

# Social Development Disparity in Western Himalayan Region

PREM SINGH KUTWAL  
Associate Professor, Govt. College Bilaspur,  
District Bilaspur (H.P.) 174001

---

## Abstract

*This research has a fresh look on the social development disparity among states/union territories of Western Himalayan Region during 2001-2011. The inter state and intra-state social development disparity has decreased during the corresponding period of time. Broadly, one can experience the rising trend of disparity, as we move from east to west in Western Himalayan Region. The Muslim majority union territory and districts of the region are more backward in social development. It is matter of serious concern for policy makers and architects of development. It is recommended that the Union and State Governments should start more female oriented literacy programmes keeping in view the target group and area.*

---

Date of Submission: 18-01-2022

Date of Acceptance: 02-02-2022

---

## I. Introduction

Education is one of the most important tool for expanding opportunities, building capabilities and safeguarding freedom. It enables person for making choices, participating in various walks of life, protecting oneself from discrimination and exploitation. The female literacy, in particular, improves the knowledge of a household to manage the basic care of the child, nutrition level and ensure health care. It is said in Chinese proverb, “if you plan for a few years, earn money; for ten years, then plant trees; but if you plan for hundred years, educate the women”. That is why, in this paper, the social development has been captured through female literacy.

Social welfare includes all things contributing to the quality of human existence (Smith, 1977). It concerns not only the what but also who gets it where. Social well-being is at the more concrete or specific end of a continuum of abstraction that descends from human happiness through the concept of the quality of life (Smith, 1973).

UNESCO (1977) emphasized that quality of life is an inclusive concept that covers all aspects of living, including material satisfaction of vital needs as well as more transcendental aspects of life, such as self-realization, a healthy eco-system and personal development.

Development disparity is an omnipresent phenomenon at global, continental, country, and province level. At global level, countries have been categorized into developed, developing, and underdeveloped realms.

## Objective

The major objective of this research paper is to:

- Examine the trends and patterns of social development disparity in Western Himalayan Region.

## Research Question

The following major research question is forwarded for investigation:

- What are the trends and patterns of social development disparity in Western Himalayan Region?

## Significance of the Study

The study of the trends and patterns of social development disparity in Western Himalayan Region will provide an insight and unfold the real nature and intensity of disparity. The present study on disparity may be useful for policy makers and planners for the formulation of policy and programs.

## Period and Unit of Study

The social development disparity in Western Himalayan Region was studied covering two points of time i.e. 2001 and 2011. India has adopted policy of liberalization, privatization, and globalization since 1990s. The free play of market accentuates spatial disparity in development. It attracts the considerable research interest to know development disparity during post reform period. The state/union territory and district level data were used for tracing the inter and intra-state/union territory social development disparity.

### **The Study Area**

This study is focused on western Himalayan states and union territories. These states are erstwhile Jammu & Kashmir (now bifurcated into two union territories i.e. Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh), Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. These states were designated as hill states as well as special category states by National Development Council of India for preferential treatment to accelerate the development of disadvantaged region. The study area lies between 28°44'N to 37°5'N latitudes and 72°40'E to 81°01'E longitudes covering an area of 331 thousand Km<sup>2</sup>. It shares one-tenth (10.08 per cent) of total geographical area of India and contains 2.44 per cent of total population of the country in 2011.

### **Database and Methodology**

The secondary data of Census of India have been used to measure the social development disparity for two points of time i.e. 2001 and 2011. The data of Jammu & Kashmir have been recasted in consonance with the administrative divisions of two union territories i.e. Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh in order to know the development disparity. In this research, social development is inferred using female literacy. Social development Index (SDI) is used to assess the level of social development.

In the present study, social development disparity discussed at three spatial contexts: (i) Western Himalayan Region, (ii) inter state/union territory, and (iii) intra-state.

SDI has calculated by using the highest and the lowest value of indicator. For example, across states/union territories of India, the highest female literacy was recorded in Kerala in 2001. It was 87.73 per cent. Contrary to it, Bihar recorded the lowest. It was 33.12 per cent. Himachal Pradesh recorded 67.42 per cent female literacy in 2001. The SDI of Himachal Pradesh is calculated as under:

$$\text{Deprivation Score} = \frac{\text{Maximum Value} - \text{Actual Value}}{\text{Maximum Value} - \text{Minimum Value}}$$

$$\text{Deprivation Score} = \frac{87.73 - 67.42}{87.73 - 33.12} = 0.372$$

$$\text{Development Index} = 1 - 0.372 = 0.628$$

It was separately done for two points of time viz. 2001 and 2011 to work out social development index.

