

The pattern of Urban Literacy in Different Statutory Towns of West Bengal : An Appraisal

Abstract

A striking and vivid feature of literacy in India lies in its differential character. It exists across all hierarchies of region – state and district wise, between rural and urban, strata of society- among caste and gender .This paper undertakes to unfold the attributes and dimension of literacy level in different statutory towns¹ of West Bengal in relation to class of towns and caste and gender composition of population in each class of towns. Higher average literacy rate is found among class I towns and tend to decrease with lower class of towns. There also exists a wide disparity in literacy rate among scheduled male- female population. Hence this paper is an attempt to examine the underlying factors which has moulded the mosaic of literacy level among towns of West Bengal.

Keywords: Statutory Towns, Literacy, Class of Towns, Caste, Gender.

Introduction

The state of literacy in India over the decades has been dismal .The reasons are manifold out of which Colonial rule is one. During colonial India education was only confined to elite by excluding the weaker section of society resulting in mass illiteracy. Post-independent India experienced a major push to achieve a higher literacy which is about 74.04 % in 2011(census 2011) from mere 27.2% in 1951 (census 1951).The figure of literacy at national level shows wide variation across different states. As per the census 2011 the average literacy of West Bengal is 77.08 % a slight more than national level. The census unfolds the highest literate district is Kolkata with 81.31% while Purulia stands at bottom with 56.14%.The report further brings out the differences in literacy between rural and urban areas which is 72.18% and 84.78 % respectively. The urban areas shows better achievement because of nature of economy-trade or industry which demands a minimal level of education to enter into workforce on the other hand social and cultural amenities are more in number. Literacy rate among different classes of statutory towns in the state is not the same. The higher class of towns show higher literacy rate than smaller towns on account of better employment opportunity easy access to educational institutes. The social composition and availability of cultural amenities also contribute to such variation.

Study Area

The statutory towns of West Bengal have been selected for pursuing the study. The Census of India has classified the towns in India into 6 categories out of which class I,II &III has been selected as unit of analysis which as follows:

Classes of towns	Population size	No of towns in West Bengal
Class I	100000 and more	59
Class II	50000-100000	33
Class III	20000-49999	25

Source: computed by the author from Census of India 2011.

The rest class of towns has been excluded since they are few in number.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out whether literacy rate varies with class of towns i.e. higher class town has higher rate of literacy level and vice -versa.
2. To find out the magnitude of intravariation of literacy in each class of towns.
3. To find out the relation between social composition (Scheduled caste and tribe) and educational institutes to literacy level.

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4. To find out gender disparity of literacy among SC and ST population within each class of towns.

Methodology and Database

To fulfil the objectives of study- data has been collected from District Census Handbook 2011 for the state of West Bengal. The collected data has been classified, tabulated and analysed by applying suitable statistical tools and represented cartographically.

In order to fulfil the objectives of study the following method has been adopted accordingly-

1. Co-efficient variation (**CV**) = $\frac{SD}{\text{Mean}} \times 100$,
Where SD-Standard Deviation

It has been used to find out the intravariation of literacy in each class of town. Higher the value - the greater the variation and vice-versa.

2. For the purpose to measure the gender disparity of literacy following formula has been used (After modified Gopal Krishnan and Madhav Shyam, 1971)- **GD=M-F/T**

Where, GD- Gender disparity of literacy of a particular caste, M- Percentage of Male literacy of a caste F-percentage of female literacy of a caste, T- Percentage of total literacy of that caste.

Review of Literature

Gopal Krishnan & Madhav Shyam (1978)- presented the influence of urban areas on rural areas in literacy in India. Urban areas are marked by higher literacy than rural Areas. Degree of urbanisation and interaction between urban-rural are two important force upon disparity in literacy. To get better insight on rural –urban difference in literacy -India was broadly classified into 3 broad categories a. Low differential index- found along the coastal part of India b. Moderate differential index-Haryana and southern Half of Andhra Pradesh c. High Differential Index-

recorded in Non-Christian tribal areas namely Arunachal Pradesh, Northern Peninsula etc and among Muslim dominated districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

S Raju (1988)-elaborated the dimension of female literacy both for non- scheduled and scheduled caste segment in cities. It reveals that caste disparity is greater than sex disparity in literacy. Female literacy has close association with male counterparts for both non-scheduled and scheduled population.

Koyel Paul (2012)-identified spatial differences in literacy between gender and social classes in Burdwan district West Bengal. It brings out that impact of social class is only confined to rural areas than urban areas.

Syed Waseem Ahmad Ashraf and Sabbir Ahmed (2013)-attempted to examine the influence of educational institution on literacy level. It finds positive association –higher literacy is found in areas where educational institutes are available with easy access.

Shiv Prakash Katiyar (2016)-presented gender disparity in literacy across the states of India. Rural areas are marked by higher gender disparity than urban areas. There exists an inverse relationship between literacy and gender disparity. With increasing total literacy-gender disparity gets reduced.

Analysis and Discussion

Literacy Pattern–Class I Towns

The literacy level of class I town shows an impressive figure which is 87.33% much higher than state level literacy. The highest literate town is Khardah (94.37%) while Jamuria records lowest literacy level with 71.65%. The literacy level of class I town has been categorised for analysis.

Table-1 Literacy level of different towns

Literacy Level (%)	Name of Towns	% distribution of towns to total class I towns
71.50-75.50 (Very low)	Kulti ,Jamuria	3.38
75.50-79.50 (Low)	Raniganj, Kharagpur, Medinipur	3.38
79.50-83.50 (Moderate)	Balurghat, Mahestala , Titagarh, Santipur, Champdani	10.16
83.50-87.50 (High)	Dugapur, Siluguri, Bankura, Purulia, Bhatpara, Basirhat, Nabadwip, English Bazar, Kolkata, Siluguri, Bansberia, Haora, Bally	27.11
87.50-91.50 (Very High)	Asansole, Bardhaman, Rajpur-Sonarapur, Naihati Kalyani, Rajarhat-Gopalpur, Kamarhati, Barasat, Habra Bongaon,, Bidhanagar, Madhyamgram, Baidyabati Barrackpore, Kanchpara, Halishar, Krishnanagar, Berhampore, Srerampore, Rishra, Hugli-Chinsurah, Uttarpara-Kotrung,	38.98
91.50-95.50 (Too High)	Darjeeling, Haldia, S. Dumdum, Panihati, Ashokenagar-Kalyannagar, North Dumdum, Baranagar, North Barrackpore, Dumdum Khardah	16.95

Source: Compiled by author from Census of India, 2011

Table 1 shows the distribution of towns falling under various categories of literacy level. It reveals that as many as 24 towns having literacy level in the range between 87.50% to 91.50%, whereas 10 towns fall under too high category of literacy rate. Both these 2 categories comprise of more than half of the class I towns which give an impression that these towns tend to have higher literacy. Most of these

towns are administrative headquarter for the respective districts which act as pull factor. On the other hand lowest literacy rate is found along the belt of Kulti, Jamuria, and Raniganj. These towns are mainly from industrial and mining areas of West Bengal, a centre of in-migration of unskilled labour from adjacent states like Jharkhand and Bihar.

