

## II. Growth of literacy

The total number of students on enrolment in 1954 was 25,363.<sup>93</sup> Since then there has been a steady increase in the number of school-going children which should be evident from the following statement :\*

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1956-57 .. ..	19,586	10,392	29,978
1957-58 .. ..	22,031	11,827	33,858
1958-59 .. ..	26,154	14,123	40,277
1959-60 .. ..	27,171	15,089	42,260
1960-61 .. ..	29,732	16,224	45,956
1961-62 .. ..	34,557	19,857	54,414
1962-63 .. ..	35,835	21,999	57,834
1963-64 .. ..	37,869	23,040	60,909
1964-65 .. ..	40,796	24,767	65,563
1965-66 .. ..	44,585	27,621	72,206
1966-67 .. ..	47,089	29,166	76,255
1967-68 .. ..	48,829	30,420	79,249
1968-69 .. ..	51,126	32,984	84,110
1969-70 .. ..	53,833	34,540	88,373
1970-71 .. ..	55,640	35,841	91,481
1971-72 .. ..	58,132	37,534	95,666
1972-73 .. ..	60,406	39,190	99,596
1973-74 .. ..	62,349	40,934	1,03,283
1974-75 .. ..	64,559	42,891	1,07,450

\* Compiled from the Abstract of Statistics.

Soon after transfer, 45 primary schools and additional classes were opened. The scheme 'Universal and Free Primary Education for the 6-11 age group' was introduced during the III Plan period. Moreover, in order to encourage the enrolment of students, certain incentive schemes such as the Mid-day Meal Scheme and the Free Supply of Books and Slates were implemented.<sup>94</sup>

According to the 1961 census, the overall percentage of literacy was 37.43 as against 24.02 for all India. The percentage of literacy was 50.39 in the case of males and 24.64 for females. Among the States and Union Territories in India, Pondicherry ranked third in literacy next only to Delhi and Kerala.

More than one-third (36.48 per cent) of the total literate population lived in the urban sector. The proportion of literate and educated males living in the urban sector was 31.8 per cent of the total literate and educated persons. In all 45.95 per cent of the literate and educated persons among females were concentrated in the urban sector showing the advancement of education in the urban sector compared to the rural sector;

As per the provisional figures of 1971 census, the percentage of literacy for the whole Territory and the various regions was as follows:

	1961	1971	<i>Percentage of variation</i>
Union Territory ..	37.43	46.02	8.59
Pondicherry .. ..	35.23	44.90	9.67
Karaikal .. ..	38.29	45.05	6.76
Mahe .. ..	62.30	67.39	5.09
Yanam .. ..	38.99	43.92	4.93

The percentage of literacy in Mahe region continued to be much above the territorial average. In terms of growth of literacy, while Mahe retained its pre-eminent position among the four regions, Yanam which held the second position in 1961 fell to the fourth position. Pondicherry went up from its last position to the third position whereas Karaikal rose from the third to the second position. In other words during the 1961-71 decade, Pondicherry region registered the highest increase in the rate of literacy which was better than the territorial increase followed by Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam in the same order.

Given below is a statement showing for the entire Territory as well as region-wise the percentage variation in the rate of literacy among males and females between 1961 and 1971:

	Males		Percentage variation	Females		Percentage variation
	1961	1971		1961	1971	
Union Territory ..	50.39	57.29	6.90	24.64	34.62	9.98
Pondicherry .. ..	47.96	56.44	8.48	22.36	32.97	10.61
Karaikal .. ..	53.73	57.32	3.59	23.67	33.05	9.38
Mahe .. ..	71.69	73.52	1.83	54.30	62.14	7.84
Yanam .. ..	47.14	50.56	3.42	31.02	37.43	6.41

An analysis of the growth of literacy during the decade 1961-71 shows that the growth of literacy among females outstripped that of males as well as the rate of growth of the combined population—a clear index of the growth of women's education during the decade. This was achieved through the special attention paid for women's education. Although education was free upto II Form for both boys and girls before merger, it was declared free upto matric or S.S.L.C. for girls with effect from August 1960.<sup>95</sup> The appointment of a Special Officer for Women's Education in 1961 and the constitution of a State Council for Women's Education in 1963 are indications of the importance attached to the promotion of women's education in the Territory.

For details on 'Educational advancements of scheduled castes', see Chapter XVII under 'Harijan Welfare'.