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## **The variation in distribution of literacy rate in Bihar: An analytical approach**

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### **Abstract**

Undoubtedly, education strengthens the ability of the people of all across the region to meet their wants and those of their family by increasing their productivity and their potential to achieve a higher standard of living. By improving people's confidence and their ability to create and innovate, it multiplies their opportunities for personal and social achievement. Thus, education is viewed as an integral part of societal and national development.

This paper is mainly devoted to examine the spatio-temporal, distribution of literacy rate in Bihar. An extensive evaluation of trends and patterns of literacy rate of the state has been enquired minutely. In almost all the important indicators of development, even to this day, the region has been and still remains one of the most educationally deprived states in India. In the state, however, the literacy rate is rising from 47% in 2001 to 63% in 2011, but, still it has the lowest literacy rate in India. While, as per the latest census estimates (2011), the all India literacy figure has gone up to 74%; About three-fourth of our menfolk (75.8%) half of our womenfolk (54.16%) are literate. More importantly, at district wise, the level of literacy is unevenly distributed.

In a nutshell, there is need to improve educational infrastructure including education relevant to societal needs and enhance the management and capacity of educational institutions at the state, district and local levels. Emphasis should also be to promote greater presence of civil society and community participation to enhance enrolment retention and other aspects of education.

**Keywords:** Education strengthens, national development, Bihar

### **Introduction**

After many decades of independence, Bihar largely an agrarian state is economically most backward region of Indian federal system. In the state, however, the literacy rate is rising from 47% in 2001 to 63% in 2011, but, still it has the lowest literacy rate in India. Globally, the definition of literacy varied to large extent, in India, although the basic criterion to define literacy is the ability to read and write with understanding in any language. A person who can merely read but cannot write is not classified as literate. Thus, any formal education or minimum education standard is not required to be considered literate.

As per the latest census (2011), the all India literacy figure has gone up to 74.0%; Literacy rate amount female is 65.5% where as male literacy rate is 82. Modern Bihar has a grossly inadequate educational infrastructure creating a huge mismatch between demand and supply. This problem further gets compounded by the growing aspiration of the people and increase in population. More importantly, at district wise, the level of literacy in Bihar is unevenly distributed. This remarkable variation of regional analysis is even quite visible in urban and rural areas too. It is pleasant surprise to find that being a comparatively less literate state in India, with women's literacy being only 51.50%, the state is striving to climb.

**Objectives:** This Study is intended to achieve the following objectives:

- I. To discuss and examine the spatio-temporal distribution of literacy rate in Bihar.
- II. To analyse and access the trend of literacy rate between India and Bihar from 1951 onwards.
- III. To evaluate the trends, patterns and interacting factors of literacy in Bihar at district level
- IV. To identify the dynamics of influencing factors of literacy rate at regional and intra-regional level.

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**Data Base and Methodology**

The study is based on secondary sources of data. The data were collected from Census of India, and official websites of Bihar. The major advantages of the census data are that they are based on complete enumeration and are, therefore reliable than projections and estimates. Further, they provide an opportunity to observe trends over a period of time and draw meaningful conclusion to facilitate planning. Method of Simple percentage has been used for the analysis of data. The data were shown on multiple bar diagram, Simple line graph and on Choropleth map.

For comparative study line graph, cartographic technique was used to show the trend of literacy rate. This line graph and bar graph also helps in giving legitimate references to the past trends and to elucidate variation and change.

**Study Area**

The region has been selected for study to enquire the spatio-temporal distribution and trends and patterns of literacy rate in Bihar. The state with the predominantly illiterate population and low levels of educational achievement is one of the poorest and least developed regions in India. It lags behind other states in almost all the important indicators of development. Even to this day, over half the population of the state is illiterate and only about a third of the females can read and write. Thus, Bihar has been and still remains one of the most educationally deprived states in India. As elsewhere in India, much of the gaps in education can be attributed to caste status, gender and poverty.

**Discussion**

**Comparative Study of Trends of Literacy Rate Between India and Bihar from 1951-2011**

Undoubtedly, the general population of Bihar has lagged

behind in educational, indicators such as general literacy rates, female literacy rates and enrolment and retention rates. On the other hand, the facts reveal that India is far behind acceptable standards regarding the first step towards education i.e. literacy. However, even that level is not uniformly attained throughout India. Wide regional disparity in educational attainment is a vexing problem in India. Here, an attempt has been made to discuss the trends of literacy rate between India and Bihar from 1951 onwards.