The intravariation of literacy level among class I towns is 5.03% which shows less variation in literacy level. The high level of literacy may be attributed to better employment opportunity, better accessibility to educational institutions etc.

Fig.1 Literacy level of class I towns

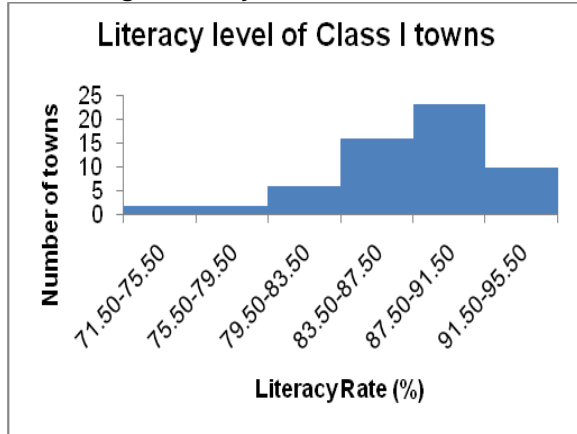


Fig 3 exhibits the spatial distribution of literacy level of towns under class I which brings out polarisation of higher literacy in the eastern part of West Bengal mainly in the district of Nadia, Hugli and North 24 Pargana. Apart from eastern part higher literacy found in pockets of Northern and Western part of West Bengal. It is interesting to note that towns with low to moderate literacy rate found around the towns of higher literacy rate.

Co-relation between SC and ST population to Total Population and Literacy Rate(%) among Class-I towns

There is a general perspective that a high proportion of SC and ST population to total population and overall literacy rate are inversely related. However the data analysis in this study through scatter diagram (Fig.2) reveals otherwise which shows no such relation exists in class I towns, even if SC & ST population constitute a sizeable proportion of 25% or above in some towns to total population. This may be attributed to in-migration of literate people from small urban units in search of better job, better infrastructure and opportunity, better liveable social and cultural situation which these towns provide and act as pull factor.

Fig.2 Co-relation between SC and ST population to Total Population and Literacy Rate(%) among Class-I town

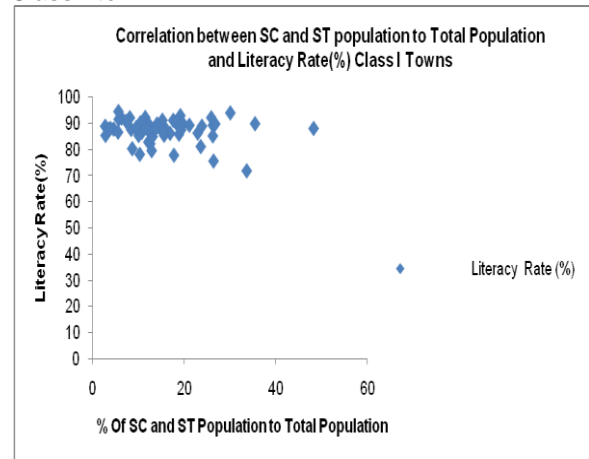
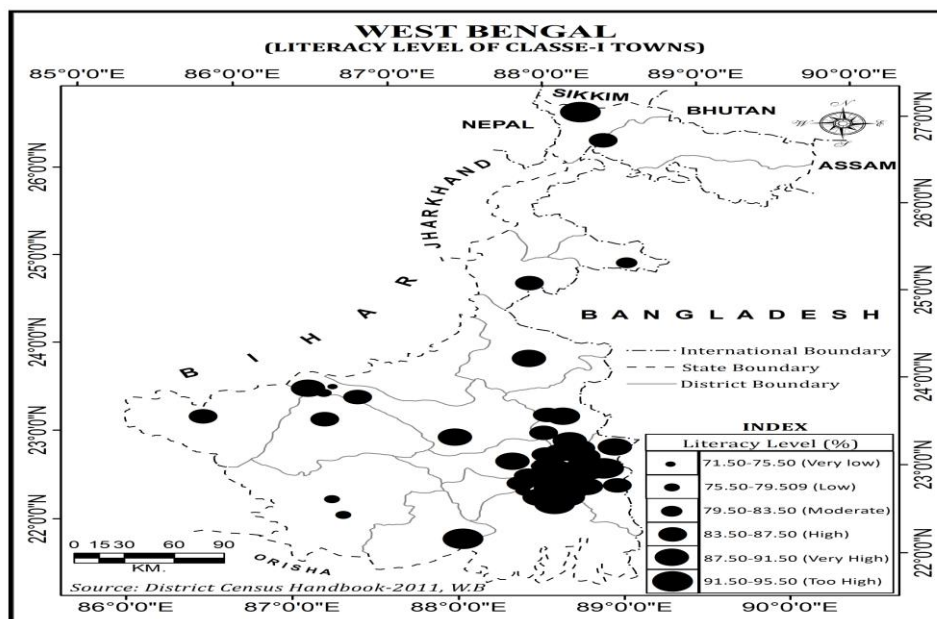


Fig.3 Literacy Level of Class I towns



**Gender disparity of literacy of SC and ST population among class I towns:
Table 2 Gender disparity of literacy of SC and ST population**

Differential Index	Name of Town	
	SC Population	ST Population
Below 0.10 (Low Differential index)	Panihati, North Dumdum, North Barrackpore, Khardah, Dumdum, Kamarhati, South-Dumdum, Darjeeling	Dumdum, Khardah, Siliguri, Darjeeling, Raiganj, Mahestala, South Dumdum, Rajarhat, Gopalpur, Panihati, Kamarhati, Nabadwip
0.10-0.20 (Moderate Differential index)	Bardhaman, Siliguri, Balurghat, Raiganj, Mahestala, Rajpur- Sonarpur, Haldia, Kharagpur, Medinipur, Rajarhat, Gopalpur, Bhatpara, Barasat, Baranagar, Barrackpore, Madhyamgaram, Habra, Kanchpara, Basirhat, Halisahar, Ashokenagar, Kalyanagar, Titagarh, Bongaon, Krisnanagar, Santipur, Nabadwip, Kalyani, Berhampore, English Bazar, Kolkata, Siliguri (Part), Serampore, Naihati, Bidhannagar, Hugli, Chandannagar, Uttarpara-Kotrung, Rishra, Baidyabati, Bansberia, Bhdraeswar, Haorah, Bally, Uluberia	Balurghat, Bankura, Rajpur- sonarpur, Haldia, Bhatpara, Barasat, North Dumdum, Baranaga, Madhyamgaram, Barrackpore, Habra, North Barrackpore, Kanchpara, Basirhat, Rishra, Naihati, Ashokenagar, Kalyanagar, Titagarh, Bongaon, Krisnanagar, Santipur, Berhampore, Kolkata, English Bazar, Siliguri (part), Serampore, Bidhannagar, Hugli, Chandannagar, Baidyabati, Bhdraeswar,
Above 0.20 (High Differential index)	Kulti, Asansole, Durgapur, Raniganj, Bankura, Purulia, Jamuria, Champdani	Asansole, Durgapur, Bardhaman, Kulti, Jamuria, Raniganj, Purulia, Kharagpur, Medinipur, Halisahar, Kalyani, Uttarpara-Kotrung, Champdani, Bansberia

Source: Compiled by author from District Census Handbook 2011 for WB.

