29	75.73	53.92	21.81
	R	62.64	73.71	50.71	23.00
	U	80.73	87.05	73.78	13.27
2011	T	73.50	81.40	64.56	16.84
	R	70.83	79.93	60.76	19.17
	U	85.86	90.41	80.67	9.74

Source: Census of India

Note: - Literacy rates for 1981 relates to population aged 5 years and above. The literacy rates for the years 2001 and 2011 relates to the population aged 7 years and above.

In Kathua district women constitute 47.10% of the total population. But the above table, it is clearly shows that there is a wide gap between male and female literacy in rural as well as urban areas. There has been only 3.58% decrease in gender gap in literacy since last three decades. Whereas, rural literacy records 1.47% decrease and urban literacy records 8.63% decrease in gender gap since last three decades. The number of factors which are responsible for the gender disparity in the study area are domestic duties of women, strong son preference, patriarchal society, culture and beliefs. In J&K, the gender gap in literacy decreased from 24.69% in 1981 to 20.25% in 2011. But Kathua district shows better picture than state, the gender gap in literacy decrease from 20.42% in 1981 to 16.84% in 2011. The female literacy of district Kathua also increase from 21.25% in 1981 to 64.56% in 2011 which is also more than the state female literacy rate 19.86% in 1981 to 58.01% in 2011. This is a better step toward enhancing female education but gender gap is still a worry in literacy. In rural Kathua, the gender gap in literacy increases from 20.64% to 23.00% in 1981 to 2001 but subsequently decrease 19.17% in 2011. The main cause behind decreasing gender gap in the study area is increasing the awareness of the people but gender gap in rural area is still a challenge to government. In urban Kathua, the gender gap in literacy decreased from 18.10% in 1981 to 9.74% in 2011. It is clear in the above assessment that there has been educational development in urban centre both in male and female. The literacy rate of urban area is 85.86% and 70.83% in rural area in 2011 in the study area. On other hand, the total number of government institutions in district Kathua was 893 in 1991-92, 1003 in 2001-02, and 1422 in 2011-12.

Table 2: Comparative Analysis of Literacy Rate between J&K and Kathua District

Census Year	J&K			Kathua			Gender Gap (J&K and Kathua District)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1981	44.55	19.86	33.02	41.67	21.25	31.91	-2.88	+1.39	-1.11
2001	66.60	43.00	55.52	75.73	53.92	65.29	+9.13	+10.92	+9.37
2011	78.26	58.01	68.74	81.40	64.56	73.50	+3.14	+6.55	+4.76

Source: Census of India

It is evident that gender differentiation exists both in Kathua and Jammu & Kashmir as well as rural and urban area. In case of literacy rate the Kathua district shows better picture than the state literacy rate but lack behind than the national literacy rate. In census 1981, the J&K literacy rate was 33.02 which was higher than the Kathua literacy rate 31.91, but after that literacy rate of Kathua district shows better place +9.37 in 2001 and +4.76 in 2011 than the state

literacy rate. The female literacy rate of Kathua district also possess better position +1.39 in 1981, +10.92 in 2001 and +6.55 in 2011 than the J&K female literacy rate. It clearly shows that the people of Kathua district are more aware in the field of education than other parts of the state.

Table 3: Number of Educational Institutions (Govt & Private) and Female/Male Ratio by Stage of Education and Sex

	Primary				Middle				HS & HSC			
	T	M	F	F/M%	T	M	F	F/M%	T	M	F	F/M%
1991-92	600	398	202	0.50	212	170	42	0.24	80	71	9	0.12
1995-96	653	452	201	0.44	223	178	45	0.25	80	71	9	0.12
2001-02	682	483	199	0.41	237	191	46	0.24	83	74	9	0.12
2005-06	890	722	168	0.23	424	358	66	0.18	117	108	9	0.08
2011-12	1048	942	106	0.11	507	448	59	0.13	215	206	9	0.04
2013-14	1010	910	100	0.11	478	419	59	0.14	267	258	9	0.03

Source: District planning and Statistical Department, Kathua.

