

## **Literacy Trend of West Bengal and Its Differentials: A District Level Analysis.**

**Dr. Kuntal Kanti Chatteraj.<sup>1</sup> and Susanta Chand.<sup>2</sup>**

*Assistant Professor, P.R.M.S Mahavidyalaya. Baragari, Jamboni, Bankura.*  
*Part-time Teacher, Sonamukhi College. Sonamukhi, Bankura.*

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**Abstract:** Literacy and Education is considered as the main driving force of development for a nation. According to Indian Census definition 'Literacy' means 'a person who can read and write a simple message in any language with understanding is considered literate'. The present paper focuses on the particular state of West Bengal and its districts to understand its Literacy condition. 74.04 % peoples are said to be literate in the country (2011 Census) and for West Bengal it is 77.08%. The Literacy rate and its growth in West Bengal is very close to national average since long past. But there is wide variation of literacy rate among different districts of West Bengal. The Southern districts, near to Metropolitan Kolkata exhibits higher rate of literacy on the otherhand the districts of North Bengal and Western Plateau region have lower literacy rate. This paper investigates the actual spatial pattern of general literacy along with Scheduled Caste and Tribe Literacy. Development (Change) of literacy form 2001 to 2011 also differs from district to district. The paper tries to find out the reason and pattern of such disparities.

Picture of female literacy in West Bengal is said to be worse. Presently it is 70.54 percent. The difference of Male and Female literacy is high, 11.15. (2011 Census). A male-Female differential is more prominent among the S.C and S.T population. In this paper Sex Differentials of literacy among General, S.C. and S.T have been analysed in Rural and Urban Frame. The rate of literacy and its pattern obviously vary in rural and urban Bengal. The paper also research on this vital issue. .

Present paper is divided into **four sections**.

**Section one** deals with the geographical distribution, change of literacy in different districts of West Bengal in Post Liberalization period (after 1991) and correlation with other factors. **Section two** analyse the Male-Female literacy among different districts of West Bengal and its trend. Literacy differentials among the different Caste and Tribe and their change is discussed in the **Section three**. The geographical distribution of literacy among different Caste and Tribe is also highlighted in this section. **Section four** Rural-Urban Differentials of literacy and its change is analysed. The study necessarily ends with conclusion.

The entire study is secondary data based. Maximum relevant data is taken from two consecutive census reports, 2001 and 2011 'Primary Census Abstract (PCA) of West Bengal'. Data from 'Backward Caste Welfare' (BCW) department, Govt. of West Bengal, and publication from 'Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics' are used as and when necessary.

**Key Words:** Composite Index, Literacy differential index, Regional development, Rural, Urban, Spatial pattern, Temporal change,

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### **I. Introduction**

Literacy and Education is considered as the main driving force of development for a nation. The future of the largest democracy in India will mostly depend on people's educational development. It is remarked that "Literacy skills are fundamental to informed decision-making, personal empowerment, active and passive participation in local and global social community" (Stromquist, 2005, p. 12). UNESCO documentation rightly says "Literacy is a human right, a tool of personal empowerment and a means for social and human development. Educational opportunities depend on literacy. It is at the heart of basic education for all, and essential for eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy" (UNESCO 2010). According to Indian Census definition 'Literacy' means 'a person who can read and write a simple message in any language with understanding is considered literate' (Census of India, 2011)

Post-Liberalization period (after 1991) in India is no doubt significant because Indian economy, society and way of life of Indian people have changed considerably. Presently India is an emerging nation in the field of consumption, business and Global politics. Field of education is also sufficiently affected by Liberalization policy. The effect is how much positive or negative it is a matter of controversy. 74.04 % peoples are said to be literate in the country (2011 Census) and for West Bengal it is 77.08%. The Literacy rate and its growth in West Bengal is very close to national average since long past. After 68 years of Independence the

picture of literacy and education is not worse but the rate of development is not satisfactory. The most serious problem relating to literacy is hidden in its gross data, which are literacy differentials among different castes, religion, population groups, male-female differentials etc. For example only 57.92% Scheduled tribes are literate in West Bengal where as the total literacy rate for this state is 77.08. Another problem is the spatial variation of literacy and education. District level literacy rate varies from a lowest of 60.13% in Uttar Dinajpur to a highest of 83.35% in Medinipur (Purba and Paschim) (excluding the metropolitan district of Kolkata, 87.14) with of course a large extent of literacy variation at block and village level too.

The central theme of the paper is the change of literacy of different district of West Bengal form 2001 to 2011 and find out the difference of literacy and its change among the different caste, sex. The entire study is based on secondary data, Census of West Bengal 2001 and 2011.

Keeping in mind the examination and analysis of the objectives the paper is divided into *four sections*.

**Section one** deals with the geographical distribution, change of literacy in different districts of West Bengal in Post Liberalization period (after 1991) and correlation with other factors.

**Section two** analyse the Male-Female and of literacy among different districts of West Bengal and its trend.

Literacy differentials among the different Caste and Tribe and their change is discussed in the **Section three**. The geographical distribution of literacy among different Caste and Tribe is also highlighted in this section. In **section four** Rural-Urban Differentials of literacy and its change is analysed. The study necessarily ends with conclusion.

## The Study Area

West Bengal is located in the eastern side of the country make boundary with Bangladesh. The Latitudinal and Longitudinal extension of the state are 21° 38' N to 27° 10' and 88° 50' to 89° 50' E. Total population of West Bengal is 21463270 Persons according to 2011 census, seventh largest figure among the Indian states and the population density is 1029 persons per square Kilometre which is the second densely populated state in the country. The Human development index (HDI) for the state is 0.492 (2008).

## Data base and Methodology

The entire study is secondary data based. Maximum relevant data is taken from two consecutive census reports, 2001 and 2011 'Primary Census Abstract (PCA) of West Bengal'. Data from 'Backward Caste Welfare' (BCW) department, Govt. of West Bengal, and publication from 'Bureau of applied economics and statistics' are used as and when necessary.

Statistical tables, technique like correlation and Choropleth mapping techniques is used for showing the spatio-temporal variation of literacy. In these maps Kolkata as a metropolitan district is not displayed. Disparity pattern of literacy is presented by applying differential Index is follows:

$$URDI = \frac{ULR - RLR}{TLR}$$

URDI= Urban Rural differential Index, ULR= Urban Literacy Rate, RLR= Rural Literacy Rate.

(Jhariya and Jain, IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Volume 19, Issue 9, Ver. I Sep. 2014, PP 77-84)

To measure the real development of literacy following formula is used.

$$\text{Composite Index of Development} = \frac{\text{Total Literacy Rate}}{(\text{M-F differentials} + \text{R-U differentials} + \text{Caste differentials})}$$

## SECTION: 1.

The literacy rate of West Bengal is 77.08, according to 2011 census. The rank of the state is 20<sup>th</sup> in terms of literacy among all Indian states. The rate is just 3.07% higher than national average. Such figure is not desirable for that state which was the most developed state within the country up to 1961 and has a long history of cultural development since British Colonial period. The state of West Bengal cannot enjoy the benefit of liberalization in the field of education. Only 8.44 percent literacy development is found during ten years (2001 to 2011) which reflects the fact. (Table No.-1)

**1.1 Spatial Variation of Total Literacy:** There is a wide variation in literacy figure among the districts of West Bengal, already mentioned. Lowest literacy rate is found in Uttar Dinajpur (60.13) and highest in Medinipur (Purba and Paschim) district (83.35) excluding the metropolitan district of Kolkata, 87.14. If we divide the all districts through quartiles then, Hugli, Paschim and Purba Medinipur (Calculated together), Haora, North Twenty four Parganas, and Kolkata districts are above Q3. Nadia, Baddhaman, South Twenty four Parganas and Darjilling are in between Q2 and Q3. Between Q1 to Q2 Birbhum, Bankura, Jalpaiguri, Dakshin Dinajpur and Koch Bihar districts are found. Uttar Dinajpur, Maldah, Purulia and Murshidabad lie below Q1. The Southern districts, near to metropolitan Kolkata exhibits higher rate of literacy on the otherhand the districts of North

Bengal and Western Plateau region have lower literacy rate due to historical background of backwardness, high percentage of Muslim minority, Scheduled Caste, Tribe population. It is believed in the discipline that some socio-economic factors influence the literacy rate considerably. In our study some of them are incorporated for the analysis. Percentage of urban population, Percentage of worker, Percentage of non-agricultural labour, Percentage of female worker, Percentage Muslim population and Percentage of scheduled tribe population are considered for this purpose. The correlation value with literacy and the said factors are tabulated in table No.-2.

Positive relationship is observed with the percentage of urban population and percentage of non-agricultural workers but negative relationship is found with the percentage of worker and female worker, percentage of Muslim and Scheduled Tribe population. Unlike the developed realm the work participation in this state is an economic compulsion both for male and females especially in the rural areas. The worker in the rural field generally unskilled agricultural labour and there is no any pre-quisetic condition of literacy and education.

Table.-1.

