



## REVIEW OF RESEARCH

ISSN: 2249-894X

IMPACT FACTOR : 5.2331(UIF)

VOLUME - 7 | ISSUE - 6 | MARCH - 2018



### LITERACY DIFFERENTIALS AMONG SCHEDULED AND NON SCHEDULE CASTES IN INDIA

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#### ABSTRACT

*The present paper is an attempt to analyse the trends of differential in literacy rate, of scheduled caste and non scheduled caste literacy in India. Although scheduled castes are in a minority, they constitute about 16.2 per cent of the total population of India (Census of India, 2011). The Scheduled castes throughout the country occupy the lowest rank in the caste hierarchy, and faced many problems, which are social, economic, political and educational in nature. According to 2011 census, the crude literacy rate of the scheduled castes of India was 66.07 per cent, whereas the literacy rate of Non- Scheduled was 74.04 per cent. So, the gap between scheduled castes and general category was 7.97 per cent. The overall literacy rate of scheduled caste in India has been sharply increasing due to various government policy programs. For present investigation secondary data is obtained from censuses of India. In this paper discussed about the literacy differentials among scheduled and Non-Scheduled caste in India.*



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**KEY WORDS:** Literacy, Scheduled and Non-Scheduled caste etc.

#### INTRODUCTION:

Literacy is one of the important indicators of human development. Literacy is as the ability to read and write at least a simple message in any language. Literacy reflects the socio- economic and cultural set-up of a nation, ethnic group or community. It influences and determines qualitatively and quantitatively not only the human resources, but also other population attributes like fertility, mortality, age of marriage and economic participation of a population ultimately, aiming towards welfare of the society (Sawant and Lewis, 2004). Indian society is recognized by its diversity and in terms of religion, caste, region and language. Caste is a rigid system of occupationally specialized, interdependent groups. The inequality of the caste system is a special type of inequality, of ideas and values based on the purity- pollution which is the basic to the hierarchy in caste structure (Dumont, 1970).

Scheduled castes have historically been disadvantaged and vulnerable people recognized in the Constitution of India. During the period of British rule they were known as the Depressed Classes (Abdus Salam, 2014). The Scheduled castes population throughout the country occupy the lowest rank in the caste hierarchy and faced many problems, which are social, economic, political and educational (Shinde, 2013; Parul, 2014). Khan, et.al, (2013) noted the scheduled caste populations are 'the depressed classes', they are also deprived from the basic amenities. Scheduled Castes are worst victim of social inequality in every sphere of life. They remain at the bottom of social hierarchy and have been socially deprived, discriminated and exploited by the upper castes. Contemporarily, the rigours of pollution, social practices of

untouchability and social relations of servility vary greatly in different parts of the country. The schedule castes are comparatively backward in occupational, educational, social, cultural, religious and political sector (Chouhan, 2012). Also they are deprived from the employment opportunities (Deka, 2016). Illiteracy is the main cause of the deprivation of lower caste people. Almost 90 per cent of the Scheduled Castes still live in rural areas and half of the population lives under the poverty line, and majority are illiterate. For their source of income the majority of Scheduled Castes households are engaged in some form of manual labour, cultivation, grazing, mining, scavenging, construction work, metal, leather or brick work. The suffering of Scheduled Caste varies from region to region and caste to caste as also in the time frame.

After independence, The Constitution of India, mandated special protections and provisions provided Scheduled castes in Articles 341(1). The efforts of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar to create constitutional safeguard for Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe of India is remarkable. Constitutional safeguard like Reservation Policy for Scheduled caste in education and employment in government sector is helping to improve their socio economic condition. The caste has been undergone significant change since independence of India. According to the Census 2011 there are 1241 castes notified under the scheduled castes and population is 20.13 crore, which constituted 16.63 per cent of the total population. In 2011 the crude literacy rate of the scheduled caste of India was 66.07 per cent, whereas the literacy rate of Non- Scheduled was 74.04 per cent. So, the gap between scheduled castes and general category was 7.97 per cent. The literacy rate of Scheduled caste population is differing from region to region, as the region. The overall literacy rate of scheduled caste in India has been sharply increasing. The study of educational status of scheduled caste population is quite interesting aspect.

Therefore in this paper an attempt has been made to study the literacy differentials among scheduled and Non-Scheduled caste in India.