In table:3 the information of government and private schools and its female/male ratio in number upto higher secondary level has been given which clearly indicates that the primary school level, the female to male ratio was 0.50 in 1991-92 which continuously declined, 0.41 in 2001-02 and 0.11 in 2013-14. On other hand, the female to male ratio also declined in middle school level 0.24 in 1991-92 and 0.14 in 2013-14. Similarly in case of high school and higher secondary level the female to male ratio was 0.12 in 199-92 and 0.03 in 2013-14. The continuously decrease in gender parity index clearly indicates that gender disparity in educational institutions still persists in district Kathua.

5.2. Gender Inequality and Sex-ratio

The *sex ratio is calculated by* number of females per thousand males. The sex ratio is also one of important indicator to check gender status in the society. In India, dowry system is practice even in 21st century, one of the main causes of gender inequality in sex ratio. There are many other factors responsible for gender inequality in sex ratio like sex-selective abortions, gender biasness, son preference, belief and discrimination against girl child. Inequality in Sex ratio also make headache to Indian Government, because in 1951 the sex ratio was 946 females per thousand of males but still in 2011 the sex ratio is 940 females per thousand of males. There are great variations in the sex ratio at state level. The sex ratio of Kerala is 1048 females per thousand of males. On other hands, the sex ratio of J&K in 2001 was 900 females per thousand males but in 2011 the sex ratio is 883 females per thousand males.

Table 4: Sex Ratio and Rural-Urban gap of Kathua district

Census Year	Total	rural	urban	R-U Gap
1961	905	907	871	36
1971	921	922	908	14
1981	917	920	894	26
2001	901	912	834	78
2011	890	894	870	24

Source: Census of India

The sex ratio of Kathua district as well as J&K is lower than the national average. The above table clearly shows that there are great variations in sex ratio between rural and urban area in Kathua district from 1961 to 2011. In 1961, the rural-urban gap in sex ratio of Kathua district was 36 and it decreases to 14 in 1971. The main cause behind the decreasing rural-urban gap in the sex ratio was due to migration of people from border and other areas toward urban area of Kathua district for security during war between India and Pakistan in 1965 and 1971. Again rural-urban gap in sex ratio increased to 26 in 1981 and 78 in 2001. The sex ratio decline and the rural-urban gap in sex ratio of Kathua district increased after 1971 because the sex ratio at birth had altered and pointing to the prevalence of sex selective abortions mainly in urban area. Due of these practices the sex ratio had constantly decreased in urban area of Kathua from 908 in 1971, 894 in 1981 and 834 in 2001, and the gender gap increased. In 1981, the rural-urban gap in terms of sex ratio was 26 but it increase 78 in 2001, because urban sex ratio of the study area decline from 894 in 1981 to 834 in 2001. The main cause of increasing rural-urban gap was sex-selective abortions more concentrate in urban area of Kathua district. In census 2011, the rural-urban gap in sex ratio decreased from 78 in 2001 to 24 in 2011. The

main reason behind this abruptly decrease in the gap from 2001 to 2011 was the controlled in sex selective abortions by administration and actions have been taken in the form of laws, awareness campaigns & schemes by both the government and the independent bodies. However, rural areas experienced a better sex ratio as compared to urban areas. It clearly shows that the practice of sex-selective abortions is more prevalent in urban areas and amongst the well educated women.

Table 5: Comparative analysis of sex ratio between J&K and Kathua district

Census year	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981	2001	2011
Jammu & Kashmir	882	876	870	865	869	873	878	878	892	900	883
Kathua District	871	865	870	874	887	896	905	921	917	901	890
Gap (Jammu & Kashmir and Kathua District)	-11	-11	0	+9	+18	+23	+27	+43	+25	+1	+7

The changing trend in sex ratio in Jammu & Kashmir and Kathua district depict a healthy sign as compared to state. Sex ratio in both cases shows an upward trend i.e. from 882 in 1901 to 900 in 2001 in case of Jammu & Kashmir and from 871 in 1901 to 901 in 2001 in case of Kathua district but later decline in both cases. The Kathua district shows better picture of sex ratio +9 in 1931, +18 in 1941, +23 in 1951, +27 in 1961 +43 in 1971, +25 in 1981, +1 in 2001 and now +7 in 2011 as compare to the J&K sex ratio. The sex ratio of J&K is 883 in 2011 and sex ratio of Kathua is 890 in 2011. Hence, it is a matter of reconsideration to the government of their policies, programmes and their level of implementation for declining trends of sex ratio in the state. Yet sex ratio is not favorable to women in the state as well as in district. The main factors which are responsible for recent declining in sex ratio e.g. discrimination against girl child, sex-selective abortions, belief and son preference.