**CHANGING PATTREN OF TOTAL, MALE & FEMALE LITERACY IN WB .FROM 2001 - 2011**

Sl No	DIST/ STATE	2001 LITERACY RATE			2011 LITERACY RATE			Change of Total Literacy	Change of Male Literacy	Change of Female Literacy
		TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE			
1	Darjilling	72.87	81.28	63.92	79.92	85.61	73.33	7.05	4.33	9.41
2	Jalpaiguri	63.62	73.64	52.9	73.79	79.95	66.23	10.17	6.31	13.33
3	Koch Bihar	67.21	76.83	57.04	75.49	80.71	68.49	8.28	3.88	11.45
4	Uttar Dinajpur	48.63	59.27	37.16	60.13	65.52	52.17	11.5	6.25	15.01
5	Dakshin Dinajpur	64.64	73.3	55.12	73.86	78.37	67.01	9.22	5.07	11.89
6	Maldah	50.71	59.24	41.67	62.71	66.24	56.96	12	7.00	15.29
7	Murshidabad	55.05	61.4	48.33	67.53	69.95	63.09	12.48	8.55	14.76
8	Birbhum	62.16	71.57	52.21	70.9	76.92	64.14	8.74	5.35	11.93
9	Barddhaman	71	79.3	61.93	77.15	82.42	69.63	6.15	3.12	7.7
10	Nadia	66.55	72.67	60.06	75.58	78.75	70.98	9.03	6.08	10.92
11	North 24 Parganas	78.49	84.35	72.13	84.95	87.61	80.34	6.46	3.26	8.21
12	Hugli	75.59	83.05	67.72	82.55	87.03	76.36	6.96	3.98	8.64
13	Bankura	63.84	77.21	49.8	70.95	80.05	60.05	7.11	2.84	10.25
14	Puruliya	56.14	74.18	37.15	65.38	77.86	50.52	9.24	3.68	13.37
15	Haora	77.64	83.68	70.93	83.85	86.95	79.43	6.21	3.27	8.5
16	Kolkata	83.31	84.07	77.95	87.14	88.34	84.06	3.83	4.27	6.11
17	South 24 Parganas	70.16	79.89	59.73	78.57	83.35	71.4	8.41	3.46	11.67
18	Paschim & Purba Medinipur	75.17	85.25	64.63	83.35	88.79	75.93	8.18	3.54	11.3
	<b>West Bengal</b>	68.64	77.02	59.68	77.08	81.69	70.54	8.44	4.67	10.86

Source: Census of W. Bengal, 2001 & 2011.

Note : For Comparison Purba and Paschim Medinipur are calculated together because at the time 2001 census Medinipur was undivided.

Table - 2.

**CORRELATION BETWEEN LITERACY AND SOME SELECTED PARAMETERS. YEAR - 2011.**

SL NO	NAME OF THE DISTRICTS/STATE	%Of Worker 2011	%Of Non agricultural Worker (Main+ Marginal) 2011	% OF Urban Population 2011	%OF Female Worker 2011	%Of S T Population in 2011	% Of Muslim Population 2011.	Literacy 2011
1	Darjiling	37.02	79.20	39.42	22.44	21.52	5.31	79.92
2	Jalpaiguri	39.06	62.68	27.38	22.31	18.89	10.78	73.79
3	Koch Bihar	40.01	32.92	10.27	20.67	0.64	24.24	75.49
4	Uttar Dinajpur	35.77	34.95	12.05	18.96	5.41	47.36	60.13
5	Dakshin Dinajpur	41.94	32.69	14.1	24.84	16.43	24.01	73.86
6	Maldah	38.55	47.92	13.58	23.30	7.87	52.05	62.71
7	Murshidabad	36.46	52.76	19.72	17.38	1.28	63.67	67.53
8	Birbhum	38.02	37.01	12.83	17.64	6.92	35.08	70.9
9	Barddhaman	37.72	54.82	39.89	16.48	6.34	19.78	77.15
10	Nadia	35.66	53.06	27.84	11.48	2.72	25.41	75.58
11	North 24 Parganas	35.68	75.16	57.27	12.81	2.64	24.22	84.95
12	Hugli	39.01	60.84	38.57	16.24	4.15	15.14	82.55

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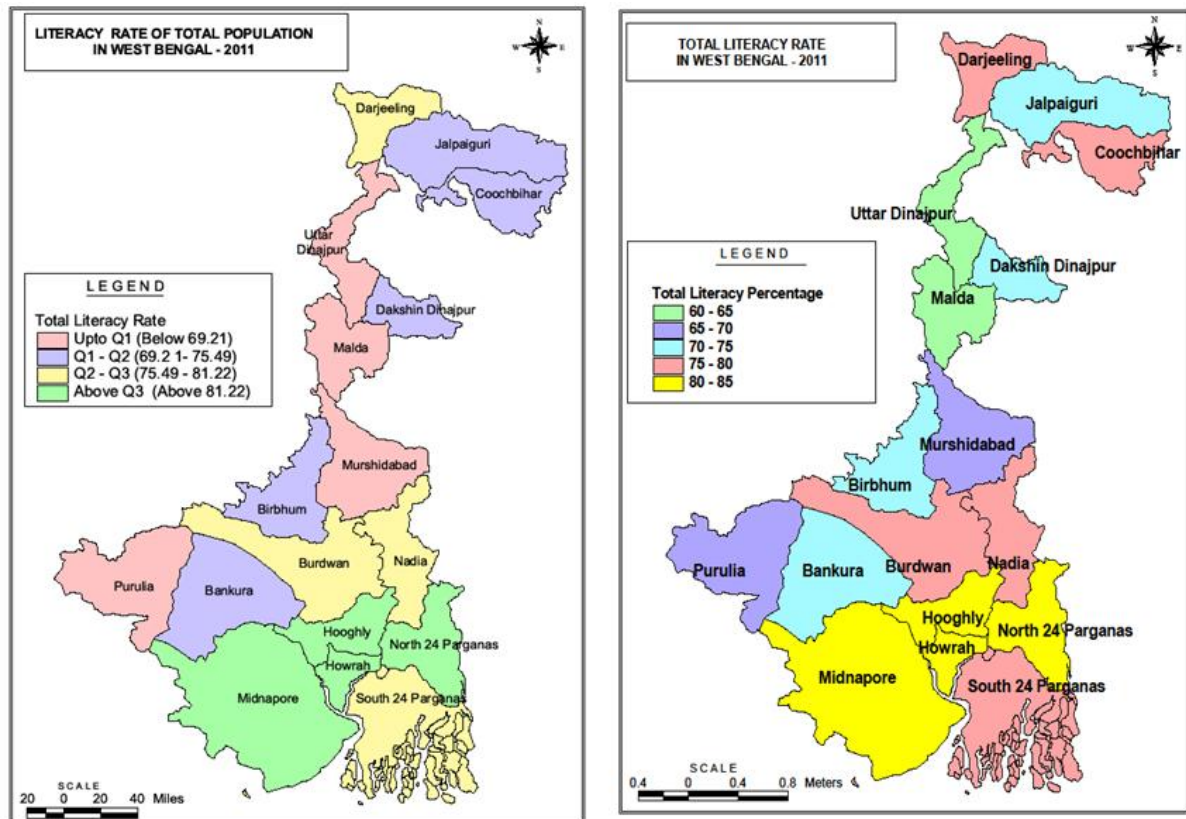
13	Bankura	40.77	34.72	8.33	23.62	10.25	7.52	70.95
14	Puruliya	42.65	39.10	12.74	31.29	18.45	7.12	65.38
15	Haora	37.52	85.59	63.38	13.69	0.31	24.44	83.85
16	Kolkata	39.93	98.42	100	17.91	0.24	20.27	87.14
17	South 24 Parganas	36.32	60.81	25.58	15.24	1.19	33.34	78.57
18	Paschim Medinipur	42.43	33.15	12.22	25.87	14.88	9.56	79.04
19	Purba Medinipur	37.49	45.17	11.63	15.99	0.55	13.27	87.66
<b>WEST BENGAL</b>		<b>38.08</b>	<b>55.96</b>	<b>31.87</b>	<b>18.08</b>	<b>5.50</b>	<b>27.00</b>	<b>77.08</b>

Source: Census of West Bengal PCA 2011.

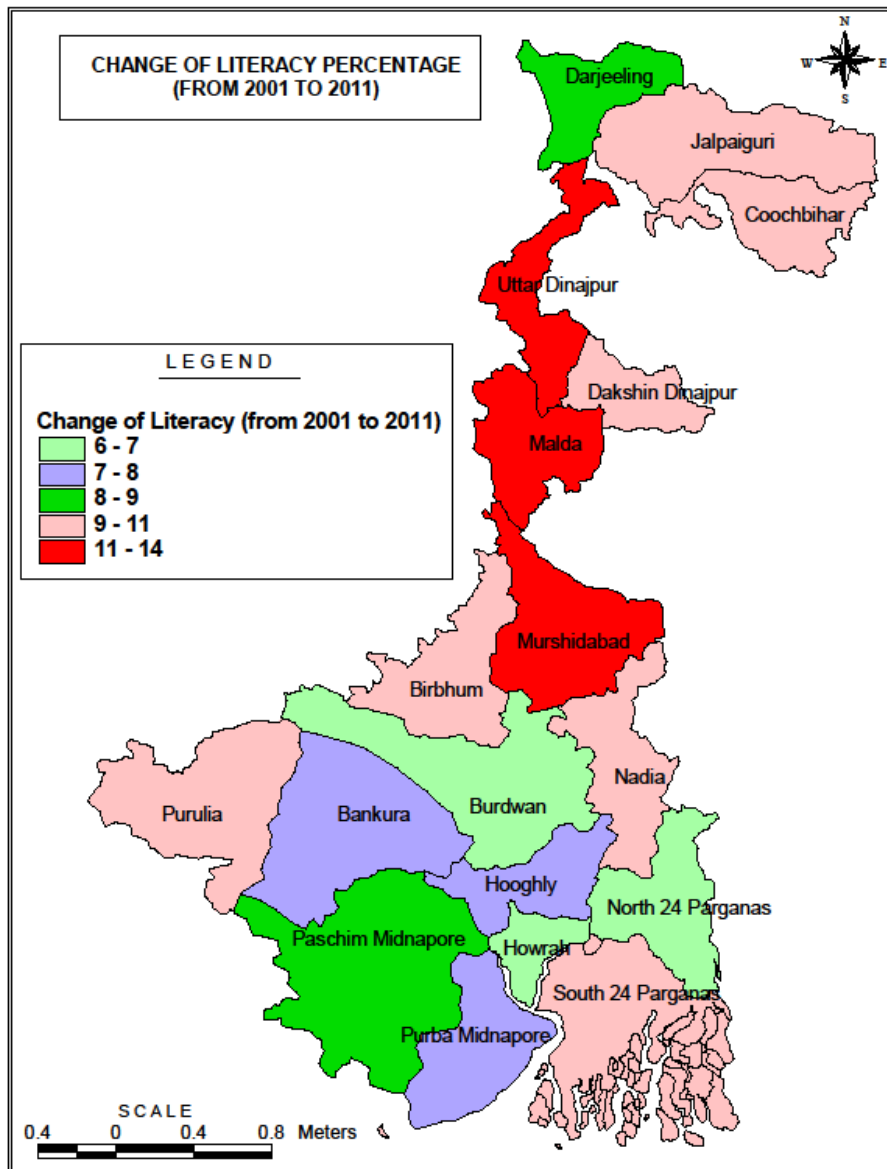
- Correlation (r) between Literacy and Percentage of Worker = - 0.823
- Correlation (r) between Literacy and Percentage of Non Agricultural Worker = 0.603
- Correlation (r) between Literacy and Percentage Urban Population = 0.624
- Correlation (r) between Literacy and Percentage of Female Worker = - 0.474
- Correlation (r) between Literacy and Percentage of Tribal population = - 0.30
- Correlation (r) between Literacy and Percentage of Muslim Population = - 0.51