In case of SC population lowest gender disparity is found in Dumdum (0.04) and Kamarhati (0.04) followed by Panihati (0.08), Khardah (0.08), Darjeeling (0.08), North Barrackpore (0.08), North Dumdum (0.09), South Dumdum (0.09) while highest disparity is noticed in Purulia (0.38) followed by Raniganj (0.35), Jamuria (0.34), Kulti (0.34), Bankura (0.29), Asansole (0.27), Durgapur (0.27), Champdani (0.23).

Among ST population lowest gender disparity found in Dumdum (-0.01), Darjeeling (0.05), Mahestala (0.07), South Dumdum (0.07), Nabadwip (0.07), Panihati (0.08), Kamarhati (0.08), Rajarhat-gopalpur (0.09), Raiganj (0.10). Highest gender disparity Jamuria (0.47), Raniganj (0.44), Asansole (0.38), Kulti (0.37), Bansberia (0.30), Kharagpur (0.27), Kalyani (0.26), Durgapur (0.26), Medinipur (0.25), Uttarpara (0.23).

A salient trend is emerging for both SC and ST population in respect of gender disparity i.e. low gender disparity is found where total literacy is high and vice versa e.g. towns like Jamuria, Raniganj, Asansole are on top of the highest gender gap among SC and ST population where total literacy rate is low. It is also found that industrial belt is marked by highest gender disparity as well as nature of economy of region has played a determining role for high gender disparity e.g. Purulia.

Educational Institutes and Literacy Level

Educational institutes are the base for imparting formal educations. There exists a positive relation between educational facilities and literacy level- higher the availability of educational institutes

better the level of literacy depending on easy access and availability of institutes. Insufficient number of educational institutes stands as hindrances to attain higher literacy level.

To ascertain the association between educational institutes and its impact on literacy level- the educational institutes has been grouped into 5 distinct categories 1. Primary 2. Middle school 3. Secondary school 4. Senior secondary school 5. Degree colleges. Here only govt and govt aided school and colleges has been taken because firstly, these institutes aim to enhance the literacy level by providing free education under present economic structure secondly inaccessibility to obtain data of private institutes. Hence entire analysis is based on data available from Census of India 2011 for govt and govt aided schools and colleges for the towns concerned.

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Table 3.No of Educational Facilities and Total Composite Score

SL NO	CLASS I		No of Educational Facilities															
	NAME TOWNS	OF	P	PR	PR W	M	MR	MRW	S	SR	SRW	SS	SSR	SSR W	CLG	CLGR	CLG RW	TCSR
1	Asansole		213	3	3	3	41	82	441	1	3	30	4	16	3	9.5	95	195
2	Durgapur		149	7.5	7.5	44	6	12	44	5	15	27	6	24	3	9.5	95	153.5
3	Bardhaman		174	6	6	9	31	62	21	18	54	28	5	20	3	9.5	95	237
4	Kulti		244	2	2	3	41	82	17	25.5	76.5	6	51.5	206	1	3.5	35	401.5
5	Jamuraia		52	41.5	41.5	2	48	96	14	30	90	0	47	188	0	55	550	965.5
6	Raniganj		56	37	37	2	48	96	4	54	162	0	39	156	2	21.5	215	666.0
7	Siliguri		208	4	4	67	3	6	49	4	12	39	2	8	5	3.5	35	65
8	Darjeeling		28	56	56	0	28.5	57	12	37.5	112.5	21	14.5	58	4	5.5	35	338.5
9	Balurghat		40	50	50	0	35	70	3	56	168	10	31.5	126	2	21.5	215	629
10	Bankura		113	17	17	2	48	96	5	51.5	154.5	12	30	120	1	44.5	445	832.5
11	Raiganj		59	35	35	13	23	46	10	41	123	8	42.5	170	2	21.5	215	589.0
12	Mahestala		86	20.5	20.5	3	41	82	20	19.5	58.5	17	21	84	2	21.5	215	460.0
13	Rajpur sonarpur		122	13	13	49	4	8	28	13	39	22	10.5	42	1	44.5	445	547
14	Purulia		78	23.5	23.5	0	57.5	115	15	27.5	82.5	4	57	228	2	21.5	215	664
15	Haldia		78	23.5	23.5	18	18	36	18	23.5	70.5	15	23	92	1	44.5	445	667
16	Kharagpur		119	14	14	1	64.2	128.4	9	44	132	23	8	32	2	21.5	215	531.4
17	Medinipur		141	9	9	24	13	26	26	14	42	18	19.5	78	4	5.5	55	210
18	South Dumdum		149	7.5	7.5	1	64.2	128.4	41	6	18	38	3	12	0	55	550	715.9
19	Rajarhat Gopalpur		116	15.5	15.5	36	7	14	36	8	24	9	39	156	1	44.5	445	654.5
20	Bhatpara		195	5	5	11	26	52	24	16	48	21	14.5	58	0	55	550	713.0
21	Panihati		116	15.5	15.5	123	2	4	132	3	9	162	17	68	1	44.5	445	541.5
22	Kamarhati		97	18	18	0	57.5	115	39	7	21	21	14.5	58	2	21.50	215	427.0
23	Barasat		68	28	28	7	33.5	67	7	47	132	21	14.5	58	6	2	20	305.0
24	North Dumdum		56	37	37	0	21	15	18	23.5	70.5	0	33.5	134	0	55	550	806.5
25	Baranagar		49	44.5	44.5	33	9.5	19	33	10.5	31.5	0	12.5	50	1	44.5	445	590.0
26	Madhyamgaram		126	11	11	47	5	10	35	8	24	16	22	88	1	44.5	445	578.0
27	Barrackpore		62	32.5	32.5	12	24.5	49	1	57	171	11	33.5	134	1	44.5	445	831.5
28	Habra		66	30	30	21	15	30	20	19.5	58.5	5	55	120	2	21.5	215	453.5
29	North Barrackpore		52	41.5	41.5	19	17	34	19	21.5	64.5	8	42.5	170	0	55	550	860.0
30	Kanchpara		48	46.5	46.5	14	22	44	14	30	90	14	25	100	1	44.5	445	723.5
31	Basirhat		56	37	37	3	41	82	6	49	147	6	51.5	206	1	44.5	445	917.0
32	Halisahar		64	31	31	1	64.2	128.4	4	54	162	6	51.5	206	0	55	550	925.0
33	Ashokenagar		86	20.5	20.5	2	48	96	9	44	132	11	33.5	134	3	9.5	95	478.5