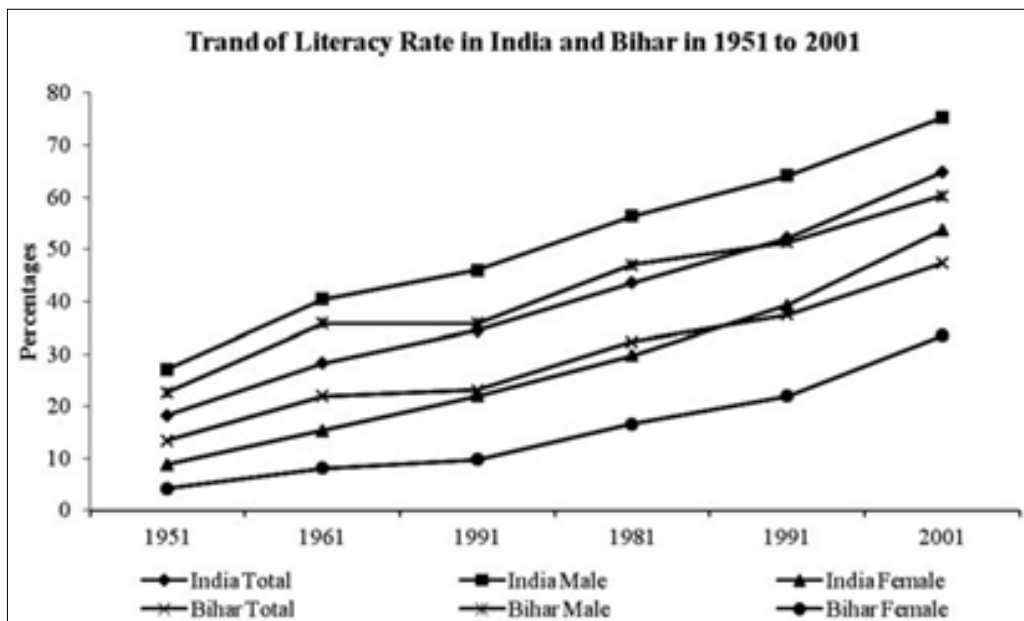
**Table 1:** Trends of literacy rate in India and Bihar (1951-2011)

Years	India			Bihar		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86	13.49	22.68	4.22
1961	28.3	40.4	15.35	21.95	35.85	8.11
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97	23.17	35.86	9.86
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76	32.32	47.11	16.61
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	37.49	51.37	21.99
2001	64.84	75.26	53.67	47.53	60.32	33.57
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46	61.80	71.20	51.50

**Source:** Census of India, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011

In 1951, the literacy rate for India was 18.33 and it was 13.49 for Bihar (for male it was 27.16 per cent for India and 13.49 per cent for Bihar whereas for female it was 8.86 per cent for India and 4.22 per cent for Bihar). The difference of literacy rate between India and Bihar during 1951 was 4.84 per cent of the total population (it was 4.84 per cent for male and 4.46 for female).

Reasons of low literacy in Bihar supported by a set of factors comprise of poverty, socio-economic constraints and background of the family-as the children



**Fig 1.**

need to struggle for survival at an early age. Many parents know that education is important for their children. Nevertheless, due to economic and socio-cultural constraints, preference and priority were given to work. In 1961, the literacy rate increased to 26.3 per cent (9.98 per cent point) for India and 21.95 per cent (8.46 per cent point)

for Bihar. The male literacy rate was 40.40 per cent (an increase in 13.34 per cent point) for India and 35.85 per cent (an increase of 13.17 per cent) for Bihar. In case of female literacy rate an increase of 15.35 per cent (6.49 per cent point) for India and 8.11 per cent for Bihar (3.89 per cent) has been reported.

While female literacy may have exhibited the largest decadal increase ever, it still remains considerably lower than male literacy rates. What further confounds the picture is the considerable disparity between educational achievements between and within states, between rural and urban areas, between social groups.

In 1971, the total literacy rate increased to 34.45 per cent (6.14 per cent point) and 23.17 per cent (1.22 per cent point) for India and Bihar respectively. An increase in male and female literacy rate up to this level is 45.96 per cent (5.55 per cent point) 21.97 per cent (6.63 per cent point) and 35.86 per cent point (0.01 per cent point), 9.86 per cent point (1.75 per cent point) for India and Bihar has been reported. The reason of low literacy during this period was Indo-Pak War. Other than that poverty and illiteracy go hand in hand, the poor are disenfranchised, cut off from the democratic process.

1981, the total literacy rate of India and Bihar has increased to 43.57 per cent (9.12 per cent point) and 32.32 per cent (9.15 per cent point). For male and female literacy rate an increase up to 56.38 per cent (10.43 per cent point), 29.76 per cent (7.79 per cent point) and 47.11 (11.25 per cent point) and 16.61 per cent (6.75 per cent point) for India and Bihar has been noted.

