

Levels of Socio-Economic Status of Female-Headed Households in Rural Haryana

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Abstract

Family and household structure and headship is fast changing under the impact of structural changes due to the development of the Indian society. Women are now increasingly taking up the responsibility of head of the household and such household are commonly termed as 'female headed households'. Availability of assets and amenities in the households reflects the socio-economic status of people in an area. Female headed households are generally marked distinct socio-economic conditions. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to study the levels of socio-economic status of female headed households in rural Haryana. For the present study, districts wise census data of 2011 of select indicators have been obtained, tabulated, processed and used to infer the districts level status in rural Haryana. The 'z score' of all the selected indicators has been added to obtain the 'composite z scores'. On the basis of composite z scores, levels of socio-economic status of female headed households at districts level in rural Haryana have been identified. At districts level, Kurukshetra district has scored the highest value (4.82) while Mewat (-18.50) occupies the lowest position with respect to all indicators taken into consideration. It is noted that relatively better socio-economic status is observed in the eastern part of the state while low status has been witnessed in the southern part in rural Haryana.

KEYWORDS: Female Headed Households, Amenities and Facilities, Composite Z score, Socio Economic Status.

Introduction

In patriarchal societies all over the world and in India in particular, an elderly male member of the family is considered as head of the household. But family and household structure and headship are fast changing under the impact of structural changes due to the development of the Indian society (Vardhan, 1999). With change of household structure and development, women are now assuming headship status in the household and such household are termed as female headed households (FHH). The household is considered to be basic unit in a society for social, economic, political and socialization purpose (Census of India, 2001). Parthasarthy (1982) in his study described that in every caste group, the percentage of the poorest of the poor form a higher proportion among the female heads of the households as compared to others. Unisa and Datta (2004) in their study found that in significant cases women are heading the households even when adult male in the household is present, she is not in work force and the economic responsibility is borne by some other members. Further, they highlighted that a woman shows better decision-making power when she is staying with a female head as compared to male head. Dar (2018) described that female headed households are of the hurtled groups of the society. He described that factors like husband's demise or addiction or his disablement or divorce or abandonment or careless husband, makes this broad variety of the society more hurtled from time to time. He also found that socio-cultural and economic conditions, entrepreneurship conditions and welfare conditions are the main distressing components.

Socio-economic status is an objective, multidimensional concept that defines a standard level for physical, material and social wellbeing. It serves as a reference against which an individual or society can measure the different domains of a personal life. It includes not just income and building materials but also educational attainment, financial security and subjective perceptions of social status and social class. It is a construct that reflects one's access to collectively desired resources, be they material goods, money, power, friendship networks, healthcare, leisure time or educational opportunities (Oakes & Rossi, 2003). Provision of basic amenities is an important factor for measuring the household's quality of living. There are many types of variables of basic amenities in a society (Das & Nipun, 2012). According to Das & Mistri (2013) household quality of living refers to three broad aspects pertaining to housing condition, amenities and assets. They have analyzed the regional variation in household's quality and found that southern states like Goa, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra rank very high while Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and whole eastern and north eastern states occupy lower positions in the ladder in terms of household quality of living. Eastern India particularly demonstrates very poor quality of living based on composite index in 2011.

Geographers and other scholars have carried out many detailed studies on conditions and quality of household amenities prevailing in rural dwellings at district, state and national levels from time to time (see for instance Bhagat and Sharma, 2001; Krishan, 2017; Dave, 2018; Chamar & Bairagi, 2018 and Raj et. al, 2018). With a significantly larger proportion of population still residing in rural areas, rural housing conditions provide a very good insight into living standard of the people in an area. The present study therefore endeavors to identify the levels of socio-economic status of female-headed households in rural Haryana. Evidences indicate that nearly 61 per cent female headed households come from rural areas in the state.

Study Area

The geographical address of Haryana lies between the 27° 39' 0" to 30° 55' 5" North latitudes and 74° 27' 8" to 77° 36' 5" East longitudes. The state is located in the northwestern part of India. Spreads over 44,212 km², the state accounts for 1.37 percent of the country's total geographical area. According to the 2011 census, the state has 21 districts. Physiographically, the eastern sector of Haryana is largely plain and featureless while western sector is traversed by numerous sand dunes. With a total of 3.50 lakh female headed households accommodates a population of 16.61 lakh persons in rural Haryana as per 2011 census. The district wise distribution of female headed households occupied by them in rural Haryana has been shown in Table 1. As seen in the table nine districts report higher share than the state average. These districts are mostly situated in southern part of the study area. In terms of less than state average, western part of Haryana appears distinct. Mewat (5.29 per cent) district has the lowest share of female-headed households while Jhajjar (12.57 per cent) district has the highest proportion.