### **Limitations**

Since measurement of social development defies unanimity, the consensus on selection of indicator is subjective and open to criticism. The present study is vulnerable on this account. But the selected indicator was found to be most appropriate.

### **Social Development**

#### **Western Himalayan Region**

Female literacy of the Western Himalayan Region was recorded 55.00 per cent in 2001. It was marginally higher than national average (53.67 per cent). The gap of female literacy between the region and India was 1.33 percentage points (Table 1). It reflects that females of the region were more literate than India. However, majority females were literate in both regions.

The Western Himalayan Region recorded 65.97 per cent female literacy in 2011. It was marginally higher than national average (64.63 per cent). The gap of female literacy between the region and India was 1.34 percentage points (Table 1). Again, the females of the region were more literate than India.

The Western Himalayan Region recorded 10.97 percentage points increase in female literacy during 2001-2011. However, India recorded 10.96 percentage points in female literacy during corresponding period of time.

It is concluded from above observations that the Western Himalayan Region was socially more developed than India during 2001-2011.

#### **Inter State/Union Territory Trends and Patterns**

Female literacy among states/union territories in the Western Himalayan Region was quite different in 2001. Majority females were illiterate in two union territories in the Western Himalayan Region. These were Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. On the other hand, majority of females in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand were literate. Across states/ union territories in the Western Himalayan Region, Himachal Pradesh (67.42 per cent) recorded the highest female literacy and Jammu & Kashmir (42.89 per cent) the lowest. The gap between the highest and the lowest female literacy was 24.53 percentage points (Table 1).

**Table 1**  
India: Female Literacy in Western Himalayan Region, 2001-2011

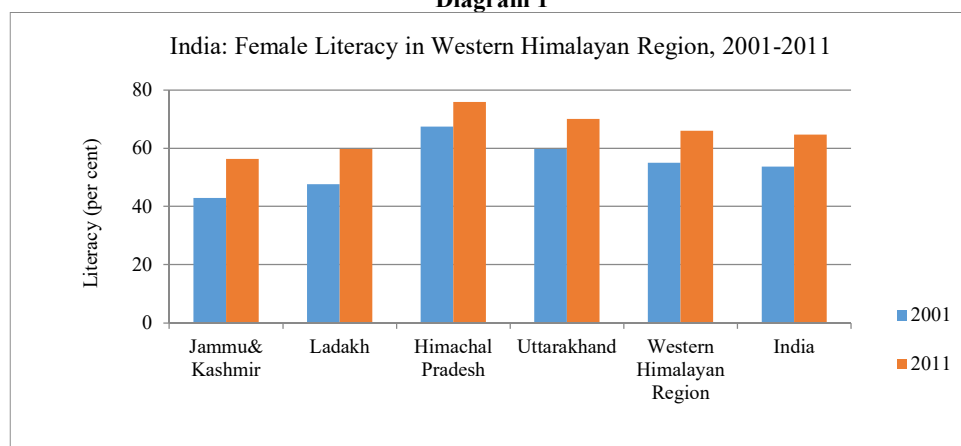
Sr.	State/Union Territory	Literacy (per cent)	
		2001	2011
1	Jammu & Kashmir	42.89	56.36
2	Ladakh	47.65	59.77
3	Himachal Pradesh	67.42	75.93
4	Uttarakhand	59.63	70.01
<b>Western Himalayan Region</b>		<b>55.00</b>	<b>65.97</b>
<b>India</b>		<b>53.67</b>	<b>64.63</b>

Source: Primary Census Abstracts, Census of India, 2001-2011.

Note: States/Union Territories were arranged in geographical contiguity.

Among states/union territories in the Western Himalayan Region, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand recorded higher female literacy than Western Himalayan Region (55.00 per cent) and India (53.67 per cent) in 2001 (Table 1). Contrary to it, both union territories of the Western Himalayan Region recorded lower female literacy than the region and national average. These were Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

**Diagram 1**



Source: Primary Census Abstracts, Census of India, 2001-2011.

For the first time, majority females were literate in all states/union territories in the Western Himalayan Region in 2011. These were Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. Across states/union territories in the Western Himalayan Region, Himachal Pradesh (75.93 per cent) recorded the highest female literacy and Jammu & Kashmir (56.36 per cent) the lowest. The gap between the highest and the lowest female literacy decreased from 24.53 percentage points in 2001 to 19.57 percentage points in 2011 (Table 1).

