

A Study on Educational Backwardness of Scheduled Caste Population of Birbhum District.

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Abstract: Education is one of the major instrument by which all the barrier imposed by his birth can be overcome. Presently we are trying to achieve 100 percent literacy through 'Education for All', but we will surely miss if we do not focus on the educational problems of Scheduled Caste. Majority of the Scheduled Caste population is still left behind. From independence to till now many initiative have been taken for the educational development of this community but still they are lagging behind. In this paper an attempt has been made to find out the root cause of the educational backwardness of Scheduled Caste population of Birbhum district.

Keywords: Educational backwardness, Education for All

1. Introduction: Education is considered as the main driving force of development for a nation. Stormquist rightly remarked that "literacy are fundamental to informed decision meaning, personal empowerment, active and passive participation in local and global social community". UNESCO documentation rightly says "literacy is a human right, a tool of personal empowerment and a means for social and human development. It is the heart of basic education for all and essential for educating, poverty reducing, child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, Peace and democracy". Since

independence there has been a remarkable expansion of the educational system as a whole and all its stages and specialization. Educational development of India is not ubiquitous; it varies in terms of religion, caste, class, gender and region. As a matter of fact while certain regions as well as sections of our society have acquired greater importance in the system of education, other stand deprived

2. Study Area: Birbhum is the northern most district of the the Burdwan division. It extended between 23° 32' 30" and 24° 35' 0" north latitude and 87° 5' 25" and 88° 1' 40" east longitude. It extends over 4545 square kilometer. In shape it looks like an isosceles triangle. Birbhum is bounded on the north and west by the Santal Parganas, on the east by the districts of Murshidabad and Burdwan and on south by Burdwan from which it is separated by the Ajay river.

Birbhum is the 14th populous district of West Bengal. The total population of this district is 35,02404, which accounts 3.84 percent of the total population of West Bengal. Out of the total population 1790920 is male and 1711484 person is female. Out of the total population 1033140 is Scheduled Caste population which constitute 29.5 percent population to the total population. The density of population is 771 per square kilometer which makes its ranks 13th in the state.

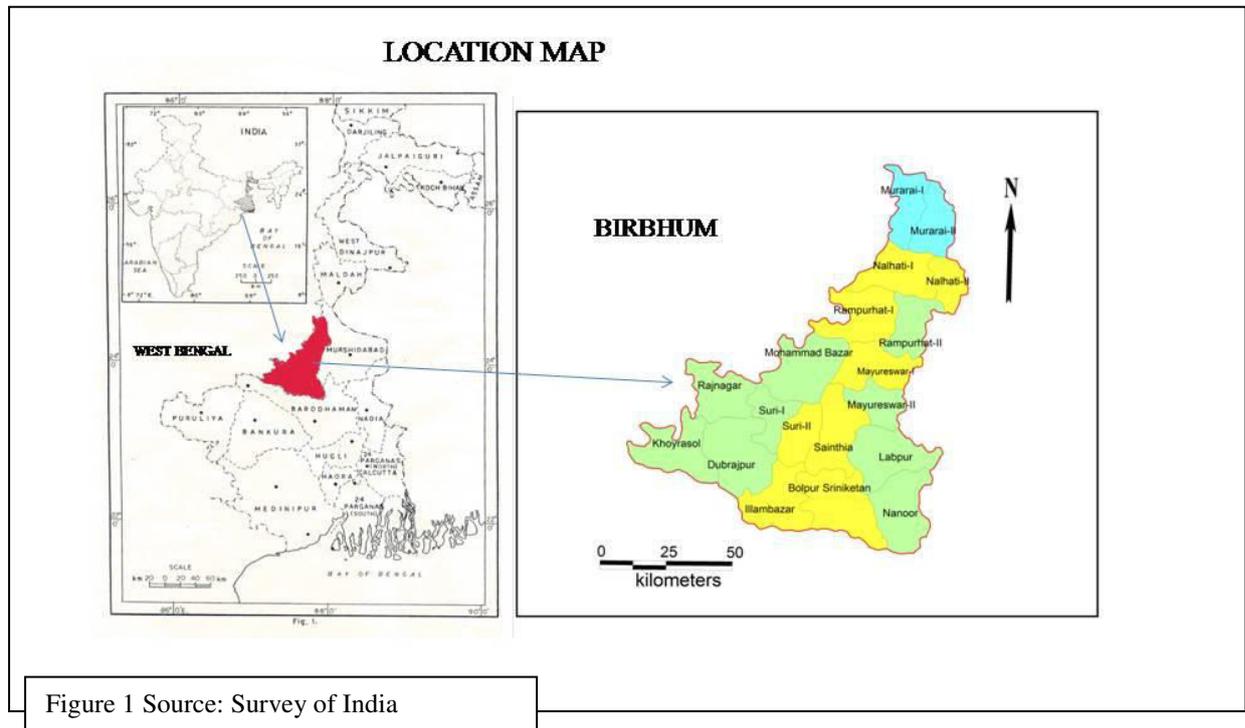


Figure 1 Source: Survey of India

3. Objectives of the study:The main objectives of this paper as follows

1. To find out the educational status of Birbhum district.
2. To assess the educational status of Scheduled Caste of Birbhum district.
3. To find out the causes of low literacy among Scheduled Caste population.
4. To find out the relation between education and socio economic environment.