Population Characteristics

As per census, 2011 the average size of the household among female headed households in rural Haryana is 4.7 persons. The largest size of household that is 5.8 persons/ house is recorded in Mewat district while smallest (4.4) is found in Kurukshetra and Rewari districts. On the whole there are 1265 females for every 1000 males in rural Haryana. The highest sex ratio (1336 females/ 1000 males) is recorded in Kurukshetra and Rewari districts, while it is the lowest (1202 females/ 1000 males)

in Palwal. The largest proportion of scheduled castes is found in Sirsa district and the smallest in Mewat. The female literacy rate works out to be 55 per cent while female work participation rate is 25 per cent in rural Haryana. The literacy rates vary a great deal across the districts from a minimum of 33 per cent in Mewat to a maximum of 64 per cent in Gurgaon. The highest proportion of urban population is recorded in Faridabad followed by Gurgaon while lowest is observed in Mewat. It may be noted that district Mewat has large household size, very low proportion of scheduled castes, very low female literacy rate, low female work participation rate and very low level of urbanization. The district wise population characteristics are given in Table 2.

Database and Methodology

District-wise census data of 2011 on various aspects of housing conditions of female headed households have been used for the present work. To identify the levels of socio-economic status of female-headed households in rural Haryana ten indicators have been taken up in this study. They are as follows;

1. Material of roof; concrete (X_1),
2. Material of wall; burnt brick (X_2),
3. Material of floor; cement (X_3),
4. Number of dwelling rooms; two rooms (X_4),
5. Source of lighting; electricity (X_5),
6. Kitchen facility; inside the house (X_6),
7. Communication facility; mobile (X_7),
8. Latrine facility; inside house (X_8),
9. Fuel used for cooking; LPG/PNG (X_9),
10. Ownership status; owned houses (X_{10})

To find out the levels of socio-economic status 'Z score' in respect to each of the indicator in a district has been calculated as under:

$$Z \text{ Score} = \frac{X - \bar{X}}{\sigma}$$

Where,

X = Percentage value of the indicator in a district

\bar{X} = Mean value of the indicator in the study area

σ = Standard deviation

The 'Z scores' of all the selected ten indicators have been added to obtain the 'composite Z score'. On the basis of 'composite Z scores', levels of socio-economic status at district level among female headed households in rural Haryana have been identified. The value of 'composite Z score' so obtained was classified into three categories. It is assumed that the value falling more than 1.0 considered as status of high level while the value falling in between minus 1.0 to plus 1.0 represents the medium level and the values minus 1.01 and below considered as low level of a district respectively. Finally, maps were prepared with the help of Arc GIS (Arc map 10.2) and tables were drawn to interpret and analyze the results.

Result and Analysis

Position of Households in Availability of Amenities

The study highlights that 97 per cent households of the female headed lived in owned houses. It is also found that 87 per cent households have walls made of burnt bricks and 86 per cent households use electricity as source of lighting. Similarly,

nearly 61 per cent households have facility of mobile, 59 per cent have kitchen inside the house, and 56 per cent households have latrine facility in rural Haryana. Nearly 39 per cent households use cement as material of floor, while 35 per cent have the facility of two rooms in the house in rural Haryana. The study also reveals that only 24 per cent households are using LPG/PNG as fuel for cooking, while only 16 per cent houses have concrete roof (Table 3).

Amenities-wise, Position of Districts

Districts recording highest and lowest positions in availability of various household amenities in this study are presented in Table 4. It reveals that district Panchkula witnessed highest value of z score in amenities like material of roof and kitchen inside the house. Likewise, Ambala district occupied highest position in two other amenities like source of lighting in the houses and type of fuel use for cooking. There are other district like Sirsa, Mahendragarh, Gurgaon, Kaithal, Jhajjar and Jind which have recorded highest position only in one amenity such as latrine facility inside the house, material of floor, facilities of mobile, number of dwelling rooms, ownership of house and material of wall used for construction respectively (Table 4).