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	Kalyanagar																
34	Titagarh	85	22	22	10	28.5	57	10	41	123	7	47	188	0	55	550	835.0
35	Dumdum	31	55	55	5	36	72	10	41	123	19	18	72	1	44.5	445	767.0
36	Bongaon	60	34	34	3	41	82	15	27.5	82.5	8	42.5	170	1	44.5	445	813.5
37	Khardah	37	52	52	1	64.2	128.4	13	33.5	100.5	0	55	220	1	44.5	445	945.9
38	Krisnanagar	68	28	28	4	28.5	57	12	37.5	112.5	22	10.5	42	3	9.5	95	334.5
39	Santipur	52	41.5	41.5	0	28.5	57	13	33.5	100.5	0	39	156	1	44.5	445	800.0
40	Nabadwip	68	28	28	3	41	82	4	54	162	10	37.5	150	1	44.5	445	867.0
41	Kalyani	17	57	57	0	28.5	57	0	46	138	6	51.5	206	1	44.5	445	903.0
42	Berhampore	77	25	25	1	64.2	128.4	6	49	147	12	30	120	3	9.5	95	515.4
43	English Bazar	137	10	10	34	8	8	29	12	36	22	10.5	42	0	55	550	541.0
44	Kolkata	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45	Siliguri (part)	62	32.5	32.5	30	12	24	19	21.5	64.5	13	27.5	110	5	3.5	35	266.0
46	Serampore	32	53.5	53.5	8	32	64	12	37.5	112.5	18	19.5	78	2	21.5	215	523.0
47	Naihati	54	39	39	20	16	32	0	58	174	0	58	232	0	55	550	922.0
48	Bidhannagar	25	58	58	12	24.5	49	0	51.5	153	0	47	188	1	44.5	445	894.0
49	Hugli	88	19	19	33	19.5	39	33	10.5	31.5	24	7	28	1	44.5	445	562.5
50	Chandannagar	73	26	26	31	11	22	25	15	45	14	25	100	2	21.5	215	408.0
51	Uttarpara Kotrung	49	49	49	2	48	96	13	33.5	100.5	14	25	100	1	21.5	215	786
52	Rishra	32	32	32	2	48	96	11	39	117	11	33.5	124	0	55	550	845.5
53	Baidyabati	42	42	42	22	14	28	13	33.5	100.5	13	27.5	110	1	44.5	445	732.5
54	Champdani	38	38	38	7	33.5	67	9	44	132	7	47	188	1	44.5	445	883.0
55	Bansberia	47	47	47	16	19.5	39	17	25.5	76.5	7	47	188	0	55	550	796.5
56	Bhdraeswar	48	48	48	3	41	82	6	49	147	5	55	220	1	44.5	445	540.5
57	Haorah	374	374	374	192	1	2	141	2	6	86	1	4	19	1	10	23
58	Bally	52	52	52	1	64.2	128.4	14	30	90	12	30	120	2	21.5	215	602.7
59	Uluberia	123	123	123	16	19.5	39	23	17	51	22	10.5	42	1	21.5	215	589.0

Source: compiled by author from District Census Handbook 2011 for the state of WB

P- No of primary schools PR- rank of primary schools PRW-weightage ranking score of primary schools. M-No. of middle schools MR- rank of middle schools MRW- weightage ranking score of middle schools S- secondary schools SR- Ranking of secondary schools SRW- weightage ranking score of secondary schools SS- senior secondary schools SSRW- weightage ranking score of senior secondary schools CLG- no. of colleges CLGR-rank of colleges CLGRW- weightage rank of colleges TCSR- Total composite score.

$$TCSR=PRW+MRW+SRW+SSRW+CLGRW$$

To obtain weightage rank of each facility following steps has been taken –firstly, each educational facility has been given a rank based on - higher the number of facility lower the value of rank and vice –versa. Secondly, each rank value has been multiplied by weightage value of each facility i.e. Primary weightage -01, Middle school-02, Secondary schools- 03, Senior secondary- 04, College-10. Finally, total composite score has been computed by adding rowise weightage score of each educational facility against each of the towns.

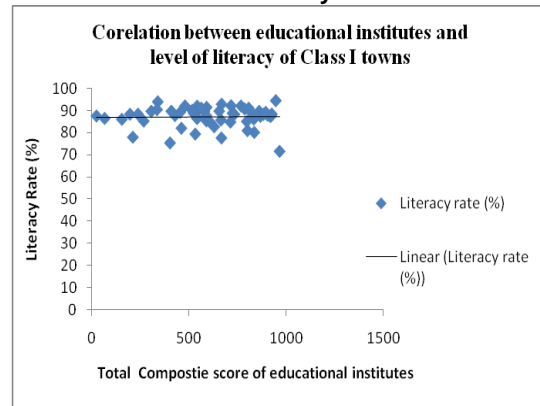
Co-Relation between Educational Institutes And Literacy Level

The co-relation value is +0.01 which shows educational institutes don't affect the literacy level. Following inferences may be drawn-

Literacy level remains independent of availability of educational institutes.2.Such a pattern is attributed to in-migration of literate people mostly

under working age group. Impact of educational institutes can only be traced when it influences aborigine population of the towns comprising in the age group of below 20 yrs of age. Thus it can be inferred that such high level of literacy is outcome of invading literate people limiting educational institute's impact to a minimal level.

Fig.4 Co-Relation between Educational Institutes and Literacy Level



Literacy pattern of class-II

The literacy rate of towns under class II ranges between 72.44 to 93.44 %.The average literacy level is 83.84%.The highest literate town is New Barrack pore (93.99%) while the lowest literate town is Dhulian.

Table: 4 Literacy Level of Different Towns

Literacy Rate (%)	Name of towns	% distribution of towns to total class II towns
71.50-75.50(Very low)	Dhulian, Kharagpur settlement, Gangarampur	9.1
75.50-79.50 (Low)	Old Malda, Jangipur, Jhargram, Ghatal, Panskura	15.2
79.50-83.50 (Moderate)	Arambagh, Kandi, Tamluk Jiaganj-Azimganj, Baduria, Islampur, Kaliaganj, Bishnupur	24.2
83.50-87.50(High)	Katwa, Garulia, Budge Budge, Bolpur, Suri, Rampurhat, Kalna, Dankuni	21.2
87.50-91.50(Very High)	Alipurduar, Chakdah, Gayespur, Contai, Konnagar,	15.27
91.50-95.50(Too High)	Baruipur, New Barrackpore, Ranaghat, Koch Behar	12.12

Source: Compiled by author from Census of India, 2011

Table 4 reveals that overall literacy level of class II that half of the town record moderate level of literacy ranging between 79.50% to 87.50%.Out of 33 towns,15 towns fall under this range which accounts for 45.4% of total distribution of towns,8towns fall under 71.50% -79.50% of literacy rate and rest towns record literacy of 87.50% and more.