Once again, across states/union territories in the Western Himalayan Region, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand recorded higher female literacy than Western Himalayan Region (65.97 per cent) and India (64.63 per cent) in 2011. Contrary to it, both union territories of the Western Himalayan Region recorded lower female literacy than the region and national average. These were Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Table 1).

Across states/union territories in the Western Himalayan Region, Jammu & Kashmir (13.47 percentage points) recorded the highest change in female literacy during 2001-2011 and the lowest in Himachal Pradesh (8.51 percentage points) as it was already very high female literacy rate. Comparing with Western Himalayan Region (10.97 percentage points) and national average (10.96 percentage points), it was found that two union territories of the region recorded higher change in female literacy. These were Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. Contrary to it, two states recorded lower change in female literacy than Western Himalayan Region and national average. These were Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. It was found that states/ union territories with higher female literacy in 2001 recorded lower change and vice-versa during 2001-2011.

### Intra-state Trends and Patterns

Majority of districts in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand recorded higher female literacy in 2001 than national average (53.67 per cent). Contrary to it, majority of districts in Jammu & Kashmir recorded lower female literacy. However, all districts in Ladakh recorded lower female literacy (Table 2). It reflects that Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh were far behind at the beginning of 21st century.

**Table 2**  
India: Female Literacy in Western Himalayan Region, 2001-2011

Sr.	Name of State/Union Territory	Districts above/ <i>Below</i> National Average(53.67 per cent) in 2001	Districts above/ <i>Below</i> National Average(64.63 per cent) in 2011
1	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu, Samba (2) <i>Kathua, Srinagar, Udhampur, Rajauri, Pulwama, Kulgam, Punch, Reasi, Doda, Shupiyan, Baramula, Anantnag, Badgam, Kupwara, Kishtwar, Ganderbal, Bandipore, Ramban (18)</i>	Jammu, Samba (2) <i>Kathua, Srinagar, Udhampur, Rajauri, Punch, Baramula, Anantnag, Pulwama, Kupwara, Shupiyan, Doda, Kulgam, Reasi, Ganderbal, Badgam, Bandipore, Kishtwar, Ramban(18)</i>
2	Ladakh	<i>Leh, Kargil (2)</i>	<i>Leh, Kargil (2)</i>
3	Himachal Pradesh	Hamirpur, Una, Kangra, Shimla, Bilaspur, Solan, Mandi, Kinnaur, Kullu, Lahul & Spiti, Sirmaur (11) <i>Chamba (1)</i>	Hamirpur, Una, Kangra, Bilaspur, Shimla, Solan, Mandi, Sirmaur, Kinnaur, Kullu, Lahul & Spiti (11) <i>Chamba (1)</i>
4	Uttarakhand	Dehradun, Nainital, Garhwal, Pithoragarh, Chamoli, Almora, Rudraprayag, Bageshwar, Champawat (9) <i>Udham Singh Nagar, Haridwar, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarkashi (4)</i>	Dehradun, Nainital, Garhwal, Chamoli, Pithoragarh, Rudraprayag, Almora, Bageshwar, Champawat, Hardwar (10) <i>Udham Singh Nagar, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarkashi (3)</i>
<b>Western Himalayan Region</b>		(22)/(25)	(23)/(24)

Source: Primary Census Abstracts, Census of India, 2001-2011.

Note:(i) Districts are arranged in descending order in terms of female literacy. (ii) Figure in parentheses show the number of district/ districts above national average. (iii) The name of district/ districts and figure in parentheses written in bold italic font have female literacy below national average.

Twenty two out of 47 districts in Western Himalayan Region recorded higher female literacy than national average in 2001. The highest female literacy recorded in Hamirpur (75.70 per cent) from Himachal Pradesh across districts of Western Himalayan Region. Against it, Ramban (24.21 per cent) from Jammu & Kashmir recorded the lowest. The gap between the most and the least female literate districts recorded 51.49 percentage points in 2001. Across districts of Western Himalayan Region, the highest five districts in female literacy were Hamirpur, Una,

Kangra, Shimla from Himachal Pradesh; and Dehradun from Uttarakhand. Against it, the least five districts were Ramban, Bandipore, Ganderbal, Kishtwar, and Kupwara. All these districts belong to Jammu & Kashmir.