**1.2. Temporal Change of General Literacy:** It is also interesting to note that the rate of change of literacy from 2001 to 2011 is low in the metropolitan districts of Kolkata and its neighbouring districts like Hugli, Haora, North Twenty four Parganas, South Twenty four Paraganas, Barddhaman. The rate of change of these districts varies between 3.83 to 6.96 is lower than state average( 8.44%). But the traditionally backward districts and low base literacy districts up to 2001 have shown a greater change, more than nine percent. Purulia, Jalpaiguri, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Maldah, Murshidabad, Birbhum are in this category. Only the Medinipur (Purba and Paschim) district has shown a big change but have a good base of literacy.(Map-2). Special emphasis has given on low literate districts to develop literacy by the different Government programme causes the higher rate of change of the mentioned districts.

MAP No. – 1(A and B).



MAP No.-2.



**SECTION: 2.**

This section of writing focussed on Male-Female literacy differentials in West Bengal and try to understand the exert nature of Male-Female differentials among different Castes in rural-urban frame. Spatial and Temporal change of Female literacy also covered in this portion of writing.

**2.1. Total Female Literacy and its change:** Picture of female literacy in West Bengal is said to be worse. Presently it is 70.54. The difference of Male and Female literacy is high, 11.15. (2011 Census). The highest Female literacy is observed in Kolkata (84.06) and lowest in Purulia district (50.52). Like general literacy distributional pattern, Female literacy is high not only in Kolkata Metropolitan district but also neighbouring district of Kolkata (Map No.-3). Those districts where general literacy is high, female literacy also high and vice-versa. But if we observed the Male-Female differential of literacy of different district of West Bengal does not follow any zonal pattern. For example Hugli and Barddhaman districts depict good literacy picture but Male-Female difference also high. Generally it is observed that the Male-Female difference is high where the literacy development is low. Male-Female literacy differential has changed significantly with the advancement of time.(Table No.-3 & Fig.-1) For every districts it is observed that the difference of Male and female literacy is went down from 2001 to 2011. The difference of Male-Female literacy for Purulia was 37.03 in 2001 but

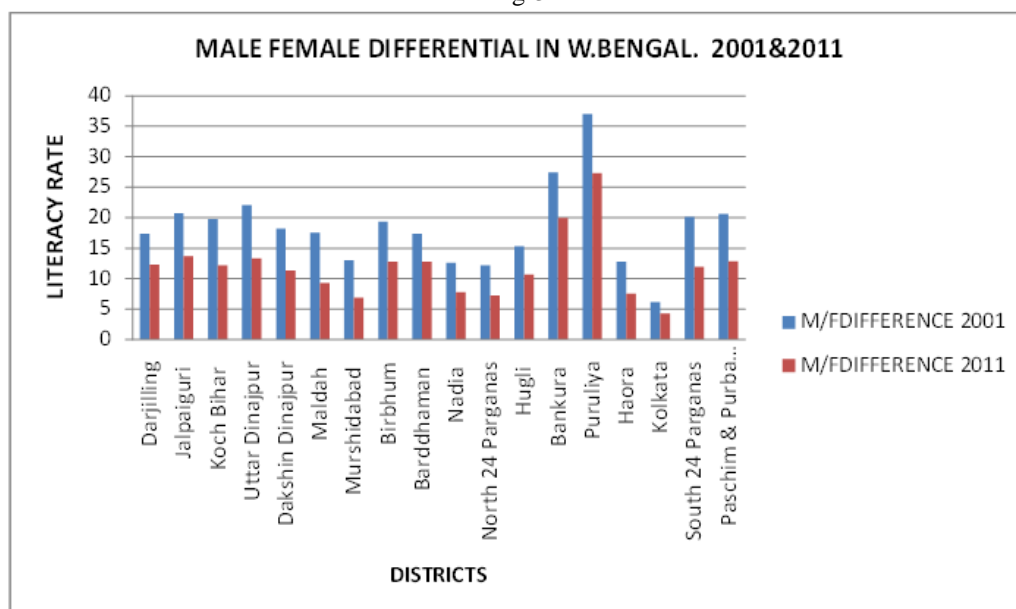
presently it is 27.34. So the difference diminishes up to 9.69 percent. More than 8 percent equalise for the district of Uttar Dinajpur, Maldah, South Twenty Four Parganas. Other districts of West Bengal also diminish the Male-Female literacy difference up to 5 percent, except Kolkata, Hugli, Barddhamn, Nadia. Form the above discussion it is clear that the female literacy of West Bengal has increase sufficiently and Male-Female differentials also going to diminish with the passage of time. But the heterogeneity of distribution of female literacy in different districts in 2001 and 2011 can be measured by using some measure of dispersion. The result of dispersion (S.D) shows that the distribution of Female literacy is more homogenously distributed among the all districts of West Bengal than the past. The S.D of 2001 and 2011 are 11.34 and 9.15 respectively and the Range of two consecutive census year are 40.80 and 33.54.(Table No.-4 & Fig.-2) Similarly the Coefficient of Variation (C.V) for the year 2001is 20.19 and for 2011 is 14.13. No doubt it a hopeful picture of literacy development as well as female advancement in West Bengal.

Table: 3.  
**MALE-FEMALE DIFFERENTIALS IN WEST BENGAL. YEAR-2001 AND 2011.**

Sl.	DIST/ STATE	M/F DIFFERENCE 2001	M/F DIFFERENCE 2011	Sl.	DIST/ STATE	M/F DIFFERENCE 2001	M/F DIFFERENCE 2011
1	Darjilling	17.36	12.28	11	North 24 Parganas	12.22	7.27
2	Jalpaiguri	20.74	13.72	12	Hugli	15.33	10.67
3	Koch Bihar	19.79	12.22	13	Bankura	27.41	20.00
4	Uttar Dinajpur	22.11	13.35	14	Puruliya	37.03	27.34
5	Dakshin Dinajpur	18.18	11.36	15	Haora	12.75	7.52
6	Maldah	17.57	9.28	16	Kolkata	6.12	4.28
7	Murshidabad	17.57	6.86	17	South 24 Parganas	20.16	11.95
8	Birbhum	13.07	12.78	18	Paschim & Purba Medinipur	20.62	12.86
9	Barddhaman	19.36	12.79		<b>WEST BENGAL</b>	<b>17.41</b>	<b>11.15</b>
10	Nadia	17.37	7.77				

Source: Census of West Bengal. 2001 and 2011.

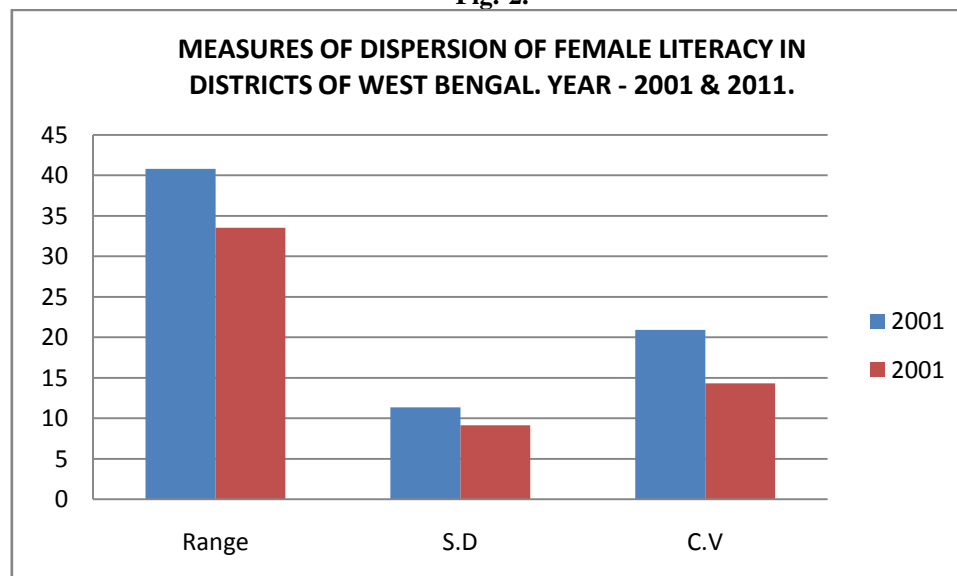
Fig-3



**Table No.-4.**  
**MEASURES OF DISPERSION OF FEMALE LITERACY IN DISTRICTS OF WEST BENGAL. YEAR - 2001 AND 2011.**

Year	Range	S.D	C.V
2001	40.80	11.34	20.19
2011	33.54	9.15	14.13

**Fig.-2.**



**2.2. Scheduled Caste (S.C) Female literacy:** Scheduled Caste (S.C) Female literacy of the state is 61.23 for the year 2011 which is far below (9.31%) than the total female literacy,70.54. The development of S.C Female literacy has jumped 46.90 to 61.23 for the period of 2001 to 2011.( Table-5, Map No-4.). The rate of change is highest for Medinipur (Purba and Paschim), 25.86 and lowest for Kolkata 10.59. More than 15 percent increment of S.C Female literacy is observed in the districts of Purulia, Hugli, Jalpaiguri, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur during ten years period (2001-2011).The distribution pattern of S.C Female literacy in the all district of West Bengal follows the similar pattern of total female literacy distribution which is discussed in earlier paragraph of the paper.