5.3. Gender Inequality and Employment

Employment is one of the major factors towards gender equality because if women are economically strong then they have decision making role in the family which is positive indicator of development. But in current scenario, there is wide gap in employment rate between male and female.

Table 6: Gender inequality in employment of Kathua district (percentage)

Census Year	Male workers	Female workers
1961	72.71	27.29
1971	95.78	4.22
1981	66.53	33.47
2001	71.34	28.66
2011	80.60	19.40

Source: Census of India

Note: The percentage of male workers is calculated by male workers/total working population of male and female, same in case of female workers.

In the above table, it is evident that there is wide gender gap in employment. In 1961, the female working population was 27.29% and only 4.22% female working population in 1971 census in the study area. The main cause behind gender gap in employment was migration due to cause of Indo-Pakistani Wars in 1965 and 1971. The female working percentage in Kathua district increased 33.47% in 1981 which was higher than last two censuses, but after that again decreased the female working population 28.66% in 2001 and 19.40% in 2011. Hence, it is matter of reconsideration to government about the female employment. The primary survey and other secondary sources assessed that the main causes of gender disparity in employment are patriarchal society, culture and beliefs.

Table 7: Gender Gap in Employment in Kathua District

Census Year	Total Workers/ Main Workers/	Kathua			Rural			Urban		
		Male	Female	Gender	Male	Female	Gender	Male	Female	Gender

	Marginal Workers			Gap			Gap			Gap
1981	T.W	55.34	30.37	19.97	56.07	33.30	22.77	49.75	7.29	42.46
	MN.W	50.62	5.05	45.57	50.85	5.10	45.75	48.87	4.68	44.19
	MRG.W	4.72	25.32	20.06	5.22	28.20	22.98	0.88	2.60	1.72
2001	T.W	50.64	22.58	28.06	50.84	24.75	26.09	49.46	9.00	40.46
	MN.W	43.46	13.83	29.63	43.06	14.69	28.37	45.74	7.80	37.94
	MRG.W	7.18	8.76	1.58	7.78	9.96	2.18	3.72	1.20	2.52
2011	T.W	49.54	13.39	36.15	49.56	14.00	35.56	50.01	9.78	40.23
	MN.W	37.84	6.70	31.14	36.71	6.41	30.30	41.25	8.40	32.85
	MRG.W	11.70	6.70	5.00	12.83	7.60	5.23	5.13	1.38	3.75

Source: Census of India

Note: The percentage of male workers is calculated by male workers/total male population of concern area (Kathua, rural area and urban area) and same in percentage of female workers.

In 1981, the gender gap in total workers of Kathua district was 19.97%, but in 2011 gender gap in total workers increased 36.39%. The main causes which are responsible for increasing gender gap in Kathua district i.e. emphasis on male child education for employment by the family and female education for education only because of patriarchal system of society.

In rural area of Kathua district, the gender gap in total workers continuously increased from 22.77% and 26.09% in 1981 to 2001 and 35.56% in 2011 census, but gender gap in main workers of rural area decreased from 45.75% in 1981 to 30.30% in 2011. The percentage of total female workers in rural area decreased from 33.30% in 1981 to 14.00% in 2011. The female marginal workers also decrease in rural area from 28.20% in 1981 to 7.60% in 2011 census. The main causes which are responsible for increasing gender gap in employment i.e. lack of proper female education, son preference, culture and belief. In urban area of Kathua district, gender gap in employment is higher than the rural area of Kathua district. The total female workers in urban area were 7.29% in 1981 and marginal increases 9.78% in 2011 census. On other hands, the gender gap of urban area of total workers was 42.46% in 1981 and remains 40.23% in 2011. The people of urban area of Kathua are more aware in female education than rural area of Kathua, but they are preferring male employment and only preferring government sector for female employment.