Majority of districts in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand recorded higher female literacy than national average (64.63 per cent) in 2011. Contrary to it, majority of districts in Jammu & Kashmir recorded lower female literacy. However, all districts in Ladakh recorded lower female literacy during the corresponding period of time (Table 2). It reflects that Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh were far behind in Western Himalayan Region. Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand were socially developed states in the region.

Twenty three out of 47 districts in Western Himalayan Region recorded higher female literacy than national average in 2011. It accounts for 48.93 per cent districts of the region. It reflects that majority districts recorded lower female literacy than national average. Thirty nine out of 47 districts recorded majority female literate. It was worth mentioning performance. The remaining 8 districts of the region recorded majority female illiterate. All these districts belong to Jammu & Kashmir. The highest female literacy was recorded in Hamirpur (82.62 per cent) from Himachal Pradesh across districts of Western Himalayan Region. Against it, Ramban (38.04 per cent) from Jammu & Kashmir recorded the lowest. Across districts of Western Himalayan Region, the gap between the most and the least female literate districts decreased from 51.49 percentage points in 2001 to 44.58 percentage points in 2011. Across districts of Western Himalayan Region, the highest five districts in female literacy were Hamirpur, Una, Kangra, Bilaspur from Himachal Pradesh; and Dehradun from Uttarakhand. Contrary to it, the least five districts were Ramban, Kishtwar, Bandipore, Badgam, Ganderbal. Once again, all these districts belong to Jammu & Kashmir (Table 2). It was found that Muslim majority districts of Jammu & Kashmir recorded lower female literacy. These districts require special attention. It is recommended that catalytic programmes may be initiated to bridge the gap.

Twenty five out of 47 districts in Western Himalayan Region recorded higher change in female literacy above the national average (10.96 per cent) during 2001-2011. It accounts for 53.19 percent districts of Western Himalayan Region. It reflects that majority of districts in the region recorded higher change than national average. It was found that every district improved female literacy during the corresponding period of time. Across districts of the region, five districts of the least change in female literacy were Lahul & Spiti, Kinnaur, Hamirpur, Kangra from Himachal Pradesh; and Garhwal from Uttarakhand. Contrary to it, the highest change