**2.3. Scheduled Tribe (S.T.) Female Literacy:** Scheduled Tribe (S.T.) Female literacy of West Bengal is very poor condition. Only 47.71 percent S.T females are enumerated as literate in 2011 census. Highest S.T Female literacy is observed in the Metropolitan district of Kolkata (76.57) and lowest is found in Uttar Dinajpur (35.48). The geographical distribution of S.T. Female literacy follows more or less similar pattern of total female literacy except Darjilling and Koch Bihar, where S.T. literacy is comparatively high. The increase of Tribal literacy is high during the last decade (2001-2011). 14.52 percent tribal literacy is increased in the state of West Bengal.

The rate of change is high, above 15 percent in the districts of Darjilling, Jalpaiguri, Uttar Dinajpur, Murshidabad, Birbhum Nadia, North Twenty four Parganas, Haora, Hugli and South Twenty four Paraganas. 10 to 15 Percent increase of literacy among the tribes is observed in the districts of Koch Bihar, Dakshin Dinajpur, Maldah, Barddhaman, Purulia and Medinipur (Purba and Paschim). Less than 10 Percent tribal literacy is observed in Kolkata and Bankura district.(Table-6,Map-5). Govt. initiative and different policies relating to S.C and S.T development rapidly increase the literacy rate.

**2.4. Rural-Urban Female Literacy:** Rural (65.51) and Urban (80.98) differentials for female is comparatively high, 15.47 in 2011. Highest Rural female literacy is found in Purba Medinipur district and highest urban female literacy is in North Twenty four parganas. Lowest rural and urban literacy is observed in Purulia districts.(Table-8). The districts exhibit higher rural female literacy better than state average (65.51) are Darjilling (67.2), Kochbihar (67.07), Barddhaman (66.39), Nadia (67.08), North Twenty four Parganas (73.08), Hugli (72.5) and Haora (75.29). Higher percentage of urban female literacy (more than state average, 80.98) is found in the districts of Darjilling (83.65), Kochbihar (85.54), Dakshin Dinajpur (86.14), Nadia (81.98), Hugli (83.95), Kolkata (84.52), Paschim Medinipur (84.98), Purba Medinipur (82.3). The geographical distribution of urban female literacy does not follow the pattern of general literacy because of two reasons, one is the percentage of urban population of some districts is minimum where the increase of small number of absolute

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increase affects the percentage value greatly, and second one is the Govt of West Bengal has emphasised on promoting female literacy in both areas, rural and urban.

Table -5.

**CHANGING PATTREN OF S.C. LITERACY (TOTAL, MALE & FEMALE) IN WB .FROM 2001- 2011**

Sl No	DIST/ STATE	2001 LITERACY S C RATE			2011 LITERACY RATE S.C			Change of Total Literacy	Change of Male Literacy	Change of Female Literacy
		TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE			
1	Darjilling	62.43	73.91	50.31	72.94	80.59	65.00	10.51	6.68	14.69
2	Jalpaiguri	61.78	73.37	49.62	73.04	80.11	65.54	11.26	6.74	15.92
3	Koch Bihar	64.35	75.82	52.29	73.57	80.67	66.01	9.22	4.85	13.72
4	Uttar Dinajpur	50.06	63.49	35.71	62.41	70.87	53.31	12.35	7.38	17.60
5	Dakshin Dinajpur	51.99	63.74	39.59	66.26	73.82	58.24	14.27	10.08	18.65
6	Maldah	51.17	62.75	38.87	61.04	68.58	52.91	9.87	5.83	14.04
7	Murshidabad	48.91	58.05	39.27	62.23	68.45	55.68	13.32	10.40	16.41
8	Birbhum	45.74	57.75	33.05	59.42	67.98	50.42	13.68	10.23	17.37
9	Barddhaman	51.99	63.74	39.59	62.74	71.50	53.60	10.75	7.76	14.01
10	Nadia	63.09	71.76	53.94	73.34	79.01	67.29	10.25	7.25	13.35
11	North 24 Parganas	70.74	70.79	61.41	79.70	85.37	73.69	8.96	14.58	12.28
12	Hugli	56.01	67.26	44.73	68.36	76.29	60.24	12.35	9.03	15.51
13	Bankura	42.92	58.22	27.11	54.03	65.74	42.10	11.11	7.52	14.99
14	Puruliya	45.15	63.01	26.35	56.07	69.82	41.63	10.92	6.81	15.28
15	Haora	61.13	70.5	51.4	71.33	77.29	65.12	10.20	6.79	13.72
16	Kolkata	70.54	77.25	62.26	79.31	85.02	72.85	8.77	7.77	10.59
17	South 24 Parganas	67.36	79.63	54.21	76.31	84.38	67.76	8.95	4.75	13.55
18	Paschim & Purba Medinipur	54.32	62.25	41.39	75.52	83.17	67.25	21.20	20.92	25.86
	<b>West Bengal</b>	<b>59.04</b>	<b>70.54</b>	<b>46.9</b>	<b>69.43</b>	<b>77.22</b>	<b>61.23</b>	<b>10.39</b>	<b>6.68</b>	<b>14.33</b>

**Source:** Census of West Bengal, 2001, 2011 and Data from BCW, W. Bengal Department.

**Note:** Purba and Paschim Medinipur are calculated together because at the time 2001 census Medinipur was undivided.

Table -6.

**CHANGING PATTREN OF S. T (TOTAL, MALE & FEMALE) LITERACY IN WB .FROM 2001- 2011**

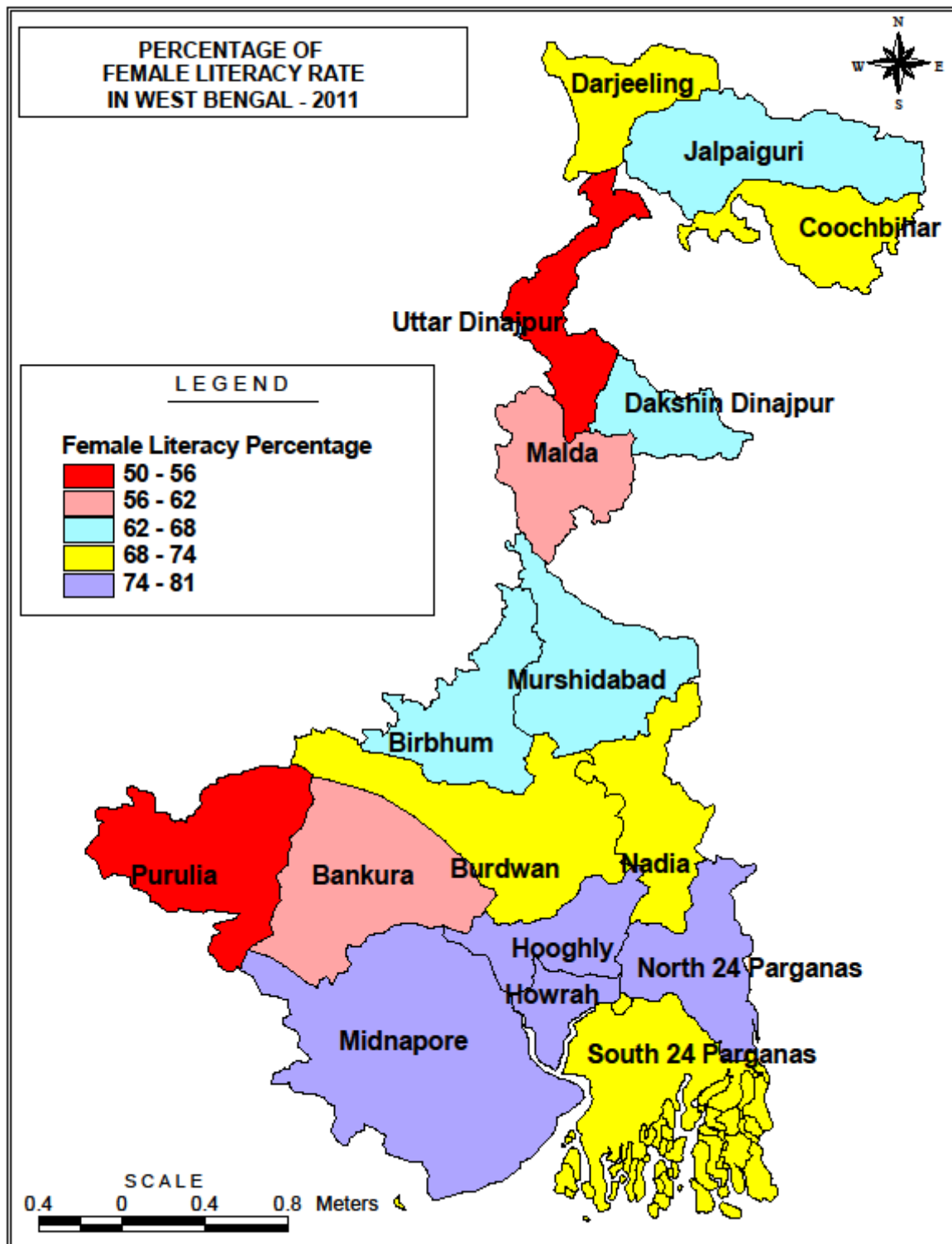
Sl No	DIST/ STATE	2001 LITERACY RATE S T			2011 LITERACY RATE S. T POP			Change of Total Literacy	Change of Male Literacy	Change of Female Literacy
		TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOT LIT	M LIT	F LIT			
1	Darjilling	55.48	67.07	45.85	74.26	81.50	67.16	18.78	14.43	21.31
2	Jalpaiguri	42.59	54.24	30.67	58.70	67.93	49.51	16.11	13.69	18.84
3	Koch Bihar	55.31	66.38	43.3	66.89	74.82	58.35	11.58	8.44	15.05
4	Uttar Dinajpur	28.68	39.51	17.63	43.76	51.96	35.48	15.08	12.45	17.85
5	Dakshin Dinajpur	42.82	55.14	30.22	57.02	65.54	48.50	14.20	10.40	18.28
6	Maldah	32.16	44.72	19.63	46.86	55.83	37.86	14.70	11.11	18.23
7	Murshidabad	35.79	46.17	25.01	51.34	59.15	43.32	15.55	12.98	18.31
8	Birbhum	31.2	44.17	18.17	47.48	57.57	37.67	16.28	13.40	19.50
9	Barddhaman	41.83	55.36	28.19	54.74	65.41	44.22	12.91	10.05	16.03
10	Nadia	40.63	51.78	29.2	57.75	65.35	49.98	17.12	13.57	20.78
11	North 24 Parganas	46.09	58.38	33.27	64.78	72.90	56.40	18.69	14.52	23.13
12	Hugli	45.45	59.23	31.94	60.67	71.39	50.29	15.22	12.16	18.35
13	Bankura	49.6	67.84	31.13	59.37	72.93	46.01	9.77	5.09	14.88
14	Puruliya	42.64	61.26	23.4	53.86	67.84	39.77	11.22	6.58	16.37
15	Haora	52.06	61.16	42.19	70.86	77.08	64.23	18.80	15.92	22.04
16	Kolkata	76.39	83.66	67.07	82.06	86.81	76.57	5.67	3.15	9.50
17	South 24 Parganas	43.29	56.33	29.88	59.72	69.03	50.17	16.43	12.70	20.29
18	Paschim & Purba Medinipur	47.97	61.24	33.29	62.15	72.88	51.27	14.18	11.64	17.98
	<b>West Bengal</b>	<b>43.4</b>	<b>57.38</b>	<b>29.15</b>	<b>57.92</b>	<b>68.16</b>	<b>47.71</b>	<b>14.52</b>	<b>10.78</b>	<b>18.56</b>