## OBJECTIVES

The present study was undertaken with the following objectives

1. To study the spatial pattern of scheduled and non Scheduled caste population in India.
2. To analysis the trends of differential literacy rate between scheduled caste and Non scheduled caste in India

## DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

The present paper intends to analysis distributional pattern of literacy differentials among scheduled and Non-Scheduled caste in India. Present study mostly relies on the secondary data collected through censuses handbook of India and varies report. The collected data are analyses by statistical and cartographic techniques. The actual growth rate of specific decade is obtained by dividing the difference between the populations of two decades. In order to assess the population growth, the following formula has been adopted. This difference is calculated from the literacy rate Scheduled caste subtracted from literacy rate of non Scheduled caste population. The appropriate statistical and cartographic techniques have been adopted for preparation of map's and diagrams. The following statistical equation is used to understand the growth rate.

$$\text{Formula} = \text{GR} = \frac{P_1 - P_0}{P_0} \times 100$$

Whereas,

GR = Growth rate of population

P1 = Population of the present year.

P0 = Population in the previous year.

## Trend of Scheduled Caste and Non Scheduled Caste Population

Literacy is a determinant of social, economic, cultural and political development of a region. Often, it is not easy to prepare list of such factors determining on literacy rates. The degree of urbanization, type of

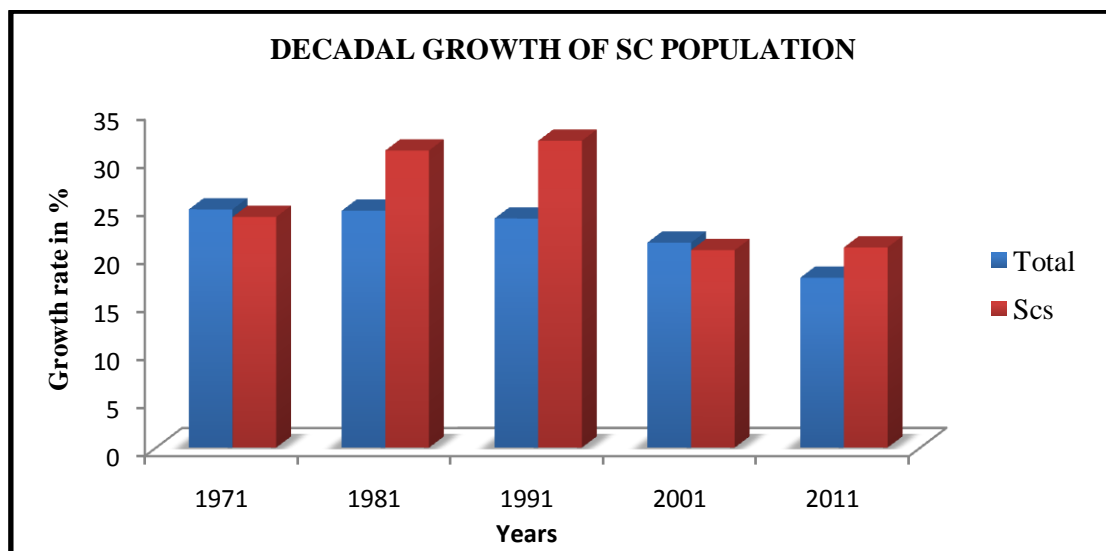
economy, political background, education facilities, cost of education, degree of development of means of transportation and communication, status of woman in society, standard of living and religious groups are the factors which are influencing directly on the rate of literacy, where as physical factor like as, topography, climate and soil have indirectly influencing the rate of literacy (Rukhsana and Alam, 2014).

Table 1 shows the decadal growth of Non Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Caste population in India from 1961 to 2011. The population of Non Scheduled Caste has increased from 43.92 crore in 1961 to 121.05 crore in 2011, consequently the Scheduled Caste population in India rose from 6.45 crore in to 20.13 crore in the same period.

**Table No 1: Growth of Scheduled Caste and Non Scheduled Population (1961-2011)**

Sr. No.	Year	Non Scheduled Caste		Scheduled Caste	
		Population	Growth rate (%)	Population	Growth rate (%)
1	1961	439234771	0.0	64511313	0.0
2	1971	548159652	24.80	80005398	24.01
3	1981	683329097	24.66	104754623	30.93
4	1991	846302688	23.85	138223277	31.94
5	2001	1,02,86,10,328	21.34	16,66,35,700	20.55
6	2011	1,21,05,69,573	17.68	20,13,78,086	20.84

Source: Census of India 1961-2011.