In many sense, it is true that the education system has undergone many types of changes and experiments. But educational growth in India and in the state of Bihar did not steeped up speedily as post independence planners and policy makers failed in establishing sound strides in the over world advancement at grass-roots level.

The 2001 Census of literacy shows 65 per cent (8.65 per cent point) total literacy for India and for Bihar, it was 37.49 per cent (5.17 per cent point), for male and female it was 64.13 per cent (7.76 per cent point) and 47 per cent (9.54 per cent point) and 59.68 per cent (4.26 per cent point) 33.12 per cent (5.38 per cent point) for India and Bihar respectively.

The decade of the 2000s, closely identified with the expansion of children's access and participation in basic education across India. The challenge of achieving gender and social equity in assuring quality of education was on real track.

In 2011, the total literacy increases to 74.84 per cent (12.63 per cent point) for India and 63 per cent (15 per cent point) for Bihar. The male literacy was 82 and female literacy was 65 per cent. Where is in Bihar male literacy was 71.20 and female literacy was 51.50.

Despite recent improvement in enrolment in primary education and survival rates to grade 5, Bihar is still behind the national average in terms of educational enrolment and literacy rates. The 2011 census indicated that Bihar's literacy level was 63 per cent, the lowest in India average of 74 per cent.

The revised target year to achieve universal access to primary education has been pushed to 2007 in the approach

paper has now been fixed at 72% by 2007 and 80% by 2012.

### Trends and Patterns of Literacy in Bihar

Bihar has the lowest literacy rate among the major states of India. This acute poverty and backwardness can be traced to the backwardness of both its agricultural and industrial sectors. The social fabric of the state is also unique in comparison to other states of India and still has a pronounced hangover of the medieval period. The social fabric not only segregates community into strong line of caste system but also has effect on the livelihood pattern at large.

There is huge gap in regional pattern and trends of literacy among the districts of Bihar and even urban to rural and male to female literacy rate.

Literacy rate is marked with notable variations in its distribution among the districts of Bihar. The total literacy rate among the various district of the state varies from 51.08 per cent (Purniya) to 73.37 per cent (Rohtas) in 2011. The eighteen districts fall even below the average literacy rate of the state. (Table-2 and fig. 2). The districts in descending order of high literacy rate are Rohtas (73.37 per cent), Patna (70.68 per cent), Munger (70.46 per cent), Bhojpur (70.47 per cent), Aurangabad (70.32 per cent), Buxar (70.14 per cent), Jehanabad (66.80 per cent), Kaimur (69.34 per cent), Nalanda (64.43 per cent), Saran (51.8 per cent), Siwan (69.45 per cent), Vaishali (66.60 per cent) and Gaya (63.67 per cent). On the other hand, the districts with medium literacy rate are Bhagalpur (63.14 per cent), Sheikhpura (63.86 per cent), Muzaffarpur (63.43 per cent), Lakhisarai (62.42 per cent), Begusarai (48 per cent), Gopalganj (65.47 per cent), Nawada (59.76 per cent), Samastipur (61.86 per cent) Darbhanga (56.56 per cent), Banka (58.17 per cent), Jamui (59.79 per cent) Madhubani (58.62 per cent), Khagaria (57.92 per cent). The districts of lowest literacy rate are mainly concentrated in the North - East and North-West parts of Bihar (Table 2). The districts of less than 56% literacy rate under lowest category are Saharsa (53.20 per cent), West Champaran 9 55.70 per cent), Sitamarhi (52.05 per cent), East Champaran (55.79 per cent), Supaul (57.67 per cent), Madhepura (52.25 per cent), Sheohar (53.78 per cent), Katihar (52.24 per cent), Araria (53.53 per cent) Kishangang (55.46 per cent) and Purnia (51.08 per cent), A large number of children below the age of eighteen from the northern districts of Bihar including Champaran, Sitamarhi, Darbhanga, Madhubani, Purnia, Araria and Kishangang, one way and, the other way are the part of child labour due to poverty and lack of opportunities for education. These children have been deprived from their basic right to education. Total number of children as main workers (i.e. working for more than six month (per year) is about 0.54million, while children in marginal work (working for less than six months) is approximately 0.58 million (Census of India 2011). These children do not have education potions that are available for them.