**Note:** Purba and Paschim Medinipur are calculated together because at the time 2001 census Medinipur was undivided.

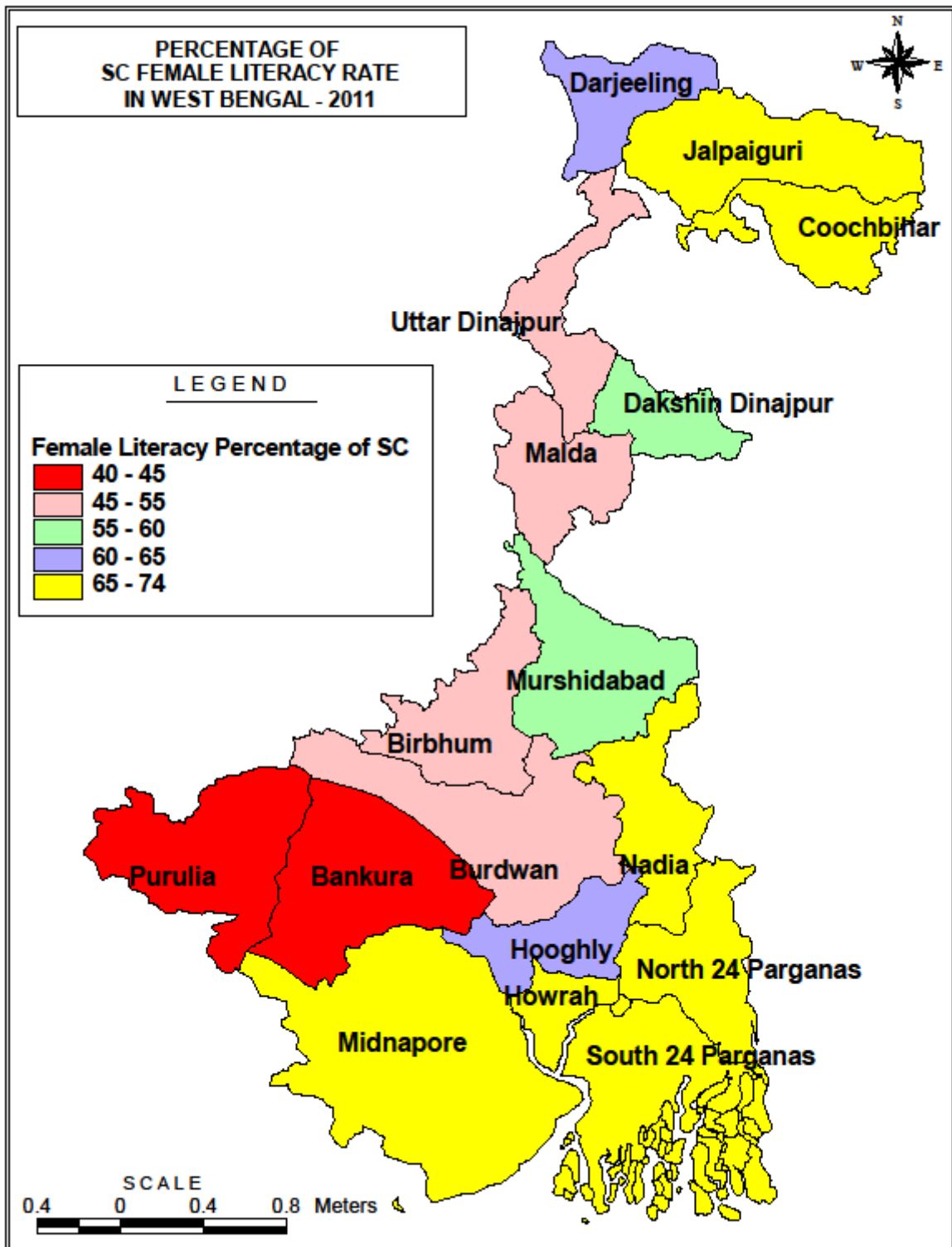
**Source:** Census of W. Bengal, 2001, 2011 and Published Data of BCW Department, Govt. of W.Bengal.



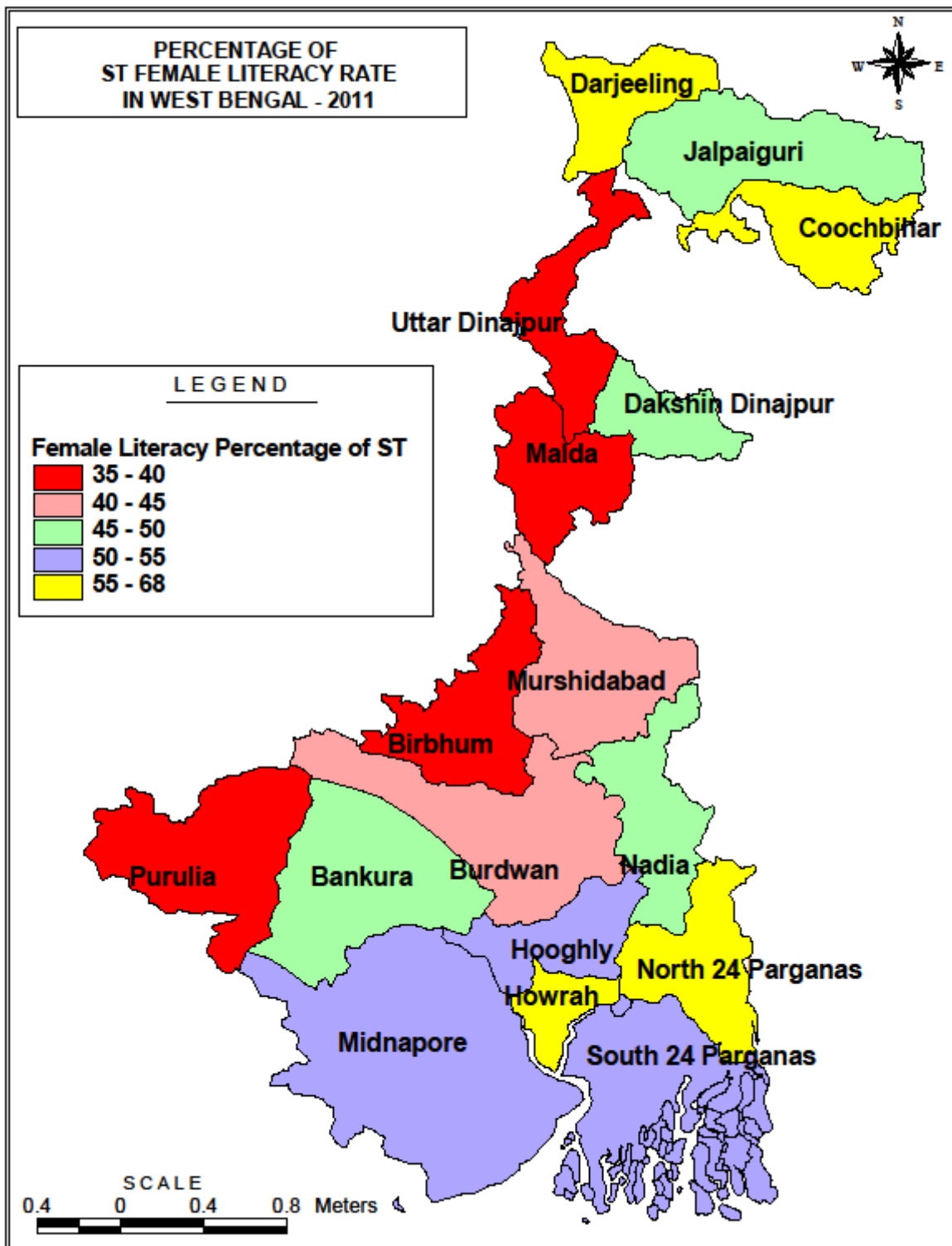
MAP No.- 3.