On the other hand, district Mewat emerged to be at the bottom in provision of household amenities by having the lowest position in source of lighting in the house, material of wall, latrine facility inside the house, kitchen inside the house, and fuel use for cooking. It is followed by district Palwal with lowest z scores in communication facility and material used for construction of roof. Sirsa district has the lowest position in two amenities such as material of floor and number of dwelling rooms (Table 4). Thus, the study highlights that on the basis of provision of household amenities Panchkula district and Mewat district attained the top and bottom positions respectively in rural Haryana.

Table -1
District-Wise Female Headed Households in Rural Haryana, 2011.

Name of the District	Total Households	Female Headed Households	Per cent
Jhajjar	136503	17,156	12.57
Rohtak	117450	14,743	12.55
Rewari	130299	15,661	12.02
Mahendragarh	147122	15,568	10.58
Sonapat	187552	19,504	10.40
Bhiwani	248136	24,501	09.87
Ambala	117702	10,973	09.32
Gurgaon	88678	8,232	09.28
Hisar	225651	20,812	09.22
Fatehabad	145137	12,872	08.87
Jind	190875	16,546	08.67
Kaithal	158019	13,523	08.56
Panchkula	46154	3,849	08.34
Karnal	198594	15,984	08.05
Sirsa	183495	14,745	08.04
Panipat	121876	9,468	07.77
Yamunanagar	136652	10,587	07.75
Kurukshetra	130824	10,124	07.74
Faridabad	63366	4,795	07.57
Palwal	129696	8,819	06.80

Mewat	139975	7,405	05.29
Rural Haryana	3043756	275,867	09.06

Source: Calculated by Authors.

Table -2
Population Characteristics of Female Headed Households in Rural Haryana, 2011.

Name of the District	HHold Size	Sex Ratio	SC Pop. (Per cent)	Fem. Lit. (Per cent)	Fem. WF (Per cent)	Urban Pop. (Per Cent)
Panchkula	4.9	1298	20.28	62.64	20.57	58.45
Ambala	4.8	1295	30.25	63.87	13.21	52.10
Yamunanagar	4.8	1288	31.26	60.59	13.47	47.75
Kurukshetra	4.4	1336	22.69	59.23	20.58	33.04
Kaithal	4.5	1256	23.25	49.34	23.06	25.44
Karnal	4.5	1293	24.24	54.62	22.14	38.61
Panipat	4.7	1238	20.31	55.42	23.53	48.67
Sonipat	4.8	1205	18.40	59.88	27.58	31.00
Jind	4.6	1239	21.90	51.16	33.18	25.75
Fatehabad	4.6	1307	30.55	49.37	30.52	22.23
Sirsa	4.8	1310	31.48	49.76	28.27	29.88
Hisar	4.7	1260	25.66	50.30	35.33	35.19
Bhiwani	4.6	1259	20.66	55.81	30.21	24.17
Rohtak	4.7	1206	20.87	59.67	21.30	43.99
Jhajjar	4.8	1233	17.07	62.90	22.56	23.18
Mahendragarh	4.5	1304	16.52	60.23	27.84	17.72
Rewari	4.4	1336	19.88	63.28	28.98	23.90
Gurgaon	5.0	1288	19.66	63.52	21.35	65.81
Mewat	5.8	1251	06.85	32.68	22.17	15.21
Faridabad	5.4	1218	19.85	63.69	18.93	78.79
Palwal	5.4	1202	19.15	45.67	21.85	28.71
Rural Haryana	4.7	1265	22.07	55.38	25.40	37.69

Note: HHold Size: Persons / House; Sex Ratio: Female/ 1000 Males; SC Pop: Proportion of Scheduled Caste Population; Fem. Lit: Female Literacy Rate; Fem. W F: Female. Work Force.

Source: Compiled by Authors.

Table 3
Rural Haryana: Households having Availability of selected Amenities, 2011.

Households Amenities	Quality of Amenities	Households (Per cent)
Material of Roof	Concrete	16.31
Material of Wall	Burnt Brick	87.39
Material of Floor	Cement	38.60
Number of Dwelling Room	Two Rooms	34.88
Sources of Lighting	Electricity	86.14
Kitchen Facility	Inside House	58.71
Communication Facility	Mobile	61.48
Latrine Facility	Inside House	56.03
Fuel used for Cooking	LPG/PNG	23.73
Ownership Status	Owned House	97.41

Source: Calculated by Authors.