**Table 2:** Distribution of literacy rate in Bihar 2001

S. No.	Districts	Total	Rural	Urban
1	West Champaran	38.9	36	63.5
2	East Champaran	37.5	35.4	67.1
3	Sheohar	35.3	34.9	43.6
4	Sitamarhi	38.5	36.7	66.2
5	Madhubani	42	41.2	63.1
6	Supaul	37.3	35.9	61.4

7	Araria	35	33.2	61.4
8	Kishanganj	31.1	27.8	59.3
9	Purnia	35.1	31.4	70.9
10	Katihar	35.1	31.1	72.3
11	Madhepura	36.1	34.5	66.9
12	Saharsa	39.1	36.1	70.7
13	Darbhanga	44.3	41.5	74.9
14	Muzaffarpur	48	44.7	77.3
15	Gopalganj	47.5	46.5	62.00
16	Siwan	51.6	50.5	69.7
17	Saran	51.8	50.3	66.1
18	Vaishali	50.5	49.3	65.6
19	Samastipur	45.1	43.9	75.7
20	Begusarai	48	46.5	77.7
21	Khagaria	41.3	39.5	69.8
22	Bhagalpur	49.5	44.4	70.7
23	Banka	42.7	42.1	59.9
24	Munger	59.5	52.8	76
25	Lakhisarai	48	45.6	61.1
26	Sheikhpura	48.6	46	62.3
27	Nalanda	53.2	50.4	68.5
28	Patna	62.9	51.4	78.1
29	Bhojpur	59	56.8	71.6
30	Buxar	56.8	55	73.6
31	Kaimur (Bhabua)	55.1	54.4	76.9
32	Rohtas	61.3	59.2	74.1
33	Jehanabad	55.3	54.1	69.4
34	Aurangabad	57	55.5	73.5
35	Gaya	50.4	46.2	75.7
36	Nawada	46.8	44.7	71.1
37	Jamui	42.4	40.2	68.8

Source: Census of India, 2001.

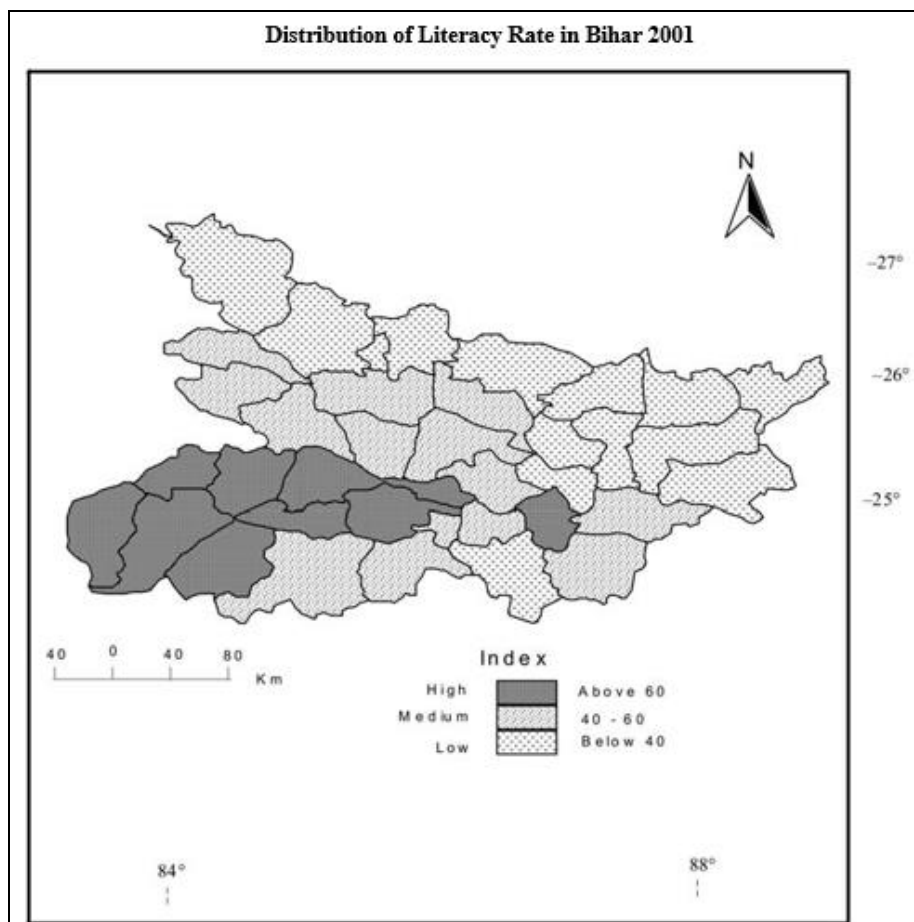


Fig 2.



### Rural - Urban Distribution

The literacy rate of rural urban population is also considerably different. The highest Rural literacy rate is found in Rohtas (59.2 per cent) and it is lowest in Kishngang (27.8 per cent point) whereas in case of Urban literacy it is highest in Patna (78.1 per cent) and lowest in Sheohar (43.6 per cent) (Table 2 and Fig. 2).