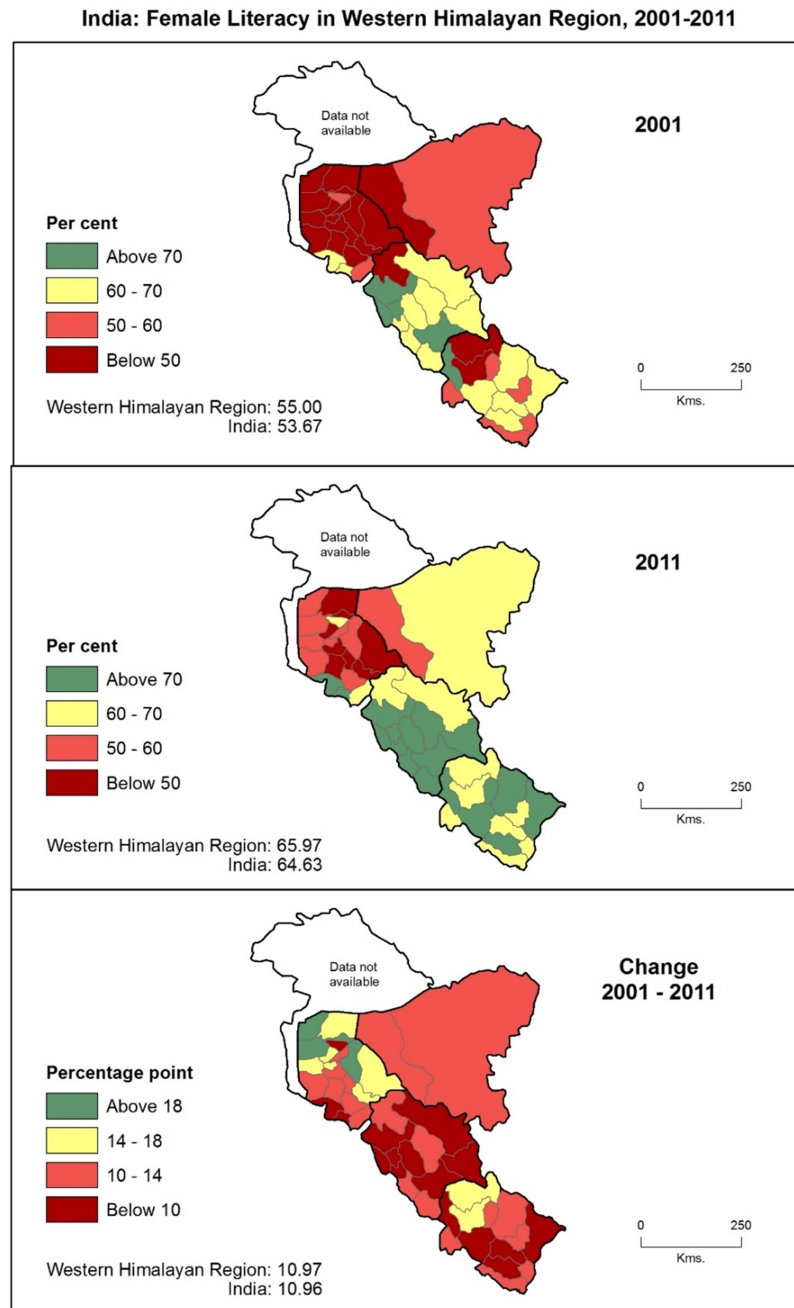


Fig. 1

experienced in Kupwara, Anantnag, Ganderbal, Baramula, and Bandipore. All these districts belong to Jammu & Kashmir (Fig. 1). It was found that districts with higher female literacy recorded lower change and vice-versa during 2001-2011

### Level of Social Development

#### Western Himalayan Region

Social development index of India, Western Himalayan Region, and all states/union territories in the Western Himalayan Region worked out in relation to the highest and the lowest female literacy of state/union territory of India. The highest female literacy was recorded in Kerala during 2001-2011. It was 87.73 per cent in 2001 and 92.07 in 2011. Contrary to it, Bihar recorded the lowest. It was 33.12 per cent in 2001 and 51.51 per cent in 2011.

Social development index of Western Himalayan Region recorded 0.401 in 2001. It was substantially higher than India (0.376). The gap of social development index between the region and India was 0.025 (Table 3). It reflects that social development in the region was higher than India.

Social development index of the Western Himalayan Region decreased from 0.401 in 2001 to 0.357 in 2011. The region recorded decrease of 0.044 whereas India (0.323) recorded decrease of 0.053 during the corresponding period of time. Both, India and the region recorded decline in SDI during 2001-2011. It is matter of concern for the governments of the region. However, social development of the region was still higher than India. The gap of social development index between the region and India increased from 0.025 in 2001 to 0.034 in 2011 (Table 3).

#### Inter State/Union Territory Trends and Patterns

There was wide variation of social development index among states/union territories of Western Himalayan Region in 2001. Across states/union territories of the region, Himachal Pradesh (0.628) recorded the highest social development index and the lowest in Jammu & Kashmir (0.179). The gap between the highest and the lowest social development index was 0.449 (Table 3).

Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh recorded lower development index than the Western Himalayan Region (0.401) in 2001. On the other hand, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand recorded higher development index than the region. Comparing with the national average (0.376), Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand recorded higher social development index. Contrary to it, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh recorded lower development index (Table 3).

After a decade (2011), the variation of social development index among states/union territories of western Himalayan has increased. Across states/union territories of the region, Himachal Pradesh (0.602) recorded the highest social development index and the lowest in Jammu & Kashmir (0.120). The gap between the highest and the lowest social development index was 0.482 (Table 3).

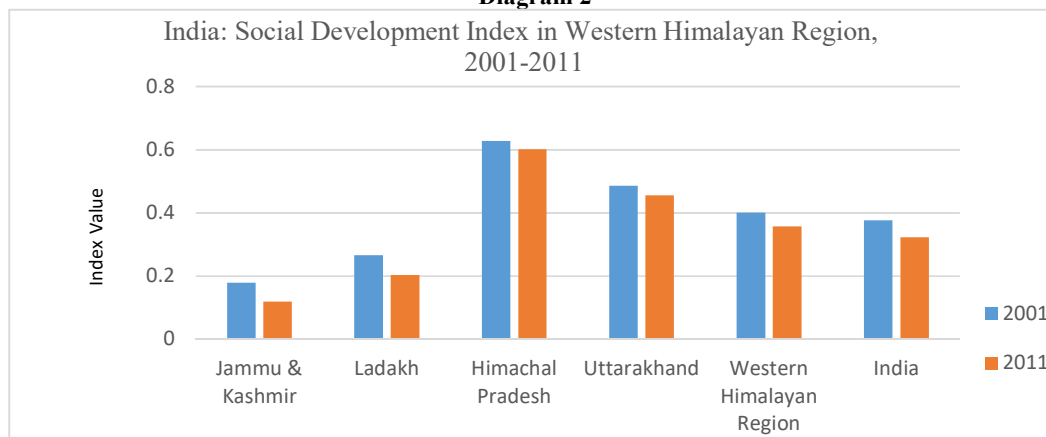
**Table 3:** India: Social Development Index in Western Himalaya Region, 2001-2011