Table 4
Rural Haryana: Districts Recording Highest and Lowest Position in Quality of Amenities, 2011.

Households Amenities		Districts & Z Score Value			
		Districts	Maximum	Districts	Minimum
Material of Roof	Concrete	Panchkula	2.85	Palwal	-0.93
Material of Wall	Burnt Brick	Jind	1.12	Mewat	-3.53
Material of Floor	Cement	Mahendragarh	1.81	Sirsa	-1.71
Number of Dwelling Room	Two Rooms	Kaithal	1.58	Sirsa	-1.70
Sources of Lighting	Electricity	Ambala	0.90	Mewat	-3.54
Kitchen Facility	Inside House	Panchkula	1.68	Mewat	-2.50
Communication Facility	Mobile	Gurgaon	1.62	Palwal	-2.58
Latrine Facility	Inside House	Sirsa	2.21	Mewat	-2.74
Fuel used for Cooking	LPG/PNG	Ambala	1.65	Mewat	-2.03
Ownership Status	Owned House	Jhajjar	1.22	Panchkula	-2.96

Source: Calculated by Authors.

Levels of Socio-Economic Status

Studies on socio-economic status have become an important focus for academicians and researchers in the 21st century. The level of socio-economic status among female headed households is marked by striking regional variations in rural Haryana. A wide range of variation in 'composite z scores' has been obtained on the basis of selected indicators in rural Haryana. It varies from a maximum of 4.82 as recorded by Kurukshetra district to minimum of minus 18.50 as witnessed by Mewat district. As already mentioned earlier, to describe the regional variations in level of socio-economic status of female headed households in rural Haryana, following three types of areas have been identified;

Areas of High Level of Socio-Economic Status

The districts with the value of composite Z score more than 1.0 are included in this category of areas of high level of socio economic status among female headed households in rural Haryana (Table 5). This category is represented by 12 districts and all are located in the eastern sector of Haryana except Bhiwani (Fig. 1). The highest level of socio-economic status has been noticed in Kurukshetra district with a composite score of 4.82 followed by Gurgaon (4.44). The lowest value of composite Z score (1.47) under this category can be seen in district Bhiwani. It may be noted that the eastern sector of the state has better transport facilities and higher level of urbanization (40 per cent) as compared to the western sector. This is also reflected the level of socio- economic status of female headed households and quality of living space in these districts. Data reveals an average size of household of 4.7 persons/ house, an average sex ratio of 1265 females/1000 males, a moderate proportion of scheduled castes (22 per cent) in population, a low female work participation rate (23 per cent) and high female literacy rate (60 per cent) among the female headed households. It may also be noted that barring only Sonipat, all the districts have moderate to better facilities and amenities in five out of ten indicators selected for the purpose. Such a high values of composite z score recorded by areas of high level of socio-economic status are mainly due to moderate to better facilities of electricity in all the districts except Bhiwani and moderate to better condition of kitchen inside the house except Panipat and Sonipat districts. Excluding Panchkula and Rewari good condition of wall material like burnt brick is observed in all the districts in this category. Along with these districts, Ambala, Yamunanagar, Karnal, Rohtak and Jind also comes under this category of 'high level of socio- economic status' among female headed households in rural Haryana.

Areas of Moderate Level of Socio-Economic Status

The districts that have recorded composite Z score ranging from 1.00 to minus 1.00 are included under the category. The moderate level of socio-economic status is observed in four districts namely Kaithal (0.43), Jind (0.13), Mahendragarh (-0.06) and Hisar (-1.00). All the districts of this category are located in the western Haryana (Fig. 1) which is socio-economically less developed than the eastern parts of the state. It is noted that the western sector of Haryana is marked with less fertile soil, lack of transport facilities, moderate size of households, moderate female literacy rate, and moderately high female working force. With a composite score of 0.43, Kaithal tops in this category (Table 5). This district performs better with regard to number of dwelling rooms and moderately better with regard to electricity as source of lighting, own house and burnt brick wall. Kaithal is followed by Jind which has better facilities and amenities in the households such as burnt brick wall and number of dwelling

rooms and moderately better such as own house, electricity as source of lighting and facility of mobile. Likewise, Mahendragarh districts has also better facilities and amenities like materials of floor, facility of mobile, own house and Hisar district has moderate facilities and amenities such as facility of mobile, brunt brick wall, own house and availability of latrine facilities inside the house.

