



A Study on Literacy Pattern among the Scheduled Caste & Scheduled Tribe Population in Jalpaiguri District, West Bengal

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Abstract

The rate of literacy is a key measure of the sociocultural development of any area and it is mostly impacted by the disparity between male and female literacy. All facets of women's life are impacted by the gender gap in literacy. People from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes constantly lag behind in every aspect of societal development. The main objective of this paper to study the literacy pattern of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population of Jalpaiguri district, West Bengal. This study is based on secondary data and comparative statistical method. An attempt has been made in this paper to study the variation of literacy pattern among scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population of Jalpaiguri district, West Bengal.

Keywords: Male-female literacy, Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe, Population, Literacy, Jalpaiguri district.

I. Introduction

Indicators of human growth in every field depend heavily on literacy rates. It is essential for reducing poverty, limiting population growth, and promoting social progress in general. Being literate is a great sign of a woman's empowerment and ability to make decisions for her home. Literacy gaps between men and women are a barrier to economic development everywhere. Understanding the gender differences throughout the country's many regions is crucial. In the household, women play a vital role. Women who are literate can contribute to literate communities. This paper is an attempt to find out the literacy among Schedule caste and Schedule tribe populations in the Jalpaiguri district. India achieved only 74.04% literacy as per the 2011 census. Male literacy accounted for 82.14 %, and the female literacy rate was 65.46%. West Bengal state accounted for 82.67% of Male and 71.16 % of female literacy. Jalpaiguri district accounted for 77.98% of Male and 62.8% of female literacy.

A continuum of learning that includes literacy helps people to attain their objectives, expand their knowledge and potential, and actively engage in their local communities and broader society (UNESCO, 2004; 2017). The social and economic growth of a nation is greatly influenced by its level of literacy (Hassan, 2009). In order to eradicate poverty and mental isolation, foster amicable and peaceful international relations, and allow demographic processes to take place freely, literacy is necessary (Chandna, 1980). An important literacy indicator is the gender difference in literacy (Khullar, 1999). According to the 2011 census, a person is considered literate if they are seven years old or older and can read and write with comprehension in any language. Illiteracy is defined as the ability to read but not write.

II. Study area

Jalpaiguri District of West Bengal is situated at the Himalayan Mountains' foothills, known as the Dooars Region. National Highway No.31 runs across the district towards northeastern India. From the geographical point of view, the district lies between latitude 26° 15' 47" N to 26° 59'34" N and longitude 88° 23' 2" E to 89° 7' 30" E (After the formation of Alipurduar District in 2014). The total area of the district is 3386.18 square kilometres. The district is situated in the Northern part of West Bengal and shares international borders with Bhutan and Bangladesh in the north and south, respectively. In India, the district is surrounded by Alipurduar, Cooch Behar, Kalimpong, and Darjeeling.

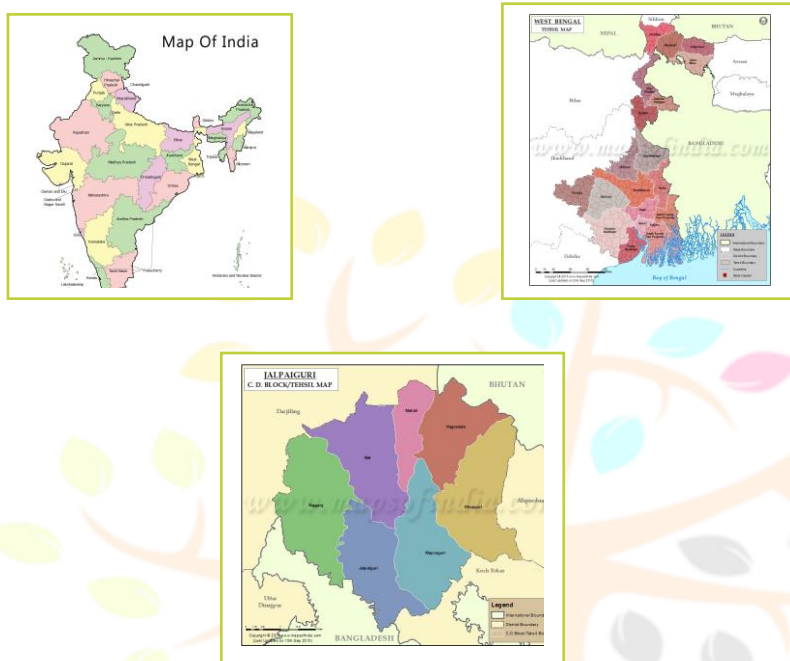


Figure: [1] Location of Study Area

III. Objectives

The main objectives of this study are to study literacy pattern of scheduled caste population and to study the circle wise variation of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population in Jalpaiguri district, West Bengal.