The high rural literacy rate are found in the districts of Rohtas (59.2 per cent), Bhojpur (56.8 per cent), Aurangabad (55.5 per cent), Buxar (55 per cent), Kaimur (54.4 per cent), Jehanabad (54.1 per cent), Munger (52.8 per cent), Patna (51.4 per cent), Siwan (50.5 per cent), Nalanda (50.4 per cent), Saran (50.3 per cent) and Vaishali (49.3 per cent).

The urban literacy rate is highest in the districts of Patna (78.1 per cent), Begusarai (77.7 per cent), Muzaffarpur (77.3 per cent) Kaimur (76.9 per cent), Samastipur (75.7 per cent), Gaya (75.7 per cent), Darbhanga (74.9 per cent), Rohtas (74.1 per cent), Buxar (73.6 per cent), Aurangabad (73.5 per cent), Katihar (72.3 per cent), Bhojpur (71.6 per cent), Nawada (71.1 per cent), Purnia (70.9 per cent), Saharsa (70.7 per cent), Bhagalpur (70.7 per cent). The medium urban literacy rate has been noticed from the districts of central parts of Bihar and the lowest from north to east parts of the districts of the state (Table 2).

Extensive impoverishment, entrenched hierarchical social divisions and the lack of correlation between educational attainment and job opportunities are often cited in studies of the hurdles. Obviously, the social set up and economic status of urban centres have greater functional utility skills and the people in various occupations warrant literacy as a pre-requisite.

### Male literacy Rate

Male literacy constitutes the major proportion of literacy rate of Bihar. Similarly, Male literacy rate has been grouped into high, medium and low. Considerable regional variation has been traced out in the male literacy rate of Bihar. The highest male literacy rate has been recorded from the districts of Rohtas (75.3 per cent), Bhojpur (74.3 per cent), Patna (73.3 per cent), Buxar (71.9 per cent), Aurangabad (71.1 per cent), Jehanabad (70.1 per cent). The south-east districts of the state lie under medium grade of literacy rate (Table 3). The districts of Sitamarhi (49.4 per cent), East Champaran (49.3 per cent), Madhepura (48.8 per cent), Araria (46.4 per cent), Purnia (45.6 per cent), Sheohar (45.3 per cent), Katihar (45.3 per cent), Kishanganj (42.7 per cent), fall under lowest literacy group (Table 3).

### Rural -Urban Male literacy Rate

The average literacy rates of males in urban areas are substantially higher than the rural areas. It is 77.3 per cent against 57.2 per cent for rural male. The ranges of variation in literacy rate among urban population are 85.1 per cent to 54.5 per cent, whereas, this variation in rural areas ranges between 74 per cent (Rohtas) to 39.5 per cent (Kishanganj) (Table 3).

The districts of Rohtas (74 per cent), Bhojpur (73.4 per cent), Buxar (70.7 per cent) and Aurangabad (70 per cent) have high rural male literacy rate, whereas the districts of Jehanad, Kaimur, Siwan, Saran, Munger, Nalanda, Patna, Gopalgang, Vaishali, Sheikhpura, Gaya, Nawada, Lakhisarai, Begusarai, Samastipur, Muzaffarpur, Madhubani, Jamui, Bhagalpur, Banka, Darbhanga, Supaul and Khagaria have medium literacy rate ranges from 69.3 per cent to 51.1 per cent. And, the districts of Saharsa, West Champaran, Sitamarhi, East Champaran, Madhepura, Sheohar, Araria, Purnia, Katihar and Kishanganj fall under the lowest male literacy rate.

The highest urban male literacy has been recorded from the district of Kaimur (85.1 per cent) followed by Patna (84.7 per cent) and it was the lowest in the district of Sheohar (54.5 per cent).