MAP No.-4.



MAP No.- 5.



SECTION: 3.

Literacy differentials among the different Caste and Tribe and their change is discussed in this section of writing. The geographical distribution of literacy among different Caste and Tribe is also highlighted in this paragraph.

**3.1. Literacy differentials among the different Caste:** Like other Indian state literacy differentials among different castes is found in this state including each and every district. The picture of S.C. literacy is somewhat better than S.T. literacy but both are far below than general literacy. In 2011 the S.C and S.T literacy are 69.43 and 57.92 but the average total literacy for the state is 77.08%. In the Table No.5 and 6 the S.C and S.T about literacy are clearly tabulated.

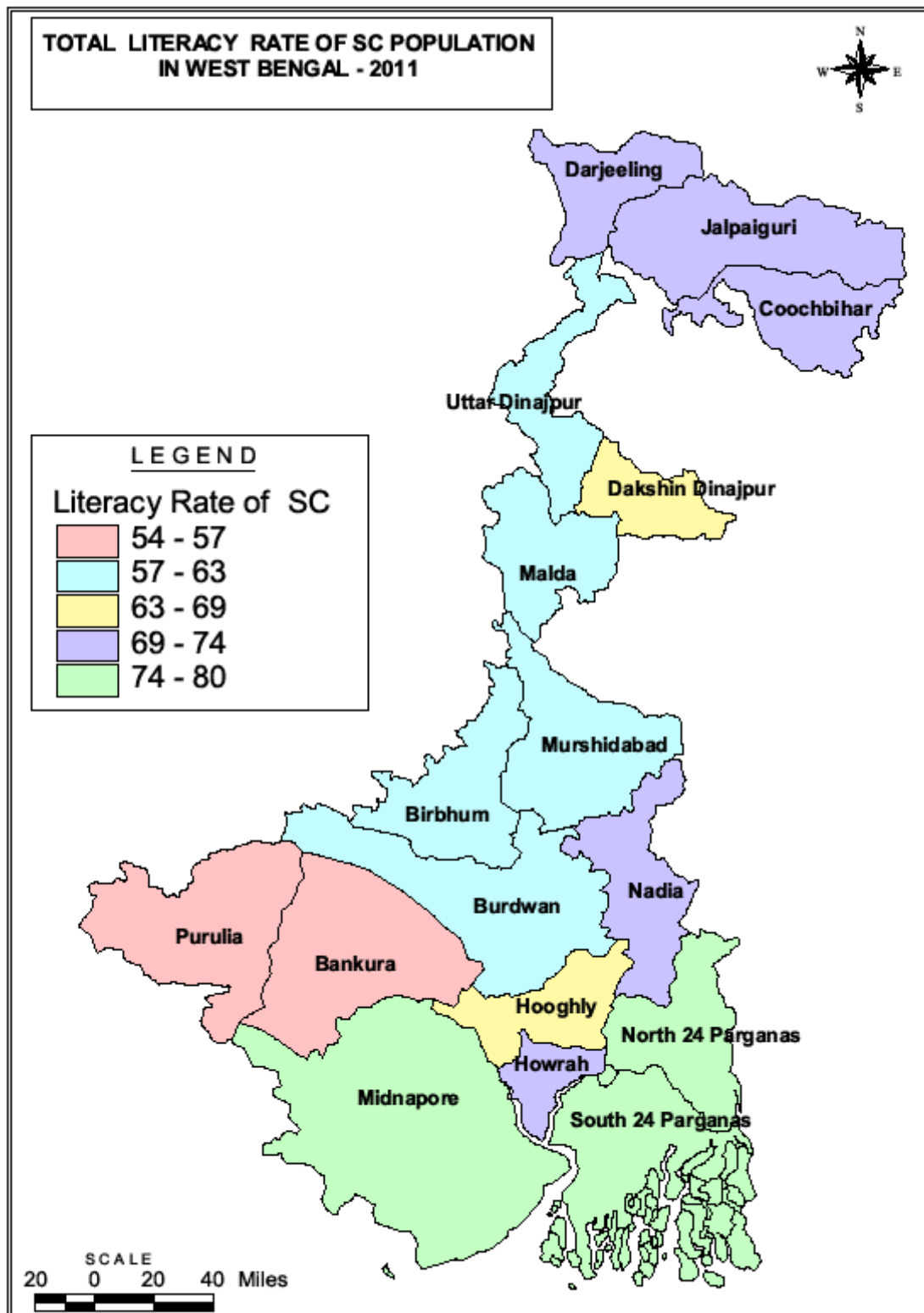
**3.1.(a). Scheduled Caste (S.C) Literacy:-** S.C. literacy as whole, 7.65 percent lower than the average literacy rate of West Bengal. Highest (79.31) S.C. literacy is found in the Kolkata Metropolitan district and lowest figure is observed in Bankura district (54.03). Medenipur (Purba and Paschim), North Twenty four Parganas, South Twenty four Parganas, Haora, Nadia, Koch Bihar, Jalpaiguri and Darjilling districts show better S.C. Literacy than state average (69.43). The distribution of district wise of literacy figure show slightly different pattern than total literacy. The Southern districts, near to Kolkata region show better literacy figure for S.C. except Hugli district where the literacy rate is 68.36. The northern districts, Darjilling, Jalpaiguri and Koch Bihar show a good S.C. literacy whereas the total literacy of those districts is not so good.

The development of S.C. literacy during ten years (2001-2011) is 10.39 which is better than total average figure, 8.44. for the state of West Bengal. District wise development of literacy figure shows a heterogeneous picture. Highest change is observed in the district of Dakshin Dinajpur, 14.27 percent and lowest change is observed in Kolkata, 3.83 percent. Good development of literacy is found in the districts of Darjilling, Jalpaiguri, Maldah, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur Barddhaman, Nadia, Hugli, Bankura, Purulia. (Table-7, Fig-3).

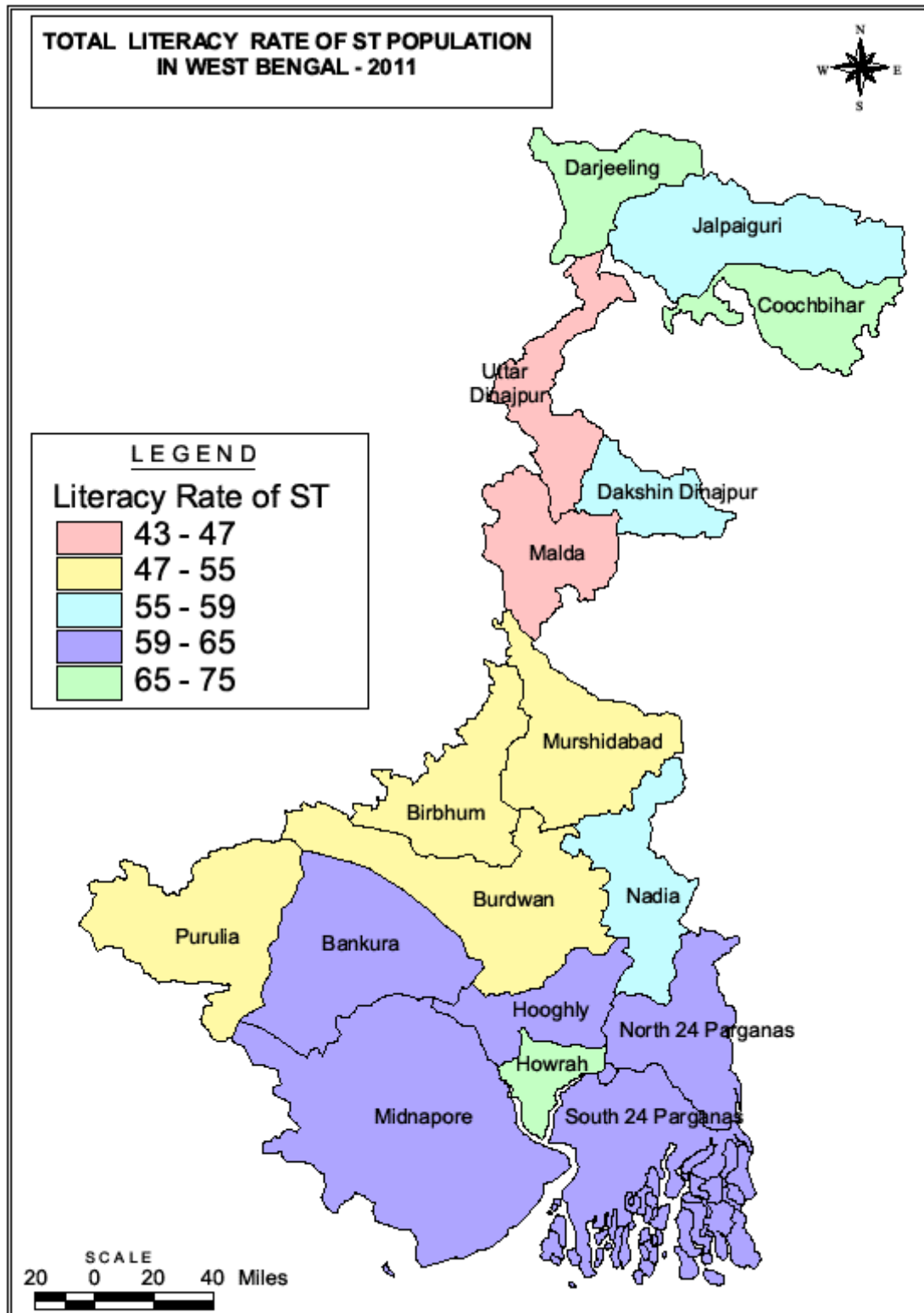
**3.1.(b). Scheduled Tribe (S.T) Literacy:-** S.T. literacy rate of West Bengal is 57.92 (2011) which is far below from state average general literacy (77.08). District wise variation is also prominent. Highest (82.06) and lowest (43.76) S.T. literacy is observed in Kolkata and Uttar Dinajpur District. The districts show a better S.T. literacy (more than 60 percent) are Darjilling, Kochbihar, North Twenty four Parganas, Hugli, Haora, Medinipur (Purba and Paschim). Dakshin Dinajpur, Murshidabad, Barddhaman, Nadia, Bankura, Purulia, South Twenty four Parganas districts show S.T. literacy between 50 to 60 percent. The Geographical distribution of Tribal literacy also differs slightly from average general literacy distribution because poor literacy district developed rapidly and the percentage of tribal population in different district are very low (below 3%). So, slight change of absolute number show a greater change in percentile figure.