IV. Database and Methodology:

The present study is based on secondary data and data collected from the District Census Handbook, Jalpaiguri 2011 & 2001. Also, Simple comparative method has been used to analysis the data with bar diagrams.

V. Result and Discussion:

Male-female literacy difference among SC and ST populations in Jalpaiguri District:

In figure [2], a comparative bar diagram represents the scenario about male-female literacy differences among the SC and ST populations at the district, state, and national levels.

Table 1: Comparative analysis of SC, ST male female literacy rate, 2011

Name of the region	Overall Literacy Rate in %		SC literacy rate in%		ST literacy rate in %	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
India	82.10	65.46	75.20	56.50	68.53	49.35
West Bengal	81.69	70.54	77.22	61.23	68.17	47.71
Jalpaiguri	77.98	62.80	79.35	64.20	66.48	46.34

Source: District Census Handbook of Jalpaiguri District & Census of India ,2011

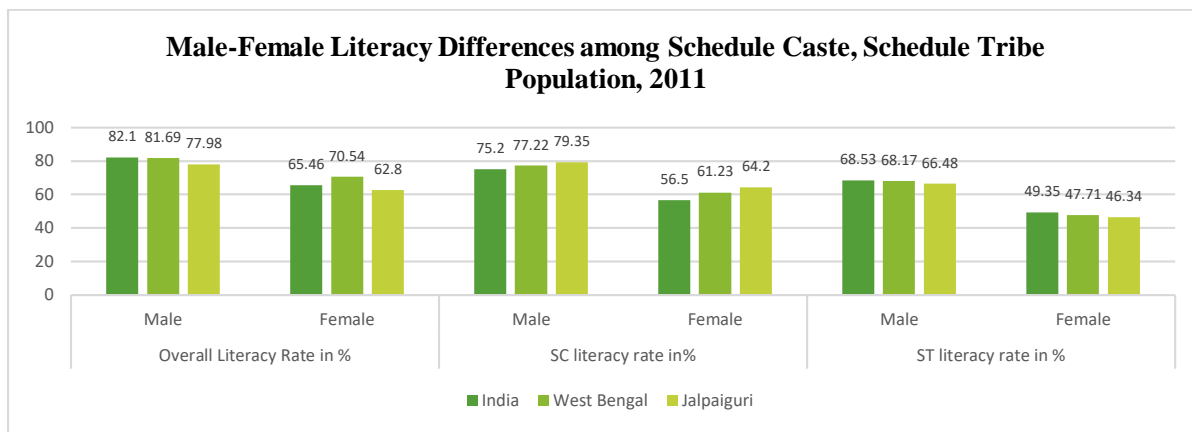


Figure [2], Male –female difference literacy differences among scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population, 2011

Figure [2] shows that Jalpaiguri district's male and female literacy rates are lower than state and national. The SC female literacy rate in Jalpaiguri has been found to be higher than the national average. The literacy rate among ST women is, nevertheless, lower than the overall literacy rate. Additionally, Jalpaiguri District's ST and SC populations have different literacy rates by gender. This shows that there hasn't been an equal advancement in education for men and women in ST and SC.

Table 2: Block wise SC male and ST female literacy rate of Jalpaiguri district, 2011

Name of Block	Literacy rate among SC in%		Literacy rate among ST in%	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Jalpaiguri Sadar	80.45	65.56	65.15	44.97
Dhupguri	79.63	64.09	67.18	46.27
Maynaguri	80.87	66.28	72.98	52.75
Rajganj	77.49	62.68	61.44	44.19
Mal	77.41	61.90	66.92	47.39
Mateli	78.72	59.09	68.68	47.30
Nagrakata	72.56	54.22	64.17	44.42

Source: District Census Handbook of Jalpaiguri District & Census of India, 2011

Among the seven blocks, Maynaguri is the SC male highest literacy rate (80.87%). When we look female literacy among the seven blocks Jalpaiguri Sadar is highest female literacy rate (65.56). After Maynaguri, Jalpaiguri Sadar is at the 2nd SC male highest literacy rate of 80.45%, and Nagrakata is at the bottom male literacy rate of 72.56. However, ST male literacy rate is highest in Maynaguri (72.98) and the lowest in Rajganj (61.44%). Female literacy is the highest in Maynaguri and the lowest in Rajganj (44.19%).

Table 3: Comparative analysis of SC, ST male female literacy rate, 2001

Name of the region	Overall Literacy Rate in %		SC literacy rate in%		ST literacy rate in %	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
India	75.26	53.67	66.60	41.90	59.17	34.76
West Bengal	77.02	59.68	70.54	46.90	57.38	29.15
Jalpaiguri	72.80	52.20	72.90	48.60	53.80	30.10

Source: Census of India, Office of Registrar General, India.