4. Review of related literature: Krishnaiah Chetty,V.B.(1991): ‘Scheduled Castes and Development Programmes in India’ in this book, the author has attempted to examine the impact of development programmes designed for the improvement of socio-economic conditions of

5. Methodology and Data base: The research work is divided in three phases. The first phase involves collection of district map, preparation of base map, collection of secondary data and framing of questionnaires for the target groups along with preparation of sample design and size. The second phase is concerned with extensive field work and primary data has been collected by

Scheduled Caste families in India in general and Andhra Pradesh in particular

Chatterjee, S.K. (2011) in his book ‘Educational Development of Scheduled Caste: Looking Ahead’ has tried to describe vividly the status of Scheduled Caste in school education and higher education in India. Constitutional provisions for educational development were discussed briefly. Reservation policy in educational institution has also been discussed extensively. But the suggestion part is not convincing enough.

Biswas,N.B and Roy,N.R. (2014) in their book ‘Education of the Scheduled Caste People; Namasudras of West Bengal’ analyzed the educational status of Scheduled Caste in India and with the help of relevant data, participation of Scheduled Caste in education has shown in detail.Various problems associated with the education of Scheduled Caste addresses well

questionnaire schedule from the study area. In the last phase collected data has been classified in a master table followed by interpretation

Secondary data were collected from published records, books, and reports etc. Such as Census of India, District Statistical Handbook, District Human Development Report,

Statistical Abstract of West Bengal and other national and international reports. Primary data collected through personal interviews based on questionnaire.

6. Population and Sample of the study:

All the Scheduled Caste population and Scheduled Caste students of Birbhum district is the population of the study.

The investigator has taken 100 Scheduled Caste parents and 100 Scheduled Caste students as a sample for this research study. Purposive sampling method has been followed to choose the sample.

7. Educational Status of Birbhum District:

Birbhum is one of the backward The scenario of total literacy of Scheduled Caste is not also good. Literacy of Scheduled Caste is opens up the loophole in the

districts of West Bengal in terms of educational development. Birbhum ranks 15th out of 19 district of West Bengal. According to census 2011 Purba Mednipur(87.66 percent) posses 1st rank in terms of literacy rate, where Birbhum(70.90 percent) ranks 15th in the state. There are only four districts behind Birbhum, those are Murshidabad, Purulia, Maldah and Uttar Dinajpur. So we can easily depict the literacy scenario of this district.

7.1 Total literacy rate: Total literacy rate of Birbhum district is 70.68 percent which is lower than the state’s average (76.3 percent). There is no block in this district which has the higher total literacy rate than states average. Lowest literacy rate is found in Murarai-I (55.67) and highest in Nalhati-I (75.48).

educational development. Total literacy rate of Scheduled Caste is found lowest in Murarai-I (43.37) block and highest in Nalhati-I (69.87).