Areas of Low Level of Socio-Economic Status

The composite Z score with negative values ranging from minus 1.01 and below is included in this category. Only five districts, namely Mewat (-18.50), Palwal (-9.33), Sirsa (-3.88), Fatehabad (-3.00) and Faridabad (-1.73) fall under this category (Table 5). Mewat, Palwal and Faridabad districts are located in the extreme southeastern part whereas Hisar and Fatehabad districts are located in north western part of the state (Fig. 1). It may also be noted that Mewat, Palwal and Faridabad districts are marked with good proportion of Muslims in its population. Likewise in Sirsa and Fatehabad districts form a significant proportion of scheduled castes, largely engaged in agricultural sector. In general, the standard of living among the female headed households is very poor in these districts. Further, it can be seen that except Faridabad, all the districts are relatively less urbanized and marked with low female literacy rate. As is expected, the average size of households within the area is reasonably large. None of the indicators could attain 'z score' value of more than 1.0 in all the five districts except Faridabad which has better facilities of cement floor, and Sirsa and Fatehabad districts where availability of latrine facilities inside the house is better.

Table 5
Rural Haryana: District-wise Z Score of Selected Amenities of Female-Headed Households, 2011.

Districts	X ₁	X ₂	X ₃	X ₄	X ₅	X ₆	X ₇	X ₈	X ₉	X ₁₀	Composite Z Score
Kurukshetra	1.09	0.39	-0.37	0.19	0.88	0.78	-0.04	1.00	1.49	-0.59	4.82
Gurgaon	-0.17	0.27	1.43	-0.67	0.29	0.36	1.62	0.48	1.30	-0.47	4.44
Ambala	1.35	0.01	0.07	-0.10	0.90	1.56	-0.84	-0.10	1.65	-0.12	4.38
Yamunanagar	2.15	0.07	-0.68	0.87	0.70	1.29	-1.16	-0.45	0.52	0.38	3.69
Rohtak	-0.89	0.96	-0.01	1.19	0.72	0.00	0.47	0.22	-0.18	1.21	3.69
Jhajjar	-0.78	0.67	0.16	0.61	0.42	0.57	0.69	0.22	-0.11	1.22	3.67
Karnal	0.40	0.32	-0.58	1.24	0.50	0.04	-0.60	0.91	1.01	-0.04	3.20
Panchkula	2.85	-0.03	1.67	-1.37	0.51	1.68	-0.89	-0.57	1.39	-2.96	2.28
Rewari	-0.22	-0.52	1.37	-0.91	0.17	0.74	0.68	-0.15	-0.11	0.96	2.01
Panipat	-0.42	0.74	-0.44	1.02	0.59	-0.35	-0.10	0.66	0.97	-0.92	1.75
Sonipat	-0.78	0.88	-0.01	0.94	0.57	-0.26	-0.03	-0.00	0.57	-0.23	1.65
Bhiwani	-0.52	0.43	0.55	-0.57	-0.21	0.46	1.19	-0.34	-0.65	1.13	1.47
Kaithal	-0.08	0.03	-0.99	1.58	0.59	-0.55	-0.06	-0.04	-0.46	0.41	0.43
Jind	-0.43	1.12	-0.74	1.11	0.28	-1.13	0.21	-0.44	-0.61	0.76	0.13
Mahendragarh	-0.09	-1.49	1.81	-1.37	-0.87	0.27	1.55	-0.86	-0.15	1.14	-0.06
Hisar	-0.54	0.80	-0.74	-0.80	-0.39	-0.01	0.88	0.42	-1.07	0.45	-1.00
Faridabad	-0.63	-0.46	1.12	0.22	0.05	-0.52	0.08	0.17	-0.32	-1.44	-1.73
Fatehabad	-0.34	0.35	-1.33	-0.65	-0.44	-0.10	0.02	1.11	-0.86	-0.76	-3.00
Sirsa	-0.19	-0.70	-1.71	-1.70	-0.04	-0.41	0.47	2.21	-1.15	-0.66	-3.88
Palwal	-0.93	-0.30	0.09	0.50	-1.67	-1.93	-2.58	-1.73	-1.18	0.40	-9.33
Mewat	-0.82	-3.53	-0.69	-1.28	-3.54	-2.50	-1.58	-2.74	-2.03	0.21	-18.50

Source: Compiled by Authors.