From 2001 to 2011 the development of literacy is highest in Haora district 18.80 percent and lowest in Kolkata, 5.67 percent. Development of literacy (Change from 2001 to 2011) is better than state average (14.52) is observed in the districts of Darjilling, Jalpaiguri, Uttar Dinajpur, Maldah, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Nadia, North Twenty four Parganas, Hugli and South Twenty four Parganas. (Table-7, Fig-3).

Map No.-6.



Map No.-7.

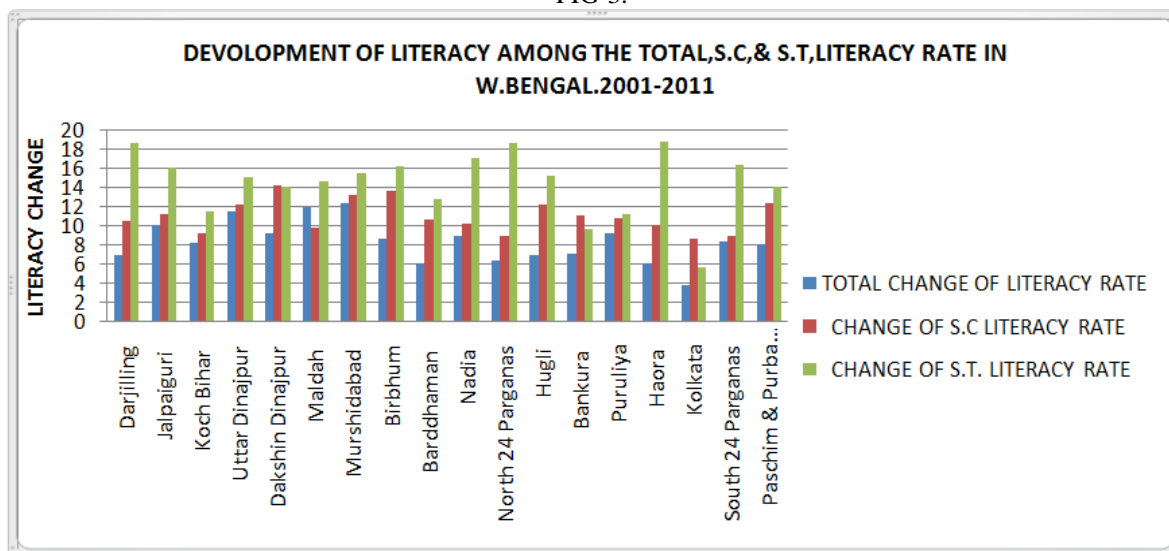


DEVELOPMENT OF LITERACY AMONG THE TOTAL S.C & S.T IN W.BENGAL. 2001-2011.

DISTRICT	TOTAL CHANGE OF LITERACY RATE	CHANGE OF S.C LITERACY RATE	CHANGE OF S.T. LITERACY RATE
Darjilling	7.05	10.51	18.78
Jalpaiguri	10.17	11.26	16.11
Koch Bihar	8.28	9.22	11.58
Uttar Dinajpur	11.5	12.35	15.08
Dakshin Dinajpur	9.22	14.27	14.20
Maldah	12	9.87	14.70
Murshidabad	12.48	13.32	15.55
Birbhum	8.74	13.68	16.28
Barddhaman	6.15	10.75	12.91
Nadia	9.03	10.25	17.12
North 24 Parganas	6.46	8.96	18.69
Hugli	6.96	12.35	15.22
Bankura	7.11	11.11	9.77
Puruliya	9.24	10.92	11.22
Haora	6.21	10.20	18.80
Kolkata	3.83	8.77	5.67
South 24 Parganas	8.41	8.95	16.43
Paschim & Purba Medinipur	8.18	21.20	14.18
<b>WEST BENGAL</b>	<b>8.44</b>	<b>10.39</b>	<b>14.52</b>

Table:-7. Source: Census of West Bengal. 2001 and 2011.

FIG-3.



SECTION: 4.

#### 4.1 Rural-Urban Literacy Differentials:

**4.1.(a) District Wise Distribution of R-U Literacy:** Urban literacy is high than rural literacy due to good availability of educational infrastructure, in-migration of educated persons in the urban field and another important factor is the perception of urban dweller about education. In the state of West Bengal the urban literacy is 84.78 and rural literacy is 72.13 (2011). This type of difference is present in every district in the state. North Twenty four Parganas shows the highest urban literacy with 89.80 percent.(Table-8). Whereas the urban metropolitan district Kolkata ranked seventh among the all district of west Bengal due to illiterate labour migration in this metropolitan district. Higher urban literacy (above 85%) is found in the districts of Dakshin Dinajpur (89.42), PurbaMedinipur (89.14), Hugli (87.75), Darjilling (87.48), Haora (87.14), Paschim Medinipur (87.01), Nadia (85.88), Low level of literacy is observed in the districts of Murshidabad (72.65) and maldah (76.82). The urban literacy is very close to state average (84.78).

The average rural literacy rate for West Bengal is 72.13 (2011). Purba Medinipur has the highest rural literacy rate among all districts of the state, 87.47. More than 80 percent rural literacy is found in another district, Haora shows the figure, 80.82 percent. Good rural literacy (75 to 80 percent) is observed in the districts of Haora (80.82), Hugli (79.22), North 24 Parganas (78.11), Paschim Medinipur (77.92), South Twenty four Parganas (76.78). Low rural literacy is found in Maldah (60.42), Murshidabad (66.27), Purulia (63.75) and Bankura (69.60) districts. (2011).

The district wise distribution of Rural-urban literacy is differ in some districts but the basic pattern of distribution is more or similar because Kolkata and Kolkata surrounding south Bengal districts posses higher level of literacy development in both rural and urban frame. On another side, North Bengal districts and Plateau districts have low level rural and urban literacy development.

**4.1.(b). R-U Differentials:** Now we will discuss about the rural-urban differentials of literacy in the different districts of West Bengal. The average rural urban difference for the state is 12.65 percent and 0.16 differential index (Mentioned in Methodology). Uttar Dinajpur shows highest rural-urban difference of literacy, 23.52 percent and 0.39 differentials index. Purba Medinipur has the lowest (1.67 percent) rural-urban difference with low differentials index, 0.02. Above 10 percent rural-urban literacy rate varies in the districts Darjilling, Jalpaiguri, Dakshin Dinajpur, Koch Bihar, Maldah, Birbhum, nadia, North Twenty four Parganas, Bankura and Purulia, (Table No-8.). Below 10 percent (0.12 differential index) R-U literacy differentials is observed in Barddhaman, Paschim Medinipur, Hugli, South Twenty four Parganas, Murshidabad and Haora districts. (Fig-4).

Fig. – 4.

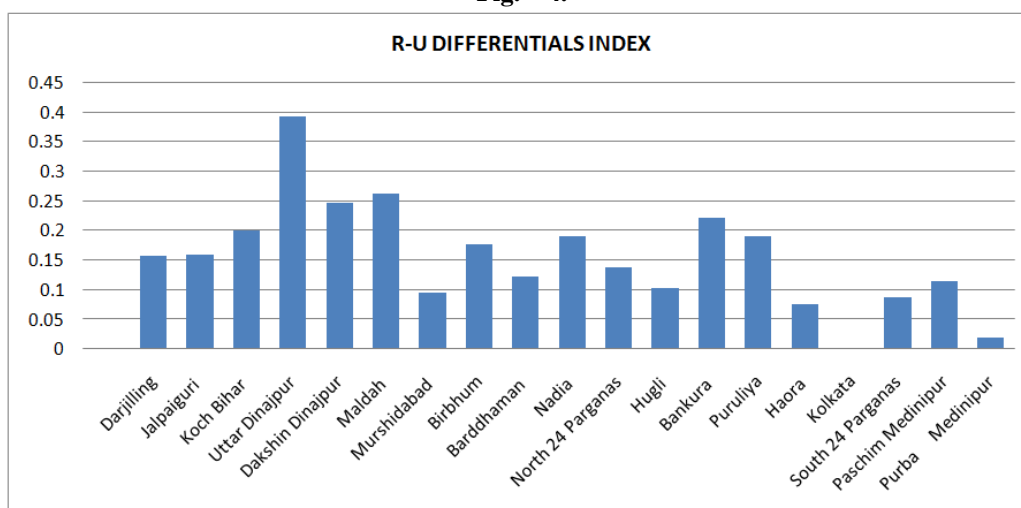


Table: 8.