**Fig.1**

It seems that, from the 1961 to 1991 Scheduled Caste population increased continuously because the large number of communities which having similarities in their culture and societies where they reside, and tried to enter in census records as Scheduled Caste to getting facilities and benefits from government (fig.1). After that the growth rate is decreased than previous year. During the 1991 to 2001 decade the caste validity process was applied in the state and some Scheduled Caste communities are shifted to Special Backward Caste i. e. SBC, therefore the percentage of Scheduled Caste was decreased.

**Table No 2: Literacy Rate of Scheduled Caste and Non Scheduled (1961-2011)**

Sr. No.	Year	Non Scheduled Caste		Scheduled Caste	
		Literacy Rate	Growth rate (%)	Literacy Rate	Growth rate (%)
1	1961	28.31	00	10.27	00
2	1971	34.45	21.69	14.67	42.84
3	1981	43.56	26.44	21.38	45.74
4	1991	52.21	19.86	37.41	74.98
5	2001	64.84	24.17	54.69	46.19
6	2011	74.04	14.76	66.10	20.86

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

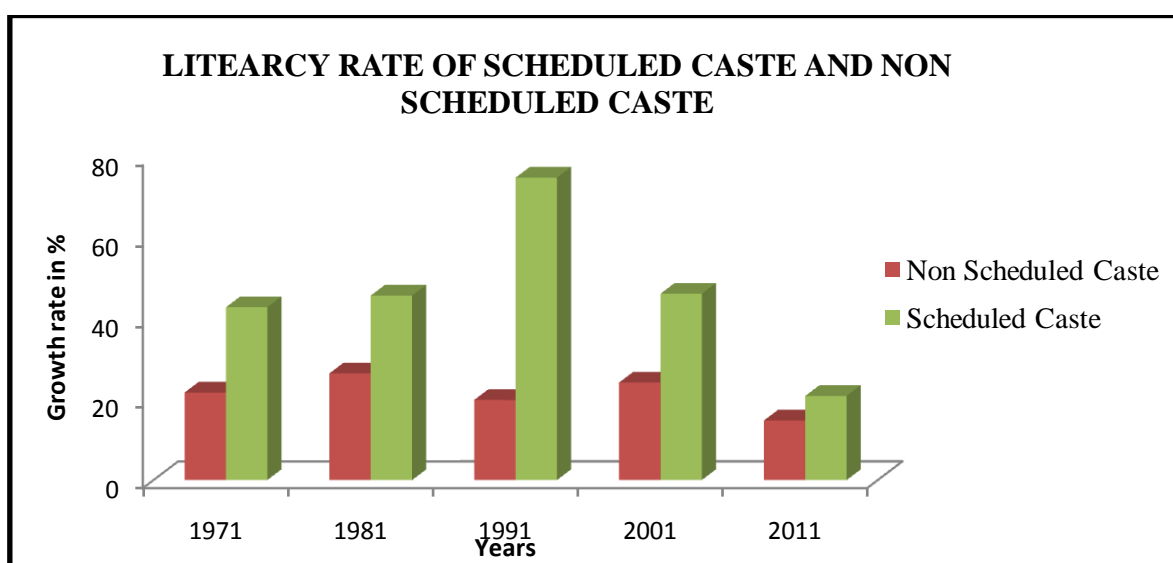
**Fig.2**

Table no 2 shows the literacy rate of Non Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Caste population In India from 1961 to 2011. It has been noted that the literacy rate of the total population has been 28.31 per cent in 1961, and has further increased up to 74.04 per cent with 161.53 per cent growth rate during 2011. Similarly, in 1961, 10.67 per cent literacy rate of Scheduled Caste, which have increased to 66.10 per cent with 543.62 per cent growth rate. The trends of literacy in Scheduled Caste and Non Scheduled Caste have increased. Because of the 'national literacy mission' drive launched in 1988 by the Government of India, which has created a new scope of immediate awareness to supply the energy for rapid growth of literacy in the country as a whole. It is also noted that, the literacy pattern shows an increasing growth rate of Scheduled Castes among the than Non Scheduled castes. Illiteracy is the main cause of the deprivation of lower caste people. "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, introduced social reform movement. He encouraged and urged his followers to pursue education as a means of escaping from poverty. He also introduced "Reservation Policy" which might have provided several opportunities to these socially backward classes in the field of education.