The intravariation of literacy among these towns is 7.10% which is little more than class I towns indicating scattering of literacy rate in comparison to class I towns.

Fig 6 shows the distribution of literacy rate among class II towns which indicates concentration of towns with higher literacy in eastern and western part while a few town in North Bengal noticed mainly in the district of Maldah and North Dinajpur The rest towns with low to moderat found in central part of West Bengal.

Fig.5 Literacy Level of Class II Towns

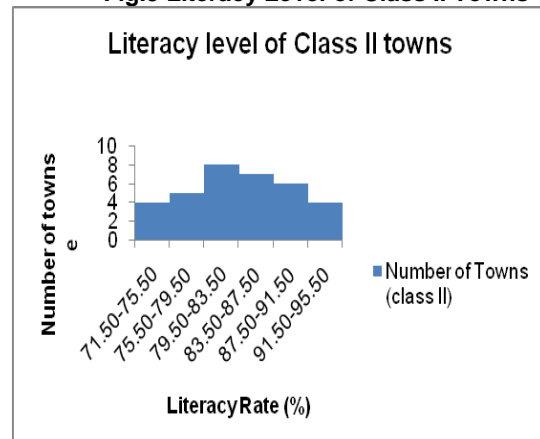
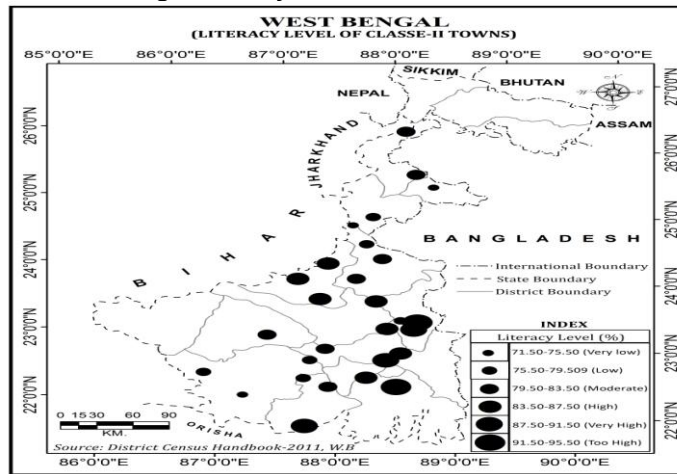


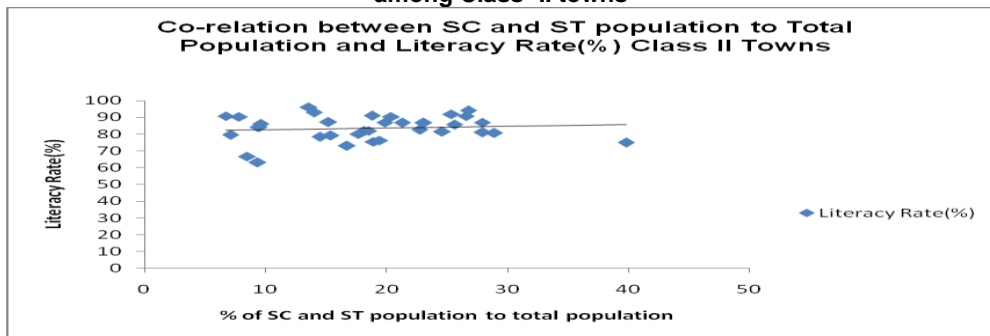
Fig.6 Literacy Level of Class II Towns



Co-relation between SC and ST population to Total Population and Literacy Rate(%) among Class -II towns

The co-relation between SC and ST population to total population and literacy level has been shown by means of scatter diagram which indicates that literacy remains independent of share of its to total population. There is hardly any change at literacy level with changing proportion of SC and ST population to total population. Even towns having significant proportion of SC and ST population maintain a high level of literacy keeping parity with other towns where it does not constitute much population.

Fig.7 Co-relation between SC and ST population to Total Population and Literacy Rate(%) among Class -II towns



Gender disparity of literacy of SC and ST population among Class II towns

Table 6 Gender disparity of literacy of SC and ST population

Differential Index	Name of Town	
	SC Population	ST Population
Below 0.10 (Low Differential index)	Old-Maldah, Chakdah, Contai, Baruipur, Ranaghat, Kochbehar, New Barrackpore.	Alipurduar, Jangipur, Garulia, New Barrackpore, Contai, Budge Budge
0.10-0.20 (Moderate Differential index)	Dankuni, Konnagar, Alipurduar, Jiaganj-Azimganj, Gayespur, Baduria, Kharagpur rly settlement, Bodge bodge, Katwa, Kaliaganj, Gangarampur, Kalna, Jangipur, Garulia, Tamluk, Islampur,	Dankuni, Kochbehar, Dhulian, Kandi, Jiaganj, Azimganj, Chakdah, Ranaghat, Baduria, Jhargram, Ghatal, Tamluk, Baruipur, Islampur, Gangarampur
Above 0.20 (High Differential index)	Dhulian, Panskura, Bishnupur.	Konngar, Arambagh, Gayespur, Panskura, Bishnupur, Katwa, Kalna

Source: Compiled by author from District Census Handbook 2011 for WB.

In respect of gender disparity of SC population – the lowest gender disparity is found in Maldah (0.03) followed by New Barrackpore (0.07), Contai (0.8), Baruipur (0.08), Ranaghat (0.09), Kochbehar (0.9), Chakdah (0.10) while highest gender disparity is noticed in Bishnupur (0.34) followed by Panskura (0.30), Dhulian (0.25), Kandi (0.23), Ghatal (0.21). The rest falls under moderate differential value of gender disparity.

The lowest gender gap among ST population found in Old Maldah (-0.4) wherein female literacy outnumbers male counterparts, followed by Alipurduar (0.05), Jangipur (0.05), Contai (0.09), New Barrackpore (0.10), Budge Budge (0.10), Garulia (0.10) while highest gender gap is found in Katwa (0.44) followed by Kalna (0.38), Arambagh (0.41), Bishnupur (0.29), Gayespur (0.26), Panskura (0.25).