**Table 3:** Distribution of male literacy rate in Bihar, 2001

S. No.	Districts	Total	Rural	Urban
1	West Champaran	51.1	48.5	72.4
2	East Champaran	49.3	47.4	75.5
3	Sheohar	45.3	44.9	54.5
4	Sitamarhi	49.4	47.7	74.7
5	Madhubani	56.8	56.1	73.9
6	Supaul	52.4	51.2	72.8
7	Araria	46.4	44.7	69.8
8	Kishanganj	42.7	39.5	68.7
9	Purnia	45.6	42.2	78.2
10	Katihar	45.3	41.4	80.2
11	Madhepura	48.8	47.4	76.4
12	Saharsa	51.7	48.8	79.8
13	Darbhanga	56.7	54.2	83
14	Muzaffarpur	59.1	56.4	83
15	Gopalganj	63	62.3	73.2
16	Siwan	67.3	66.5	78.4
17	Saran	67.3	66.3	76.5
18	Vaishali	63.2	62.3	74.9
19	Samastipur	57.6	56.5	83.9
20	Begusarai	59.1	57.8	84.9
21	Khagaria	51.8	50.1	77.1
22	Bhagalpur	59.2	54.8	77.3
23	Banka	55.3	54.8	67.8
24	Munger	69.9	64.5	83.1
25	Lakhisarai	60.7	58.8	71.1
26	Sheikhpura	61.9	59.9	72.7
27	Nalanda	66.4	64.5	77.2
28	Patna	73.3	64.5	84.7
29	Bhojpur	74.3	73.4	79.2
30	Buxar	71.9	70.7	82.9
31	Kaimur (Bhabua)	69.7	69.1	85.1
32	Rohtas	75.3	74	83.1
33	Jehanabad	70.1	69.3	79.3
34	Aurangabad	71.1	70	82.4
35	Gaya	63.3	59.7	83.4
36	Nawada	60.6	58.9	79.3
37	Jamui	57.1	55.1	79.7

Source: Census of India, 2001.

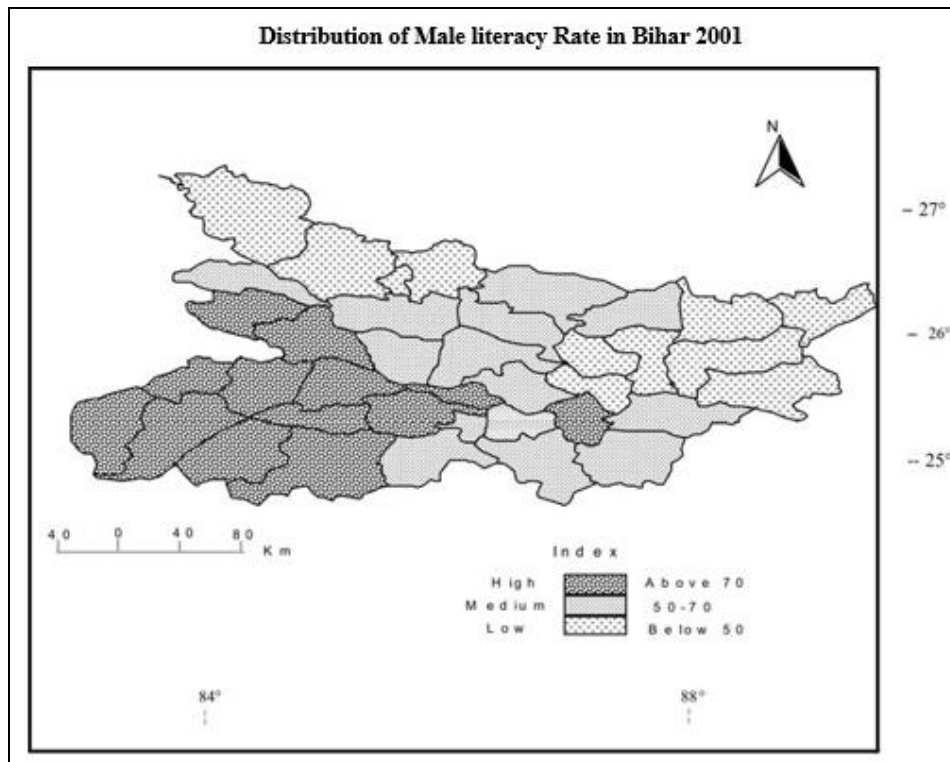


Fig 3.

Parents with limited resources invest in educating their sons, as it is typically, assumed that girls will ultimately be married and live with their in-laws.

**Female Literacy Rate**

The female literacy rate is lesser than those of males and varies widely at district level with a maximum of 50.8 per cent in Patna and minimum of 18.6 per cent in Kishanganj. Exceptionally, Patna with 50.8 per cent female literacy rate, the remaining districts of Bihar falling below the average female literacy rate of the state.

The districts below 25 per cent female literacy rate are Kishanganj (18.6 per cent), Supaul (20.8 per cent),

Madhepura (22.8 per cent), Araria (22.4 per cent), Purnia (23.4 per cent), Katihar (23.8 per cent), Sheohar (23.9 per cent) and East Champaran (24.3 per cent). These districts have large concentration of poor Muslims.