URBAN-RURAL DIFFERENTIALS OF LITERACY IN W.BENGAL. YEAR – 2011.

Sl	DIST	TOTAL LIT(R+U)	RURAL LIT 2011			URBAN LIT 2011			DIFFERENCE			INDEX
			TOTAL	MAL E	FEMA LE	TOTAL	MAL E	FEMA LE	TOTAL	MAL E	FEMA LE	
1	Darjilling	79.92	74.97	82.5	67.2	87.48	91.23	83.65	12.51	8.73	16.45	0.16
2	Jalpaiguri	73.79	70.55	78.31	62.43	82.33	86.69	77.78	11.78	8.38	15.35	0.16
3	Koch Bihar	75.49	73.87	80.25	67.07	89.01	92.41	85.54	15.14	12.16	18.47	0.20
4	Uttar Dinajpur	60.13	57.15	64.06	49.77	80.67	84.31	76.69	23.52	20.25	26.92	0.39
5	Dakshin Dinajpur	73.86	71.18	77.42	64.61	89.42	92.61	86.14	18.24	15.19	21.53	0.25
6	Maldah	62.71	60.42	65.37	55.18	76.82	78.71	74.71	16.4	13.34	19.53	0.26
7	Murshidabad	67.53	66.27	69.52	62.84	72.65	77.15	68.02	6.38	7.63	5.18	0.09
8	Birbhum	70.9	69.25	76.01	62.18	81.74	86.75	76.55	12.49	10.74	14.37	0.18
9	Barddhaman	77.15	73.39	80.05	66.39	82.75	88.43	76.63	9.36	8.38	10.24	0.12
10	Nadia	75.88	71.5	76.65	67.08	85.88	89.63	81.98	14.38	12.98	14.9	0.19



*Literacy Trend of West Bengal and Its Differentials: A District Level Analysis.*

1	North 24 Parganas	84.95	78.11	82.86	73.08	89.8	92.79	86.66	11.69	9.93	13.58	0.14
1	Hugli	82.55	79.22	85.71	72.5	87.75	91.34	83.95	8.53	5.63	11.45	0.10
1	Bankura	70.95	69.6	80.06	58.66	85.23	90.97	79.24	15.63	10.91	20.58	0.22
1	Puruliya	65.38	63.75	77.96	48.93	76.24	84.68	67.21	12.49	6.72	18.28	0.19
1	Haora	83.85	80.82	86.06	75.29	87.14	88.61	79.09	6.32	2.55	3.8	0.08
1	Kolkata	87.14	NIL	NIL	NIL	87.01	89.08	82.25	0	0	0	0.00
1	South 24 Parganas	78.57	76.78	83.59	69.59	83.62	87.93	84.52	6.84	4.34	14.93	0.09
1	Paschim Medinipur	79.04	77.92	85.97	69.45	87.01	91.61	84.98	9.09	5.64	15.53	0.12
1	Purba Medinipur	87.66	87.47	93.1	81.45	89.14	93.41	82.3	1.67	0.31	0.85	0.02
	<b>West Bengal</b>	77.08	72.13	78.44	65.51	84.78	88.37	80.98	12.65	9.93	15.47	0.16

Source: Census of West Bengal. -2011.

**4.2. Literacy Development based on Composite Index:** Simple literacy rate of a district or state cannot be the real measure of literacy development because within this simplified data there are different types of differentials are exist, like Male-Female differentials, Rural- Urban differentials and Caste differentials etc. It is believed that where the difference is high, the development is low. For example in ideal condition Male and Female literacy should be equal or near to equal in any developed area. Keeping in mind this concept we calculate the composite development index taking the total literacy in one hand, on the otherhand Male-Female differentials, Rural-Urban Differentials and Caste differentials incorporated using the formula,

Total Literacy Rate

Composite Index of Development = -----

(M-F differentials + R-U differentials + Caste differentials)

So, higher the values of composite index mean higher literacy development and lower the values mean lower literacy development. In the Table 9 (Map-8) districts are arranged in descending order according to index value. Kolkata is in top position and Bankura is in bottom. It has observed in the table South Twenty four Parganas, Murshidabad, North Twenty four Parganas, Haora and Nadia are top listing districts in respect of composite index of development but according to literacy figure the rank of these districts are 7<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>. Due to low disparities of literacy among male-female, rural-urban and caste the districts like Murshidabad stands in front line but the districts like Hugli ranked 10<sup>th</sup> but the literacy rank of this district is 4<sup>th</sup>.

Table - 9.

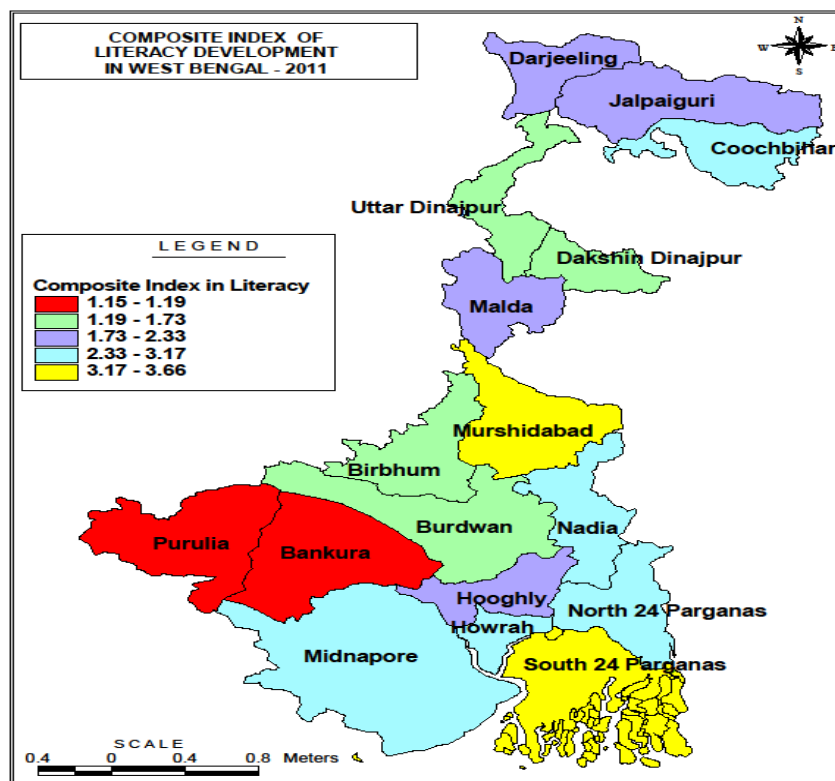
**COMPOSITE INDEX OF LITERACY DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL DISTRICTS IN WEST BENGAL.  
YEAR - 2011.**

Sl No	DIST/ STATE	TOT LIT 2011	M - F Difference	R-U Difference	Lit Difference between General Class and SC+ST	Composite Index of Literacy Development
1	Kolkata	87.14	4.28	0	7.29	7.53
2	South 24 Parganas	78.57	11.95	6.84	2.66	3.66
3	Murshidabad	67.53	6.86	6.38	6.23	3.47
4	North 24 Parganas	84.95	7.27	11.69	7.84	3.17
5	Haora	83.85	7.52	6.32	14.11	3.00
6	Nadia	75.58	7.77	14.38	4.30	2.86
7	Paschim & Purba Medinipur	83.35	12.86	6.38	12.94	2.59
8	Koch Bihar	75.49	12.22	15.14	2.65	2.52
9	Darjilling	79.92	12.28	12.51	9.54	2.33
10	Hugli	82.55	10.67	8.53	20.23	2.09
11	Jalpaiguri	73.79	13.72	11.78	11.35	2.00
12	Maldah	62.71	9.28	16.4	6.42	1.95
13	Barddhaman	77.15	12.79	9.36	22.38	1.73

14	Uttar Dinajpur	60.13	13.35	23.52	-0.48	1.65
15	Dakshin Dinajpur	73.86	11.36	18.24	17.94	1.55
16	Birbhum	70.9	12.78	12.49	21.09	1.53
17	Puruliya	65.38	27.34	12.49	15.22	1.19
18	Bankura	70.95	20.00	15.63	25.85	1.15
	<b>West Bengal</b>	77.08	11.15	12.65	12.81	2.11

Source: Basic Data from Census of West Bengal, 2011.

MAP No.- 8.



## II. Conclusion

The overall literacy picture of West Bengal is not satisfactory even in the year 2011 though the percentage of literate persons is 3.04 percent more than national average. We are hopeful about future because the development during last decade is well and most important thing is that the literacy differentials among Male-Female, Rural-Urban and differentials among different caste has going to narrowed down. The female literacy has increase sufficiently in both rural urban frames.

Regional imbalance and inequality is observed among different districts which maintained a zonal pattern. The literacy is high in Kolkata and surrounding districts and comparative low in North Bengal districts and Plateau districts of Bengal. Such type of regional imbalance should be eradicated as early as possible. Tribal literacy has increased significantly (14.52%) during the period 2001 to 2011 but the present percent of tribal literates is only 57.92. This difference is undesirable.

Poverty is one of the barrier against literacy and educational development. Poverty also compels the parents to involve their children to works, rather than sending them to schools. So any literacy programme cannot be success without poverty eradication programme. In this regard the policy implementation of Govt. of West Bengal is satisfactory. Recently the 'Kannya Sree' project is highly successful to reduce drop out of females from the schools. It should not be the task of government only but each and every section of the society should be involved in such programmes.

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