Sr.	State/Union Territory	Index value	
		2001	2011
1	Jammu & Kashmir	0.179	0.120
2	Ladakh	0.266	0.204
3	Himachal Pradesh	0.628	0.602
4	Uttarakhand	0.486	0.456
<b>Western Himalayan Region</b>		<b>0.401</b>	<b>0.357</b>
<b>India</b>		<b>0.376</b>	<b>0.323</b>

Source: Primary Census Abstracts, Census of India, 2001-2011.

Note: States/Union Territories were arranged in geographical contiguity.

**Diagram 2**



Source: Primary Census Abstracts, Census of India, 2001-2011.

Again, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh recorded lower development index than the Western Himalayan Region (0.357) in 2011. On the other hand, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand recorded higher development index than the region. Comparing with the national average (0.323), Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand recorded higher social development index. Contrary to it, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh recorded lower development index (Table 3).

All the states/union territories of the Western Himalayan Region recorded decline in their social development index during 2001-2011. It reflects that every state/union territory of the Western Himalayan Region lowered its social development level during the corresponding period of time. Across states/union territories of the region, Ladakh (-0.059) recorded the highest negative change in social development index during 2001-2011 and the lowest in Himachal Pradesh (-0.026). Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir recorded higher negative change in social development index than Western Himalayan Region (-0.044) and India (-0.053). Contrary to it, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand recorded lower negative change in social development index than region and national average (Table 3).

It is concluded from above observations that the Muslim majority union territory is socially the most backward in Western Himalayan Region. Contrary to it, Himachal Pradesh is the most socially developed.

### **Intra-state Trends and Patterns**

Social development index of India, Western Himalayan Region, and all districts of states/union territories in the Western Himalayan Region worked out in relation to the highest and the lowest female literacy of districts in India. Across the districts of India, the highest female literacy was recorded in Aizawl from Mizoram during 2001-2011. It was 96.26 per cent in 2001 and 97.67 per cent in 2011. Contrary to it, Shrawasti (18.58 per cent) from Uttar Pradesh recorded the lowest literacy in 2001 and Alirajpur (30.29 per cent) from Madhya Pradesh in 2011.

Majority of districts in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand of Western Himalayan Region recorded higher social development index than national average (0.465) in 2001. Contrary to it, majority of districts in Jammu & Kashmir recorded lower social development index. However, all districts in Ladakh recorded lower social development index than national average (Table 4).

Twenty two out of 47 districts of states/union territories in Western Himalayan Region recorded higher social development index than national average in 2001. It accounts for 46.81 per cent districts of the region. It reflects that majority districts were socially less developed than national average. Across districts of states/union territories in Western Himalayan Region, Hamirpur (0.757) from Himachal Pradesh recorded the highest social development index and the lowest in Ramban (0.075) from Jammu & Kashmir. The highest socially developed five districts were Hamirpur, Una, Kangra, Shimla from Himachal Pradesh; and Dehradun from Uttarakhand. Against it, the least five districts were Ramban, Bandipore, Ganderbal, Kishtwar, and Kupwara. All these districts were from Jammu & Kashmir.