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Educational institutes and literacy level
Table 7 No of Educational facilities and total composite score

Source: compiled by author from District Census Handbook 2011 for the state of WB

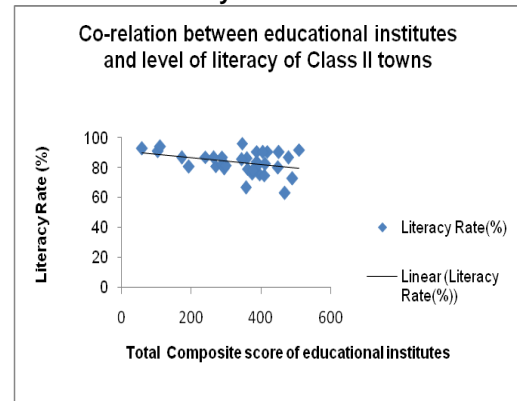
S.No.	CLASS II	No of Educational Facilities															
	Name of Towns	P	PR	PRW	M	MR	MRW	S	SR	SRW	SS	SSR	SSRW	CLG	CLGR	CLGW	TCSR
1	Dankuni	35	20	20	4	16.5	33	9	5.5	16.5	3	26	104	1	21.5	215	388
2	Konnagar	35	20	20	5	14	28	5	17	51	3	26	104	1	21.5	215	418
3	Arambagh	24	30	30	4	16.5	33	4	21.5	64.5	4	20.5	82	2	6	60	269.5
4	Alipurduar	44	11	11	12	2	4	11	3	9	9	5	20	2	6	60	104
5	Kochbehar	19	33	33	17	1	2	16	1	3	10	2.5	10	4	1	10	58
6	Old Maldah	53	5	5	6	10.5	11	5	17	51	3	26	104	1	21.5	215	396
7	Dhulian	50	7	7	0	32	64	3	26	78	3	26	104	1	21.5	215	468.0
8	Jangipur	57	2	2	4	16.5	38	5	17	51	5	15	60	1	6	60	361
9	Kandi	30	25.5	25.5	1	28	56	4	21.5	64.5	4	20.5	82	2	6	60	288
10	Jiaganj-Azimganj	36	17.5	17.5	6	10.5	11	6	11.5	34.5	5	15	60	1	21.5	215	193
11	Chakdah	44	11	11	0	32	64	3	26	78	9	5	20	1	21.5	215	388
12	Ranagaht	44	11	11	2	22.5	45	4	21.5	64.5	10	2.5	10	1	21.5	215	345.5
13	Gayespur	29	27	27	1	28	56	2	31	93	5	15	60	1	21.5	215	451.0
14	Garulia	28	28	28	0	32	64	5	17	51	2	30	120	0	33	330	478.0
15	New Barrackpore	60	1	1	11	3.5	7	10	4	12	8	7.5	30	2	21.5	215	110.0
16	Baduria	46	8.5	8.5	6	10.5	11	4	21.5	64.5	4	20.5	82	1	21.5	215	391.0
17	Kharagpur rly settlement	52	6	6	6	10.5	11	5	17	51	4	20.5	82	1	21.5	215	490.0
18	Jhargram	24	32	32	2	22.5	45	8	7.5	22.5	5	15	60	1	21.5	215	374.5
19	Ghatal	46	8.5	8.5	7	7	14	6	11.5	34.5	3	26	104	1	21.5	215	376.0
20	Contai	35	20	20	1	28	56	2	31	93	9	5	20	1	21.5	215	404.0
21	Tamluk	54	3.5	3.5	9	6	12	8	7.5	22.5	7	10	40	1	21.5	215	293.0
22	Panskura	39	15	15	10	5	10	6	11.5	34.5	4	20.5	82	1	21.5	215	356.5
23	Bodge bodge	36	17.5	17.5	3	19	18	3	26	78	8	7.5	30	1	21.5	215	358.5
24	Baruipur	30	25.5	25.5	1	28	56	2	31	93	2	30	120	1	21.5	215	509.5
25	Islampur	27	29	29	6	10.5	21	5	17	51	0	33	132	1	21.5	215	448.0
26	Kaliaganj	33	24	24	6	10.5	21	6	11.5	34.5	12	1	4	1	21.5	215	298.5
27	Bishnupur	40	14	14	2	22.5	45	3	26	78	5	15	60	1	21.5	215	412.0
28	Gangarampur	35	20	20	1	28	56	3	26	78	7	10	40	1	21.5	215	409.0
29	Katwa	54	3.5	3.5	2	22.5	45	2	31	93	7	10	40	2	6	60	240.5
30	Kalna	35	20	20	2	22.5	45	6	11.5	34.5	1	32	128	2	6	60	287.5
31	Bolpur	38	16	16	4	16.5	33	6	11.5	34.5	2	30	120	2	6	60	263.5
32	Suri	41	13	13	2	22.5	45	12	2	6	6	12	48	2	6	60	172.0
33	Rampurhat	34	23	23	11	3.5	7	9	5.5	16.5	4	20.5	82	1	21.5	215	343.50

Co-relation between educational institutes and literacy level

The co-relation value is (-0.34) a low negative relationship which indicates the towns with better accessibility and availability tend to increase the literacy rate. Higher the composite score - fewer the availability of educational institutes and vice-versa. Hence its impact on literacy is limited. Fig 6 demonstrates the co-relationship between educational institutes and literacy level which shows low negative relation. Thus it may be inferred that literacy level is not directly linked with availability of educational institutes to great extent as if it is the sole determinant. Overall high level of literacy is emerging due to floating population who tend to migrate from rural areas in search of job and avail the better civic facilities.

Literacy Pattern of Class-III Towns

Fig 8 co-relation between educational institutes and level of literacy



The level of literacy is comparatively lower than class I & II towns. The average literacy rate of towns under class III is 83.84%. The highest literate town is Kurseong (93.79%) while lowest literate town is Dalkhola.

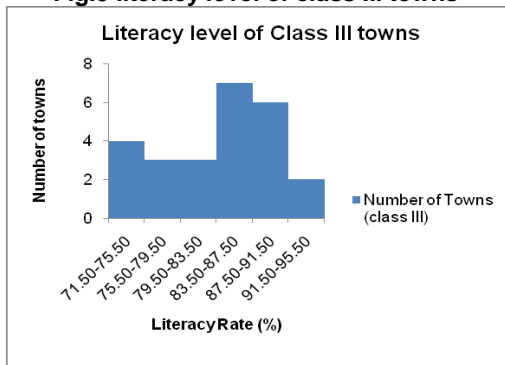
Literacy Level (%)	Name of towns	% distribution of towns to class III towns
71.50-75.50 (Very low)	Chandrakona, Egra, Dubrajpur, Dalkhola	16
75.50-79.50 (Low)	Raghunathpur, Pujali, Sainthia	12
79.50-83.50 (Moderate)	Murshidabad, Guskara, Nalhati,	12
83.50-87.50 (High)	Tarakeswar, Dhupgaria, Birnagar, Taki, Diamond Harbour, Sonamukhi, Memari	28
87.50-91.50 (Very High)	Mal, Mathabangha, Tufanganj, Gobardanga, Joynagar -Mazilpur, Kalimpong	24
91.50-95.50 (Too High)	Kurseong, Gobardanga	8

The mean literacy level is 83.84% marginally lower than class II towns. Out of 25 towns -13 towns register a literacy level between 83.50% to 91.50% which accounts for 52 % of total distribution of class III towns which indicates higher level of literacy. The rest towns fall below 83.50% of literacy rate.