### **Literacy Gap between the Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Population in India**

Literacy is a determinant of social, economic, cultural and political development of a region. Literacy determines the standard of living, levels of income, fertility and mortality, social status, economic growth etc. The analysis of data clearly indicates that percentage of literacy rates among the scheduled caste population is lower than the total population. Literacy is related to religion and caste. Similarly proportion of literates is lower among the people belongs to Scheduled Caste and Tribes. The main reason for lower proportion of literates among the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes is that they were deprived of educational facilities

for generations (Sawant and Athawale, 1994). This signifies the deplorable conditions of the socially backward classes in the country even after six and half decades of independence. According to 2011 census, literacy rate of the scheduled castes of India was 66.07 per cent, whereas the literacy rate of Non- Scheduled was 74.04 per cent. So, the gap between scheduled castes and general category was 7.97 per cent.

Table 3 depicts that the of state level literacy rate between Non Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Caste population in India between 2001 to 2011. Literacy of scheduled and non-scheduled population has been increasing from 2001 to 2011. It has been noted that the literacy of the non-scheduled population has been 64.84 per cent in 2001, and 74.04 per cent during 2011. Similarly, in 2001, literacy of Scheduled Castes was 54.69 per cent and 66.07 per cent in 2011. Which have increased to 14.76 per cent and 20.86 per cent than 2001. The literacy rates of the scheduled caste population is large than non-scheduled caste population. This might be probably because of the employment opportunities and reservation policies in the idle of education, specially meant for these socially backward classes. Dr. Ambedkar also had a vision for socially and economically disadvantaged sections. There have been several programmes, progressive legislations and constitutional safeguards to help SC and ST.

**Table No. 3: Literacy Gap between the Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Population (2001-2011)**

State	2001			2011		
	Non-Scheduled	Scheduled Population	Literacy Gap	Non-Scheduled	Scheduled Population	Literacy Gap
All India	64.84	54.69	10.15	74.04	66.07	7.97
Andhra Pradesh	60.47	53.52	6.95	67.02	62.28	4.74
Arunachal Pradesh	54.34	67.64	-13.3	65.38	NA	-
Assam	63.25	66.78	-3.71	72.19	76.99	- 4.8
Bihar	47.00	28.47	18.53	61.80	48.65	13.15
Chattisgarh	64.66	63.96	0.7	70.28	70.76	- 0.48
Goa	82.01	71.92	10.09	88.70	83.73	4.97
Gujarat	69.14	70.50	-1.36	78.03	79.18	-1.15
Haryana	67.91	55.45	12.46	75.55	66.85	8.69
Himachal Pradesh	76.48	70.31	6.17	82.50	78.92	3.58
Jharkhand	53.56	37.56	16	66.11	70.16	-4.05
Jammu & Kashmir	55.52	59.03	3.51	67.16	55.89	11.27
Karnataka	66.64	52.87	13.77	75.36	65.33	10.03
Kerala	90.86	82.66	8.2	94.00	88.73	5.27
Madhya Pradesh	63.74	58.57	5.17	69.32	66.16	3.16
Maharashtra	76.88	71.90	4.98	82.34	79.66	2.66
Manipur	70.53	72.32	1.79	76.94	76.09	0.85
Meghalaya	62.56	56.27	6.29	74.43	68.57	5.86
Mizoram	88.80	89.20	-0.40	91.33	92.43	-1.1
Nagaland	66.59	71.85	-5.26	79.55	-	-
Orissa	63.08	55.53	7.55	72.87	69.02	3.85
Punjab	69.65	56.22	13.43	75.84	64.81	11.03
Rajasthan	60.41	52.24	8.17	66.11	59.75	6.36
Sikkim	68.81	63.4	5.41	81.42	77.54	3.88
Tamil Nadu	73.45	63.19	10.26	80.09	73.26	6.83
Tripura	73.19	74.68	-1.49	87.22	84.45	2.77
Uttar Pradesh	56.27	46.27	10	67.68	60.89	6.79
Uttarakhand	71.62	63.40	8.22	78.82	74.41	4.41
West Bengal	68.64	59.04	9.6	76.26	69.43	6.83
A & N Islands	81.30	NA	NA	90.27	86.63	NA
Chandigarh	81.94	67.66	14.28	89.99	86.05	3.94
D & N Haveli	57.63	78.25	-20.62	85.17	76.24	8.93

Daman & Diu	78.18	85.13	-6.95	91.54	87.10	4.44
NCT of Delhi	81.67	70.85	10.82	90.94	86.21	4.73
Lakshadweep	86.66	NA	NA	95.56	91.85	3.71
Pondicherry	81.24	69.12	12.12	91.26	85.85	5.41

Source: Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Human Development, Govt. of India, Report,

Directorate of Economics and Statistics Government of Gujarat Gandhinagar.