5.4 D. Primary Survey of Kathua District

Table 7: Profile of Respondents

Variables	Categories	Persons (624)	Males (330)	Females (294)	Persons (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)
Age	15-25	66	35	31	10.58	5.61	4.97
	25-35	296	152	144	47.44	24.36	23.08
	35-45	193	105	88	30.93	16.83	14.10
	45-55	69	38	31	11.05	6.09	4.96
Literacy	Illiterate	104	36	68	16.67	5.77	10.90
	Primary	71	46	25	11.38	7.37	4.01
	Middle	106	54	52	16.99	8.65	8.34
	10 th	166	100	66	26.60	16.03	10.57
	12 th	113	58	55	18.11	9.29	8.82
	Graduation	47	30	17	7.53	4.81	2.72
	Post Graduation	17	6	11	2.72	0.96	1.76
Occupation	Business	14	13	1	2.24	2.08	0.16
	Private job	101	80	21	16.19	12.82	3.37
	Govt job	96	68	28	15.38	10.90	4.48
	House wife	225	N.A	225	36.06	N.A	36.06
	Labourer	79	79	N.A	12.66	12.66	N.A
	Farmer	60	60	N.A	9.62	9.62	N.A
	Students	49	30	19	7.85	4.81	3.04

Note: Survey conducted in November 2015

A primary survey of 624 respondents was conducted randomly in Kathua district which included 294 female and 330 male respondents during the month of November 2015. In the above assessment, it is clear that inequality exist between male and female in education as well as occupation. The total 16.67% respondents are illiterate, out of which female are 10.90% and males are 5.77% illiterate. On other hands, the educational level of female respondents are also lower than the male in primary, middle and other levels except post graduation. In employment sector, 8.01% of females are employed and 48.08% males are employed out of total respondents. In govt sector only 4.48% females are employed which are also lower than the male respondents. In private sector 12.82% males are employed and only 3.37% females are in private sector out of total respondents. When we relate these primary figures with the census data of 2011 it shows some sign of improvement in gender gap in literacy, because gender gap in literacy was 16.84 in 2011 and remain 10.89 in November 2015 but in employment gender gap still persist. Hence, it is clear that the inequality exist between male and female in the study area.

6. CONCLUSION:

In the above analysis an effort is made to study the extent of gender inequality in Kathua district of Jammu & Kashmir state of India in three different areas viz., education, sex ratio and employment. It can be concluded that the gender disparity exist in all three different fields of Kathua district as well as rural and urban areas. In the above assessment, it is clear that the women suffered from many problems such as oppression, discrimination and status denial. They have been subject of exploitation and discrimination resulted gender inequality in all sphere of life. In case of education, the female literacy was 21.25% in 1981 and 64.56% in 2011, indicating an increase of 43.31% in 30 years, but gender gap is still a worry in literacy. As regards sex ratio we found that the urban areas have low sex ratio than rural areas. Overall Kathua has better sex ratio than state, but when we compared with national level the sex ratio is much lower than that of national average. The Kathua district and J&K shows an upward trend in sex ratio since 1901-2001 but later decline in both cases. The main causes responsible for gender disparity in sex ratio like sex-selective abortions, gender biasness, son preference, belief and discrimination against girl child. Hence, it is a matter of reconsideration to the government of their policies, programmes and their level of implementation for declining trends and gender inequality in sex ratio. In case of employment, it is evident that there is wide gender gap in employment only 4.22% female working population in 1971 census and still 19.40% female working population in 2011 out of total working population in Kathua district. The main causes of gender disparity in employment are patriarchal society, culture and beliefs. On other hands, when we relate primary survey figures with the census data of 2011 it shows some sign of improvement in gender gap in literacy, but in employment gender gap still persist. Hence, it is clear that the inequality exist between male and female in the study area. The Constitution of India ensures gender equality in its preamble as a fundamental right and also empowers the state to adopt measures in favour of women empowerment by ways of legislation and policies, but still gender inequality a serious problem. The current policies are not sufficient and needs high level planning and more efforts to bring gender equality.

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