The female literacy rate of 23 districts of the state varies from 25 per cent to 40 per cent. The highest female literacy rate has been recorded from the districts of Buxar (39.9 per cent) where as lowest from the district of West-Champaram (25.2 per cent) (Table. and Fig. 4). Five district of the state namely Patna (50.8 per cent), Munger (47.4 per cent), Rohtas (45.7 per cent), Aurangabad (41.9 per cent) and Bhojpur (41.8 per cent) have above 40 per cent female literacy rate.

Table 4: Distribution of female literacy rate in Bihar, 2001

S. No.	Districts	Total	Rural	Urban
1	West Champaran	25.2	21.9	53.3
2	East Champaran	24.3	22	57.2
3	Sheohar	23.9	23.6	31.2
4	Sitamarhi	26.1	24.3	56.2
5	Madhubani	26.2	25.4	50.9
6	Supaul	20.8	19.3	48.2
7	Araria	22.4	20.4	51.5
8	Kishanganj	18.6	15.4	48.2
9	Purnia	23.4	19.6	62.1
10	Katihar	23.8	19.7	63
11	Madhepura	22.1	20.6	55.2
12	Saharsa	25.3	22.1	59.8
13	Darbhanga	30.8	27.6	65.6
14	Muzaffarpur	35.8	32.1	70.5
15	Gopalganj	32.2	31	50
16	Siwan	36.9	35.6	59.9
17	Saran	35.8	34	54.3
18	Vaishali	36.6	35.2	55.1
19	Samastipur	31.7	30.3	66.4
20	Begusarai	35.6	34	69.4
21	Khagaria	29.3	27.3	60.9
22	Bhagalpur	38.1	32.1	62.9

23	Banka	28.7	27.9	50.6
24	Munger	47.4	39.3	67.8
25	Lakhisarai	34	31.2	49.7
26	Sheikhpura	33.9	30.9	50.5
27	Nalanda	38.6	35	58.6
28	Patna	50.8	36.6	70.2
29	Bhojpur	41.8	38.5	62.4
30	Buxar	39.9	37.5	62.9
31	Kaimur (Bhabua)	38.8	37.9	66.8
32	Rohtas	45.7	42.9	63.9
33	Jehanabad	39.4	37.9	58.2
34	Aurangabad	41.9	39.9	63.4
35	Gaya	36.7	31.8	66.7
36	Nawada	32.2	29.7	61.9
37	Jamui	26.3	23.9	56.2