**Table 4**  
India: Social Development Index in Western Himalayan Region, 2001-2011

Sr.	Name of State/Union Territory	Districts above/ <i>Below</i> National Average (0.465)in 2001	Districts above/ <i>Below</i> National Average (0.510)in 2011
1	Ladhakh	<b><i>Leh, Kargil (2)</i></b>	<b><i>Leh, Kargil (2)</i></b>
2	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu, Samba (2) <b><i>Kathua, Srinagar, Udhampur, Rajauri, Pulwama, Kulgam, Punch, Reasi, Doda, Shupiyani, Baramula, Anantnag, Badgam, Kupwara, Kishtwar, Ganderbal, Bandipore, Ramban(18)</i></b>	Jammu, Samba (2) <b><i>Kathua, Srinagar, Udhampur, Rajauri, Punch, Baramula, Anantnag, Pulwama, Kupwara, Shupiyani, Doda, Kulgam, Reasi, Ganderbal, Badgam, Bandipore, Kishtwar, Ramban(18)</i></b>
3	Himachal Pradesh	Hamirpur, Una, Kangra, Shimla, Bilaspur, Solan, Mandi, Kinnaur, Kullu, Lahul & Spiti, Sirmaur (11) <b><i>Chamba (1)</i></b>	Hamirpur, Una, Kangra, Bilaspur, Shimla, Solan, Mandi, Sirmaur, Kinnaur, Kullu, Lahul & Spiti (11) <b><i>Chamba (1)</i></b>
4	Uttarakhand	Dehradun, Nainital, Garhwal, Pithoragarh, Chamoli, Almora, Rudraprayag, Bageshwar, Champawat(9) <b><i>Udham Singh Nagar, Hardwar, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarkashi (4)</i></b>	Dehradun, Nainital, Garhwal, Chamoli, Pithoragarh, Rudraprayag, Almora, Bageshwar, Champawat, Hardwar (10) <b><i>Udham Singh Nagar, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarkashi (3)</i></b>
	<b>Western Himalayan Region</b>	(22)/(25)	(23)/(24)

Source: Primary Census Abstracts, Census of India, 2001-2011.

Note: (i) Districts are arranged in descending order in terms of SDI. (ii) Figure in parentheses show the number of district/ districts above national average. (iii) The name of district/ districts and figure in parentheses written in bold italic font have SDI below national average.

After a decade (2011), majority of districts in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand of Western Himalayan Region recorded higher social development index than national average (0.510). Contrary to it, majority of districts in Jammu & Kashmir recorded lower social development index. Again, both districts i.e. Kargil and Leh of Ladakh recorded lower social development index than national average (Table 4).

Twenty three out of 47 districts of states/union territories in Western Himalayan Region recorded higher social development index than national average in 2011. It accounts for 48.94 per cent districts of the region. It reflects that majority districts of the region were socially less developed than national average. Across districts of states/union territories in Western Himalayan Region, Hamirpur (0.777) from Himachal Pradesh recorded the highest social development index and the lowest in Ramban (0.115) from Jammu & Kashmir. The highest socially developed five districts were Hamirpur, Una, Kangra, Bilaspur from Himachal Pradesh; and Dehradun from Uttarakhand. Against it, the least five districts were Ramban, Kishtwar, Bandipore, Badgam, and Ganderbal. Again, all the least five districts were from Jammu & Kashmir. It was found that north and north western part of Western Himalayan Region was socially backward than southern part. Socially backward districts were concentrated in two pockets across districts of union territories. These pockets were within the territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Fig. 2).