Literacy Rate of Scheduled Caste Population

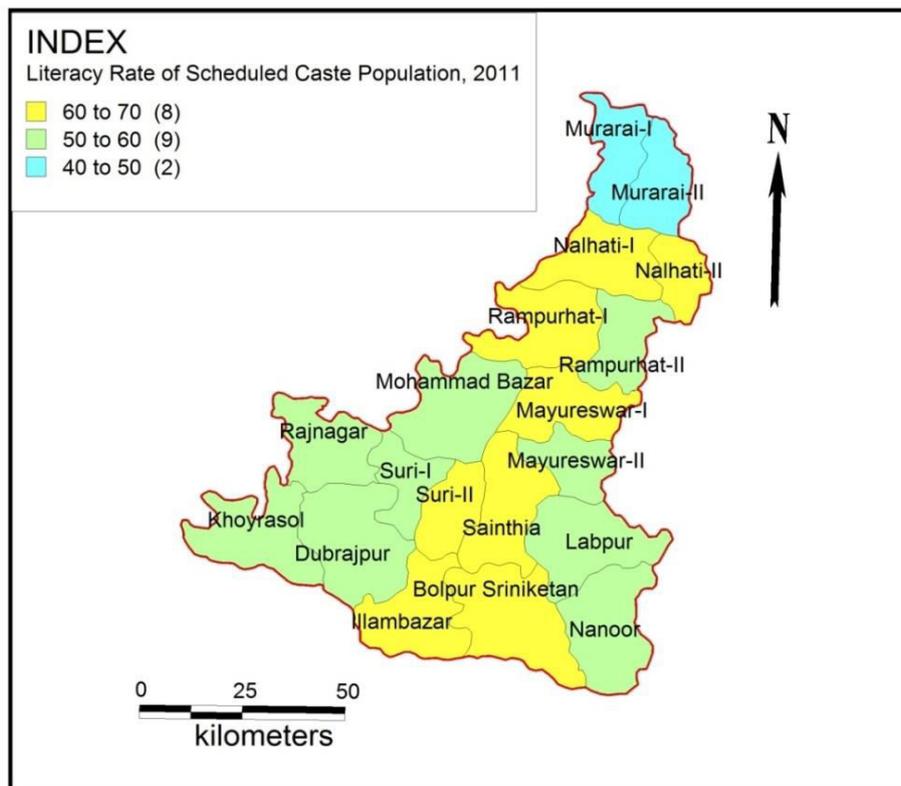


Fig 2 Source: Census of India

7.2 Male –Female literacy rate: In West Bengal the total female literacy is said to be very

total literacy rate the distributional pattern is not ubiquitous. Nalhati-I has the highest (69.78) female literacy rate and Murarai-I is the lowest (50.65).

Female literacy of Scheduled Caste of west Bengal is 61.23 in the year 2011 which is far below

worse. It is 70.54 in 2011. Birbhum is very much lagging behind in this regard. The total female literacy rate of Birbhum is 64.14. than the total female literacy rate. Scheduled Caste female literacy of Birbhum is 58.30 which are below than the state’s average Scheduled Caste literacy rate and also than the districts total literacy rate.

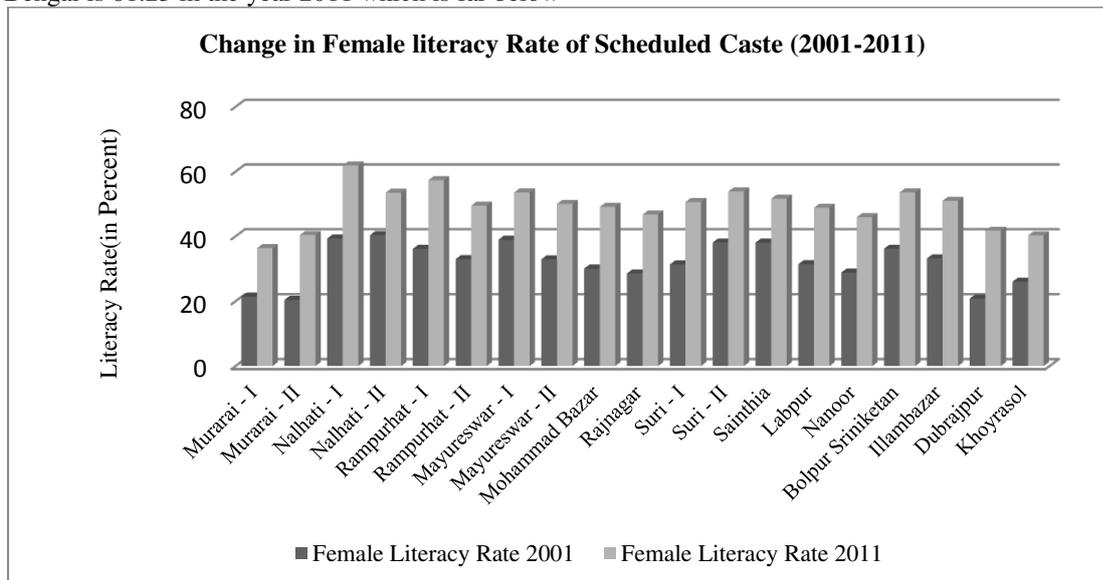


Fig 3 Source: Census of India 2001 &2011

7.3 Male-female literacy gap of Scheduled

Caste: Male-Female literacy gap of Birbhm is 13.36. Highest Male-Female literacy gap is observed in Khoyrasol(18.64) and the lowest for Murarai-II (9.2). In 2001 average Male-Female literacy gap for Birbhum was 20.03 and it has reduced to 13.36 in 2011.

In case of Male-Female literacy gap of Scheduled Caste, it was 24.78 percent in 2001 but reduced to 17.67 percent in 2011. Like the total Male-Female literacy gap, highest Male-Female literacy gap of Scheduled Caste is observed in Khoyrasol and lowest in Murarai-II.