The intravariation is 7.99% which is an of evident of skewed distribution of literacy within the same class of towns in comparison to class II and III towns in which uniformity in literacy level noticed.

Fig 11 shows towns with higher literacy rate concentrated mainly in North Bengal while low to moderate literacy found across South Bengal.

Fig.9 literacy level of class III towns



Source: Compiled by author from Census of India, 2011

Co-relation between SC and ST population to Total Population and Literacy Rate(%) among Class -III towns

The scatter diagram shows that higher proportion of SC and ST population to total population does not negatively affect overall literacy level of towns. Trend of literacy among towns is quite same. In other words SC and ST communities are well literate which is reflected through overall high er level of literacy.

Fig.10 Co-relation between SC and ST population to Total Population and Literacy Rate(%) among Class -III towns

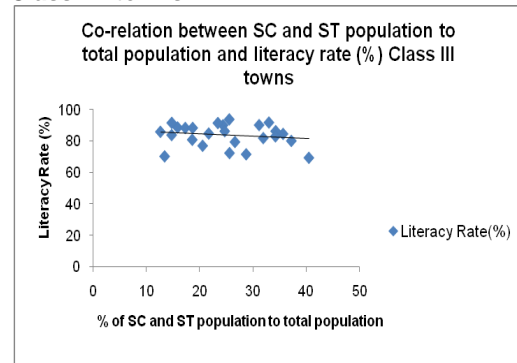
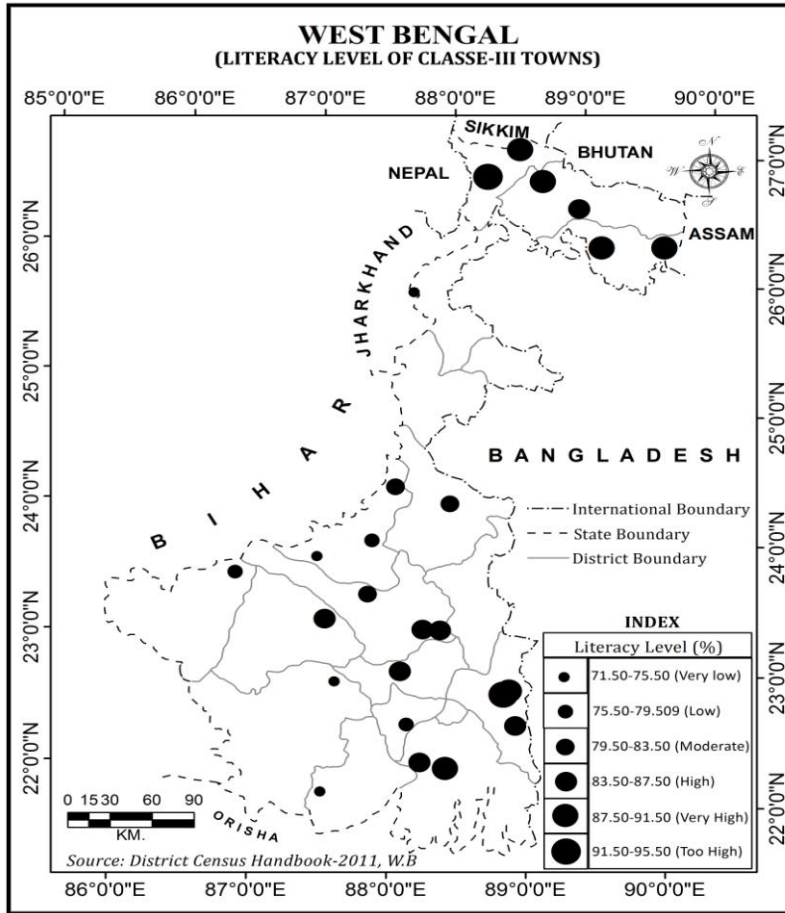


Fig. 11 Literacy level of class III Town



Gender disparity of literacy of SC and ST population among towns of class III towns
Table 9 Gender disparity of literacy of SC and ST populaton

Differential Index	Name of Town	
	SC Population	ST Populstion
Below 0.10(Low Differential index)	Dinhata, Mathabhanga, Gobardanga Tufanganj, Kalimpong Kurseong	Dhupguri, Mal, Dinhata, Kurseong Mathabhanga, Tufanganj, Kalimpong, Diamondharbour,
0.10-0.20(Moderate Differential index)	Dhupguri Mal, Murshidabad, Memari Birnagar, Taki, Egra, Pujali, Dalkhola Jaynagarmazilpur, Diamondharbour	Murshidabad, Birnagar, Gobardanga, Egra, Sainthia Nalhati
Above 0.20(High Differential index)	Tarakeswar, Chandrakona, Guskara Raghunathpur, Sonamukhi,	Tarakeswar, Taki, Chandrakona, Memari, Jaynagar mazilpur, Dalkhola, Sonamukhi, Guskara, Raghunathpur, Dubrajpur

In case of SC population the gender disparity are lowest in Tufanganj (0.07) followed by Dinhata (0.08) Kalimpong (0.08) Mathabhanga (0.08) Kurseong (0.09) all of them from North Bengal while highest gender disparity in literacy found in Raghunathpur (0.51). This trend prevails across all towns of South Bengal. It is noteworthy to state that gender disparity gets narrowed down when overall literacy level remain high. The overall literacy level in North Bengal is high which has led to reduce the gap in literacy.

The trend of low gender disparity in literacy among ST population prevails among the towns of North Bengal. The lowest disparity is found in Dhupguri (-0.03) outnumbering male literacy followed by Kurseong (0.03), Dinhata (0.04) Mathabhanga (0.04) Kalimpong (0.07) Mal (0.08) Diamondharbour (0.08) Highest gender disparity gap found in Jaynagar Mazilpur (0.60) followed by Pujali (0.56) Dalkhola (0.51) Guskara (0.51) Raghunathpur (0.42) Taki (0.40) Chandrakona (0.38) Memari (0.27) Dubrajpur (0.26).