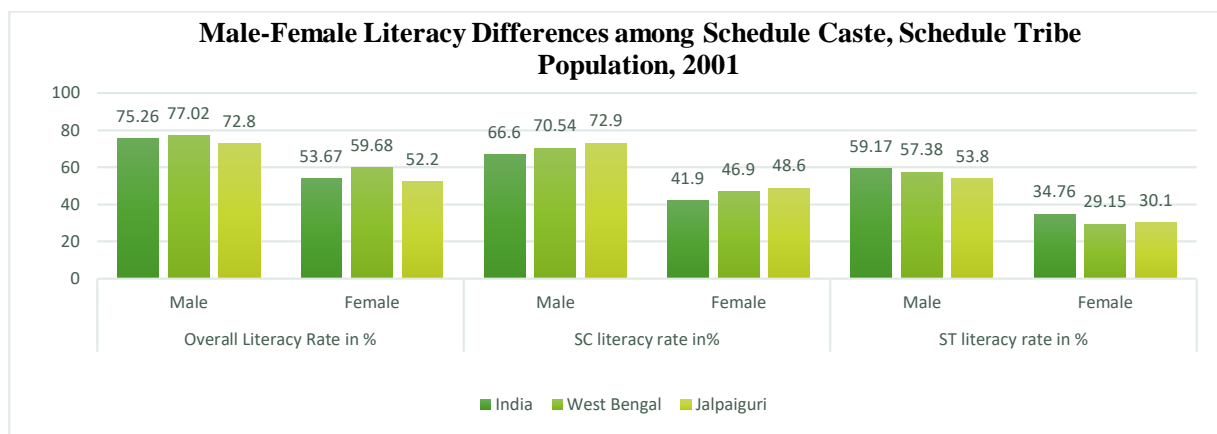


Figure [3], Male –female difference literacy differences among scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population, 2001

Figure [3] shows that Jalpaiguri district's male and female literacy rates are lower than state and national. The SC male and female literacy rate in Jalpaiguri has been found to be higher than the national average. The literacy rate among ST women is, nevertheless, lower than the national average literacy rate. Additionally, Jalpaiguri District's ST and SC populations have different literacy rates by gender.

Table 4: Block wise SC male and ST female literacy rate of Jalpaiguri district, 2001

Name of Block	SC literacy rate in%		ST literacy rate in%	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Rajganj	68.80	42.60	48.60	21.50
Mal	68.40	44.30	53.20	27.90
Matiali	74.60	46.70	56.30	29.00
Nagrakata	60.70	35.90	49.50	25.80
Madarihat	67.90	42.90	50.20	27.50
Kalchini	63.00	36.40	54.60	33.30
Kumargram	71.70	49.50	55.50	34.30
Alipurduar- I	74.00	50.70	59.80	35.30
Alipurduar- II	75.90	55.90	57.00	40.60
Falakata	73.30	50.00	52.50	27.60
Dhupguri	74.90	48.70	53.20	27.30
Maynaguri	74.50	49.90	59.00	32.20
Jalpaiguri	75.70	51.70	57.60	31.20

Source: District Census Handbook of Jalpaiguri District & Census of India, 2001

Now when we see the 2001 census report, there are thirteen blocks. Among the thirteen blocks, Alipurduar- II is the SC male highest literacy rate (75.90%). When we look female literacy among the thirteen blocks Alipurduar- II is highest female literacy rate (55.90%). After Alipurduar- II, Jalpaiguri is at the second SC male highest literacy rate of 75.70%, and Nagrakata is at the bottom male literacy rate of 60.70%. However, ST male literacy rate is highest in Alipurduar- I (59.80) and the lowest in Rajganj (Rajganj %). Female literacy is the highest in Alipurduar- II and the lowest in Rajganj (21.50%).

VI. Conclusion

The analysis of data clearly indicates that percentage of literacy rates among the scheduled caste population is lower than the total population. Scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population are distributed in remote areas of the district and difficult for communication. So, they are always deprived from education. The present study exposes the gender disparity in literacy among the SC, and ST populations of Jalpaiguri district. The male literacy rate is higher, whereas the female literacy is lower in each block. In 2011 census report show that total literacy, SC and ST literacy rates, Nagrakata block has the lowest female literacy rate and when we see census 2001 report where show that the female literacy is the lowest in Rajganj block (21.50%). The direct or indirect effect of economic schemes such as Kanyashree and other employment initiatives has helped the situation to some degree in recent times. Hence, more and more involvement of people in government initiatives is necessary for the

economic empowerment of women among Schedule Caste and Scheduled Tribe, and also need more educational development schemes for women. The overall development of society will stand still without improving women's education.

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