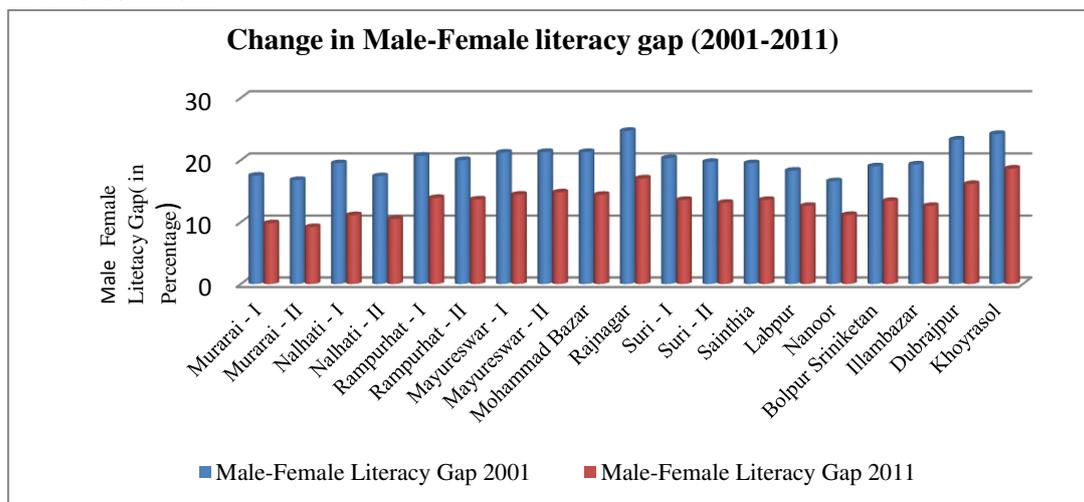


Figure 4 Source: Calculated from Census of India 2001 and 2011

8. Causes of educational backwardness of Scheduled Caste population:

8.1 Education of father: Education of father has a great impact on children's interest on education. If the father is educated, he will be curious and confident to guide his children. But the survey shows that majority of Scheduled Caste guardian are illiterate, the percentage is 65. So we cannot expect any educational guidance from such parents. It is also found that 16 percent father is literate up to class v. So nearly 80 percent students are not getting any educational guidance from their parents. Only 6 percent father are graduate and above. During survey the illiterate father replied that as they do not have any educational qualification they feel inferior, hence they do not want to involve themselves in their children's day to day activities.

8.2 Occupation of father: Among the surveyed population 38 percent are engaged in cultivation and 49 percent are as agricultural laborer. Majority of the parents are engaged in traditional occupation. In the agricultural season those who have agricultural land ask their children to help them. In this time majority of the student are unable to attend the school and they lag behind in the study. Only 4 percent parents are serviceman and 5 percent are businessman.

8.3 Income of family: Government of India initiated free and compulsory education till the age 14, government of West Bengal provides grant for school shoes, dress, free supply of books but the educational expenses increasing day by day. 30 percent parents have the monthly income of less than 2000 and 59 percent have monthly income of 2000-5000Rs. Now days it is very difficult to maintain a family with this income. 88 percent parents feel that expenses of their children education are burdened to them. Majority of the surveyed students have taken private tuition, 65 percent student spend 200- 500 Rs per month for tuition.

8.4 Parent's attitude towards education: If the parents have the favourable attitude towards education, they will try to induce their children to take interest in their education. They will present a series of examples of those who benefitted because of education. But many of the parent's attitudes are unfavorable for education, as they said 'education is not meant for us, our children are not good in study and they will not be able to search for job'.

8.5 Parent's interest in day to day activities: over 60 percent parents are illiterate; as a result they are not interested to monitor day to day activities of their children. Over 80 percent of the parents are engaged in agricultural activities, those who are educated within them, after working throughout the day, they feel very much tired and do not shows any interest in their children's education. Only 21 percent parents help their children in daily educational activities, rest of the parents does not help their children as they do not have sufficient knowledge.

8.6 Facilities available to the students: Basic facilities are needed to study properly. Major problems faced by the Scheduled Caste students are i) Students have no separate room for study. 47 percent respondents have one room and 36 percent have two rooms, so all the family members have to stay within a room and it is very hard to concentrate in study for the students. ii) The second problem is lack of electricity and latrine. Still now many of the houses are not able to bear the minimum cost of per month electricity consumption. Only 36 percent respondents have latrine facility in their home, others have to go outside, as a result their health deteriorates and they are irregular in the class room.

8.7 Time devoted to the study: Majority of the parents are not aware about their children's education. On the other hand students are not serious about their study. 74 percent parents told that their children study 1-3 hour per day students are also admitted that they should spend more time on their study.

9. Conclusion: presently we are trying to achieve 100 percent literacy. Education for all will not be successful if we do not include the Scheduled Caste population. Constitution of India has given many privileges for this community still they are lagging behind. Many commissions, committee and many crores are spending for the welfare of the Scheduled Caste but it has to be monitored in the grass root level that how much of them is really spending to uplift of their education. First of all we have to aware them and give the confidence that they can do best if they try.

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