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Educational Institutes and Literacy Level
Table 10 Composite score of educational facilities

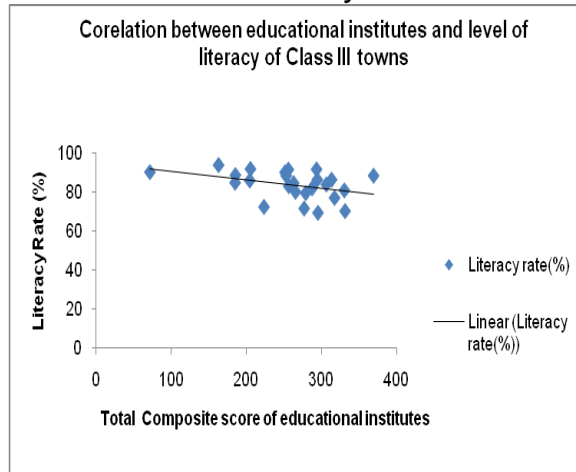
SL NO	CLASS III	No. of Educational Facilities															
	Name of Towns	P	PR	PRW	M	MR	MRW	S	SR	SRW	SS	SSR	SSRW	CLG	CLGR	CLGR W	TCS
1	Tarakeswar	17	21	21	4	13.5	27	4	16.5	49.5	3	18.5	74	1	13.5	135	306.5
2	Dhupgaria	24	13	13	4	13.5	27	3	21.5	64.5	3	18.5	74	1	13.5	135	313.5
3	Mal	40	3	3	10	2	4	10	2.5	7.5	5	9	36	1	13.5	135	185.5
4	Dinhata	32	8	8	1	25	50	3	21.5	64.5	5	9	36	1	13.5	135	293.5
5	Mathabhanga	20	17	17	8	4.5	9	8	5.5	16.5	3	18.5	74	1	13.5	135	251.5
6	Tufanganj	25	11	11	5	10	20	5	12	36	4	13.5	54	1	13.5	135	256.0
7	Murshidabad	33	7	7	4	13.5	27	3	21.5	64.5	4	13.5	54	1	13.5	135	287.5
8	Birnagar	16	22.5	22.5	3	18	36	4	16.5	49.5	6	5	20	1	13.5	135	263.0
9	Gobardanga	31	9	9	8	4.5	9	8	5.5	16.5	5	9	36	1	13.5	135	205.5
10	Taki	59	1	1	6	9	18	6	9.5	28.5	3	18.5	74	1	13.5	1.35	256.5
11	Chandrakona	26	10	10	4	13.5	27	4	16.5	49.5	2	23	92	1	13.5	135	295.5
12	Egra	24	13	13	4	13.5	27	3	21.5	64.5	2	23	92	1	13.5	135	331.5
13	Raghunathpur	21	15	15	2	22	44	4	16.5	49.5	3	18.5	74	1	13.5	135	317.5
14	Diamondharbour	40	3	3	8	4.5	9	7	7.5	21.5	5	9	36	1	13.5	135	204.5
15	Pujali	20	17	17	2	22	44	2	24.5	73.5	1	25	100	1	13.5	135	369.5
16	Jaynagar mazilpur	24	13	13	7	7.5	15	5	12.0	36	4	13.5	54	1	13.5	135	253.0
17	Dalkhola	18	19.5	19.5	8	4.5	9	7	7.5	21.5	2	23	92	1	13.5	135	277.0
18	Sonamukhi	35	5.5	5.5	2	22	44	5	12	36	3	18.5	74	1	13.5	135	294.5
19	Kalimpong	35	5.5	5.5	3	18	36	9	4	12	8	2	8	2	10	10	71.5
20	Kurseong	40	3	3	22	1	2	22	1	3	6	5	20	1	13.5	135	163.0
21	Memari	18	19.5	19.5	7	7.5	15	10	2.5	7.5	8	2	8	1	13.5	135	185.0
22	Guskara	20	17	17	2	22	44	4	16.5	49.5	6	5	20	1	13.5	135	265.5
23	Sainthia	16	22.5	22.5	3	18	36	4	16.5	49.5	5	9	36	1	13.5	135	279.0
24	Dubrajpur	12	25	25	4	13.5	27	6	9.5	28.5	8	2	8	1	13.5	135	223.5
25	Nalhati	15	24	24	2	22	44	2	24.5	73.5	4	13.5	54	1	13.5	135	330.5

Source: compiled by author from District Census Handbook 2011, WB

Co-relation between Educational Institutes and Literacy Level

The co-relation value is **-0.39** indicating a low relationship between availability of educational institutes and level of literacy. It shows that towns with better availability of educational institutes having higher literacy and vice-versa. The possible reasons for influence are because of these towns are less prone to migration. Hence population stationary in nature. Thus educational institutes have impact to some extent among these towns.

Fig.12 Co-relation between Educational Institutes and Level of Literacy



Findings and Conclusion

The paper brings out different dimensions of urban literacy among towns of various classes. Literacy rate holds an association with class of towns. Higher order towns has higher literacy rate as it is evident from average literacy rate among these class of towns which show class I towns has average literacy rate of 87.33% whereas class II and III has 83.92% and 83.845% respectively. Such a mosaic of literacy rate has been carved out due to nature of urban economy. The large towns generally tend to have industrial economic base which require skilled labour, a pre-eminence of administration and educational institution which attract literate migrants. Hence its pulling effect much larger than smaller towns resulting in higher literacy rate. The study further unfolds the variation within each class towns. The intravariation level is low within class I which is 5.03% while class II and III has 7.10% and 7.99% respectively. It proves that non-conformity in literacy prevails among those small towns.

The analysis on influence of proportion of social class i.e.SC and ST over total literacy rate of class wise towns found to be null. Overall literacy rate remains unaffected in those towns wherein a sizable proportion is SC. This proves that SC and ST population are not lagging behind in education simply because most of them are migrant. In respect of gender disparity among scheduled population two aspects are emerging firstly –gender disparity tends to decrease where the overall literacy is high irrespective of class of towns. Higher literacy town has low gender disparity and vice-versa. Secondly-gender disparity has varied across North Bengal and South Bengal. Towns of North Bengal are marked with low gender disparity

relatively than South Bengal because of dominance of Christian Community.

The study also examines the association between educational institutes and literacy level. This analysis highlights 2 important aspects- literacy rate has virtually remain independent of educational institutes for class I towns where polarisation of educational institutes concentrated. This is because of in-migration of literate people. On the other hand, there is low association between availability of educational institutes and literacy found among class II and III towns where the degree of migration is less than class I towns because of pulling affect.

In conclusion for attaining universal literacy rate govt policy should concentrate more in rural areas. There is also an urgent need to focus on eradicating gender disparity among scheduled population so that social equity is achieved.

Acknowledgement

I extend my most sincere gratitude to my Supervisor Dr Manjari Bhattacharjee, Associate Professor, Department of geography Visva Bharati for her valuable guidance in the preparation of paper. I also like to thank Dr Koyel Paul Assistant Professor, Birbhum MahaVidyalaya, Burdwan University and Pramila Nandi Research Scholar Of Geography Department for their valuable suggestion.

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Footnotes

1. *Statutory towns¹-Census of India (2011) defines towns having a Municipality, Corporation or cantonment board or notified town area committee.*