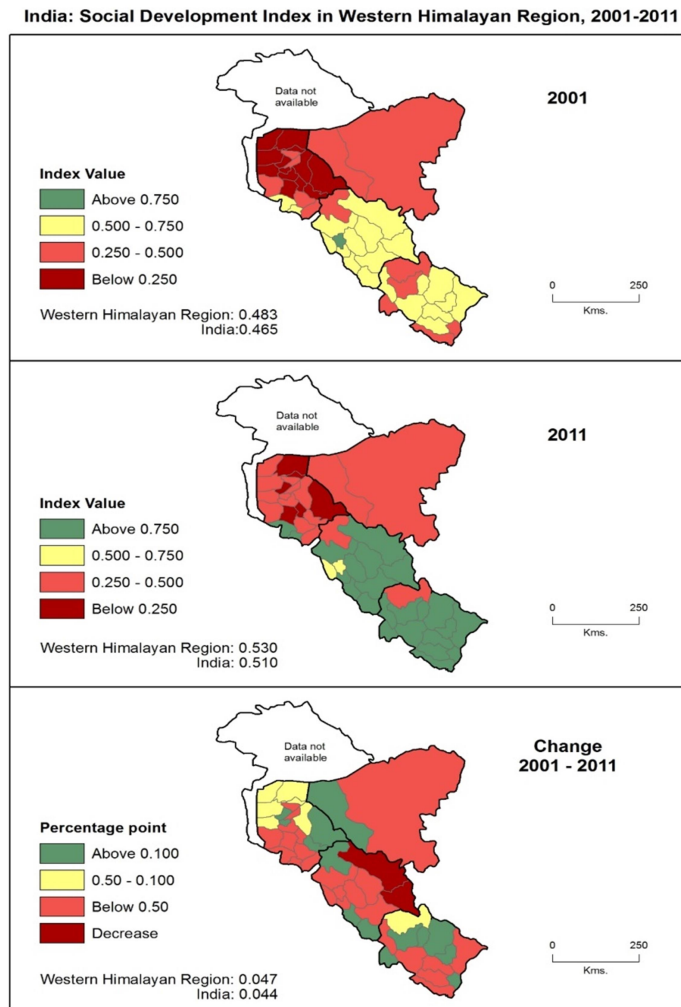


Fig. 2

Twenty five out of 47 districts of states/union territories in Western Himalayan Region recorded higher change in social development index during 2001-2011 than national average (0.044). It accounts for 53.19 per cent districts of hill states. It reflects that majority districts recorded higher change in social development index.



It was found that except two districts, every district of Western Himalayan Region improved social development index during the corresponding period of time. These two districts were Lahul & Spiti and Kinnaur from Himachal Pradesh. These are tribal districts. The highest positive change recorded in Kupwara (0.173) from Jammu & Kashmir and the lowest in Garhwal (0.003) from Uttarakhand. Across districts of Western Himalayan Region, five districts of the highest positive change were Kupwara, Anantnag, Baramula, Ganderbal, and Punch. All these districts belong to Jammu & Kashmir. Contrary to it, five districts of the least positive change were Garhwal from Uttarakhand; Shimla, Kangra from Himachal Pradesh; and Reasi, Srinagar from Jammu & Kashmir (Fig. 2).

## II. Conclusion

Western Himalayan Region was socially more developed than India during 2001-2011. Across the states/union territories in Western Himalayan Region, the Muslim majority union territory (Jammu & Kashmir) is socially the most backward. Contrary to it, Himachal Pradesh is the most socially developed. North and north western part of Western Himalayan Region was socially backward than southern part. It was found that Muslim majority districts of Jammu & Kashmir recorded lower female literacy. These districts require special attention. It is recommended that catalytic programmes may be initiated to bridge the gap. Socially backward districts were concentrated in two pockets across districts of union territories. These pockets were within the territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

Every state/union territory/district of the Western Himalayan Region improved female literacy during 2001-2011. The gap in female literacy across states/union territories and districts of the region had recorded decline. It reflects that inter state and intra-state social development disparity has decreased during the corresponding period of time. Broadly, one can experience the rising trend of disparity, as we move from east to west in Western Himalayan Region.

All the states/union territories of the Western Himalayan Region decreased their relative development index during 2001-2011. It is matter of serious concern for the policy makers and planners of union/state governments. Across the districts of the region, except Lahul & Spiti and Kinnaur, every district improved relative social development index during 2001-2011. These two districts were from Himachal Pradesh. These are tribal districts.

## Bibliography

- [1]. Gosal, G. S. and Krishan, G. (1979): 'Regional Disparities in Levels of Socio-economic Development in Punjab', Department of Geography, Panjab University, Chandigarh.
- [2]. Krishan, Gopal (1989): 'Trends in Regional Disparities in India', *Asian Profile*, Vol. (17).
- [3]. Mohan, K. (2005): 'Addressing Regional Backwardness: An Analysis of Area Development Programmes in India', Manak Publication, New Delhi.
- [4]. Smith, D.M. (1973): *The Geography of Social Well-being in the United States- An Introduction to Territorial Social Indicators*, McGraw-Hill, New York.
- [5]. -----(1977): *Human Geography a Welfare Approach*, Edward Arnold, London.
- [6]. UNESCO (1977): *UNESCO's Policy Relevant Quality of Life Research Programme*, Paris.
- [7]. Venkataramiah, P. (1969): 'Interstate Variation in Industry, 1951-61: A Comment', *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. 4.
- [8]. Williamson, J. G. (1965): 'Regional Inequality and the Process of National Development: A Description of the Patterns', *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. 13.
- [9]. Williamson, J. G. (1965): 'Regional Inequality and the Process of National Development: A Description of the Patterns', *Economic Development and Cultural Change* XIII, No. 4 (II).

PREM SINGH KUTWAL. "Social Development Disparity in Western Himalayan Region." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention (IJHSSI)*, vol. 11(02), 2022, pp 16-24. Journal DOI- 10.35629/7722