Source: Census of India, 2011

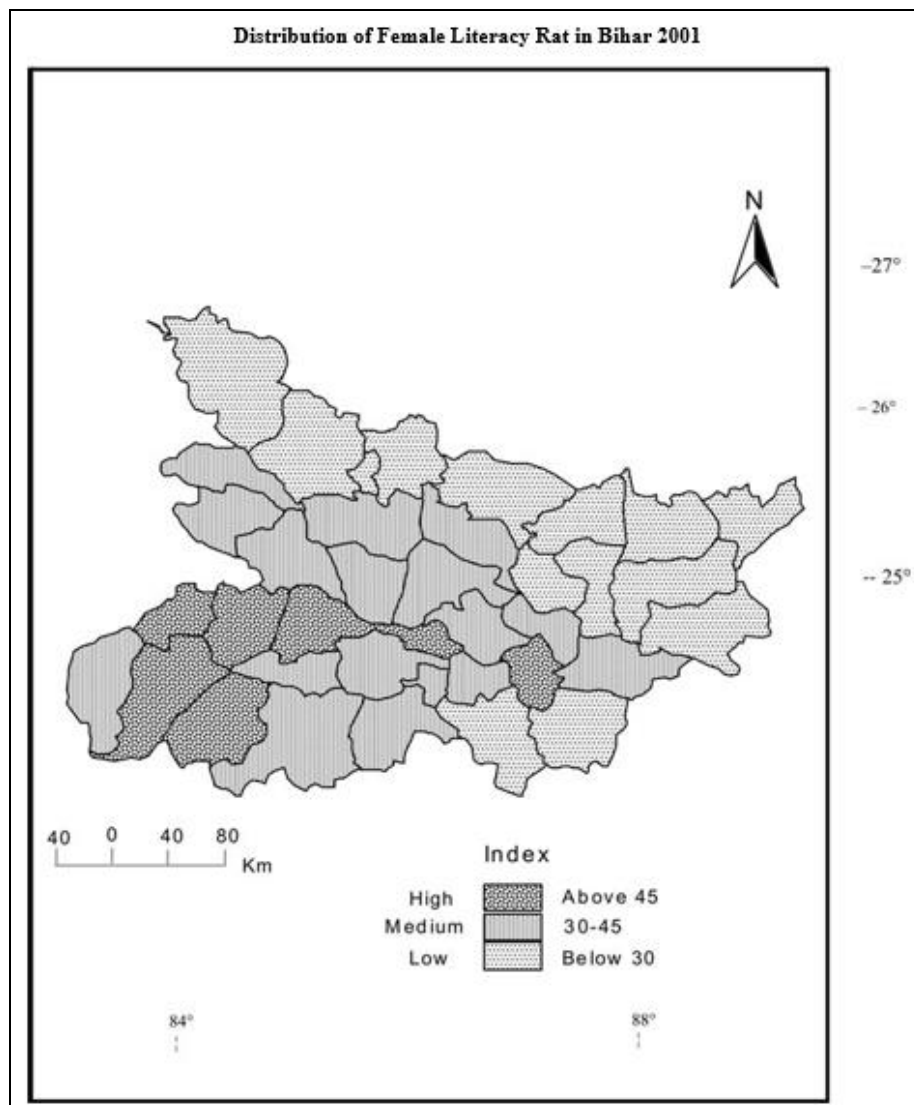


Fig 4.

**Rural -Urban Female literacy Rate**

There is a wide gap between rural urban female literacy rates. The urban female literacy rate for the state is 58.42 per cent whereas it is 29.57 per cent for the rural areas. Among the districts of rural areas it runs from 15.4 per cent to 42.9 per cent, whereas in urban areas it ranges from 31.2 per cent (Sheohar) to 70.5 per cent (Muzaffarpur). The rural areas Rohtas has the highest female literacy rate and Kishangang has the lowest female literacy rate. The high

female literacy rate in rural areas found in the districts of Rohtas, Aurangabad, Munger, Bhojpur, Kaimur, Jehanabad, Buxar, Patna, Siwan, vaishali and Nalanda. The female literacy rate in these districts ranges between 35 per cent to 42.9 per cent (Table 4).

The districts of medium rural female literacy rate are Begusarai, Muzaffarpur, Bhagalpur, Gaya, Lakhisarai, Gopalgang, Sheikhpura, Samastipur, Nawada, Banka, Dharbhanga, Khagaria and Madhubani. And it is lowest in

the districts of Sitamarhi, Jamui, Sheohar, Saharsa, East-Champaran, West -Champaran, Madhepura, Araria, Katihar, Purnia, Supaul and Kishangang (The range of variation is 24.3 per cent to 15.4 per cent).

In urban areas, the highest female literacy rate found in Muzaffarpur (70.5 per cent) whereas Sheohar has the lowest urban female literacy rate.

The districts of highest female literacy rate (ranges between 75.5 per cent to 60.9 per cent) are Patna, Begusarai, Munger, Kaimur, Gaya, Samastipur, Darbhanga, Rohtas, Aurangabad, Katihar, Bhagalpur, Buxar, Bhojpur, Purnia, Nawada and Khagaria (Table 4).

The districts of Siwan, Saharsa, Nalanda, Jehanabad, East-Champaran, Sitamarhi, Jamui, Madhepura, Vaishali, Saran, West-Champaran, Araria, Madhubani, Banka, Sheikhpura and Gopalgang comprise under medium category, the range of variation is 59.6 per cent to 50 per cent. Lakhaisarai (49.7 per cent), Supaul (48.2 per cent), Kishangang (48.2 per cent) and Sheohar (31.2 per cent) fall under the lowest category (Table 4).

Societies with no equal status and opportunities to female adversely affect total literacy rate, since women usually constitute half of the total population of any society.

In Bihar, the inability of Govt. School to prevent dropout of girls increases the probability of poor girls remaining illiterate. In addition to the factors stated above, the apathy and resistance of parents, unfavorable attitudes towards the education of girls and early marriage are the main factors aggravating the issue in excluded communities.

### Conclusion

In the light of discussions, it may be concluded that over all literacy rate of Bihar shows an increasing trend from 13.49 per cent in 1951 to 47.53 per cent in 2011. Further, in the state, however, the literacy rate is rising from 39% in 1991 to 47% in 2011, but, still it has the lowest literacy rate in India. What further confounds the picture is the considerable disparity between educational achievements within districts, between rural and urban areas and between social groups. The data on women and girls in Bihar reveal certain facts that ought to be of great concern to educationists, planners and policy makers. While the female literacy may have exhibited the decadal increase, but it still remains, considerably lower than male literacy rate (33.57% against the national average of 54.16%). Girls, yet again emerge as an extremely vulnerable category cutting across social groups as well as geographical location. The social fabric not only segregates community into strong like of caste system but also has effect on the livelihood pattern at large. As elsewhere, much of the gaps in education of the state can be attributed to caste status, gender and poverty.

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