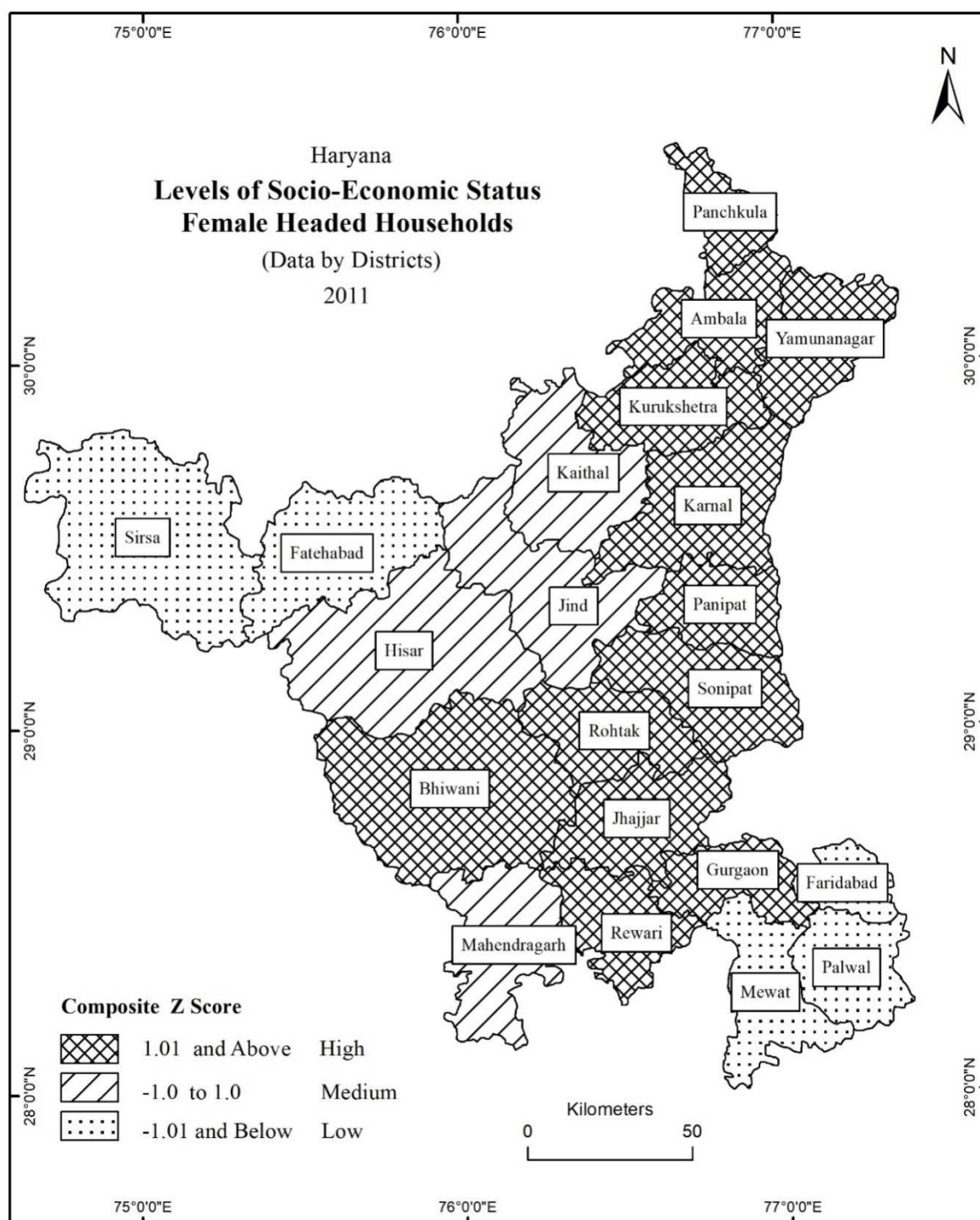


Fig. 1

Conclusion

It is concluded that a relatively better socio-economic status among female headed households is observed in eastern parts of the state due to better transport facilities, high level of urbanization, high female literacy rate and better economic conditions of the people in general. On the other hand, low level of status is witnessed in extreme southeastern and northwestern parts of the state. The extreme south eastern part of the study area reports the worst situation with regard to status among female headed households. It may be noted that this part represents the most backward space

in terms of development in the state. Overall standard of living in this part is very poor. A very low level of urbanization, widespread illiteracy rate and large size of occupancy unit characterize this area.

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