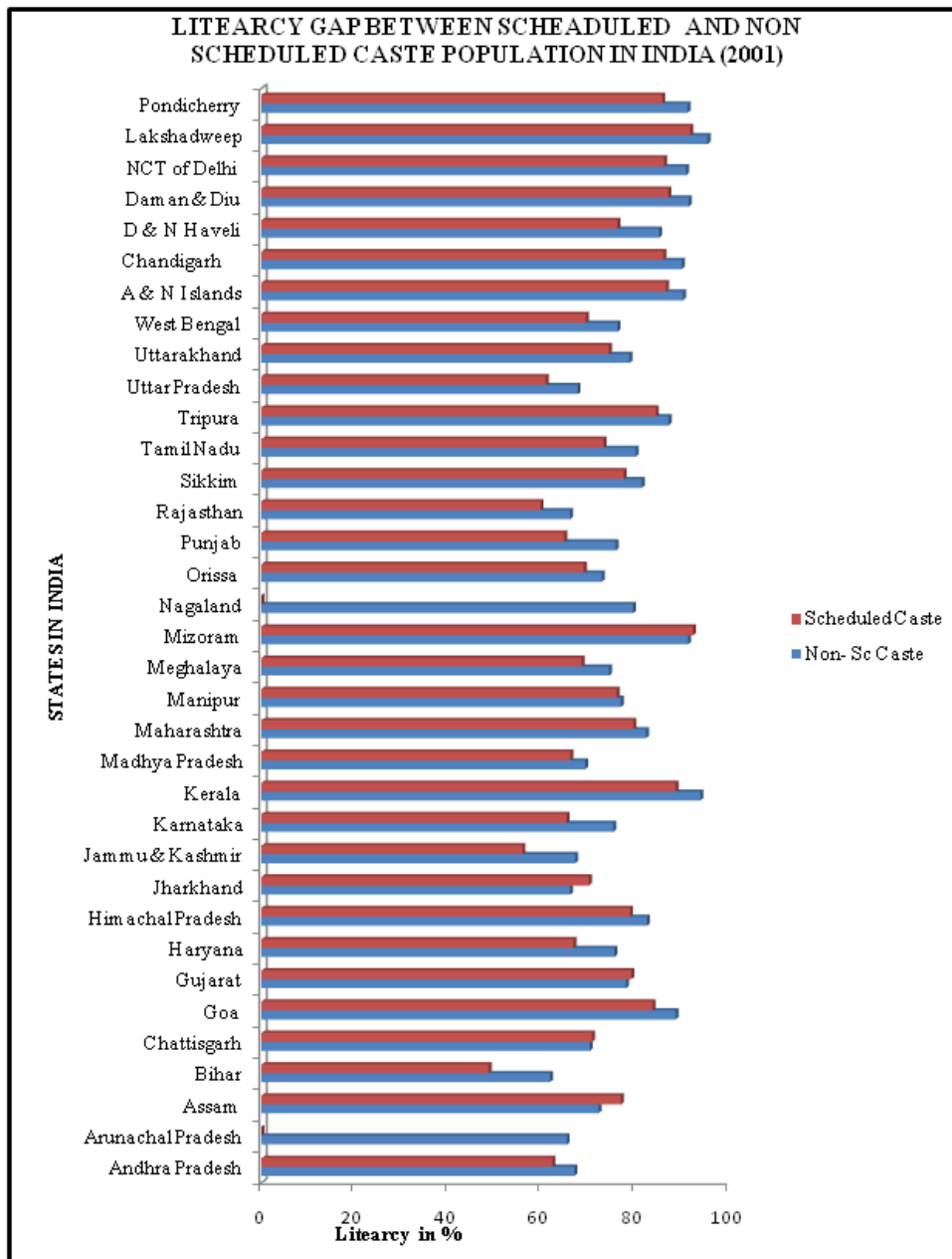


Fig.3

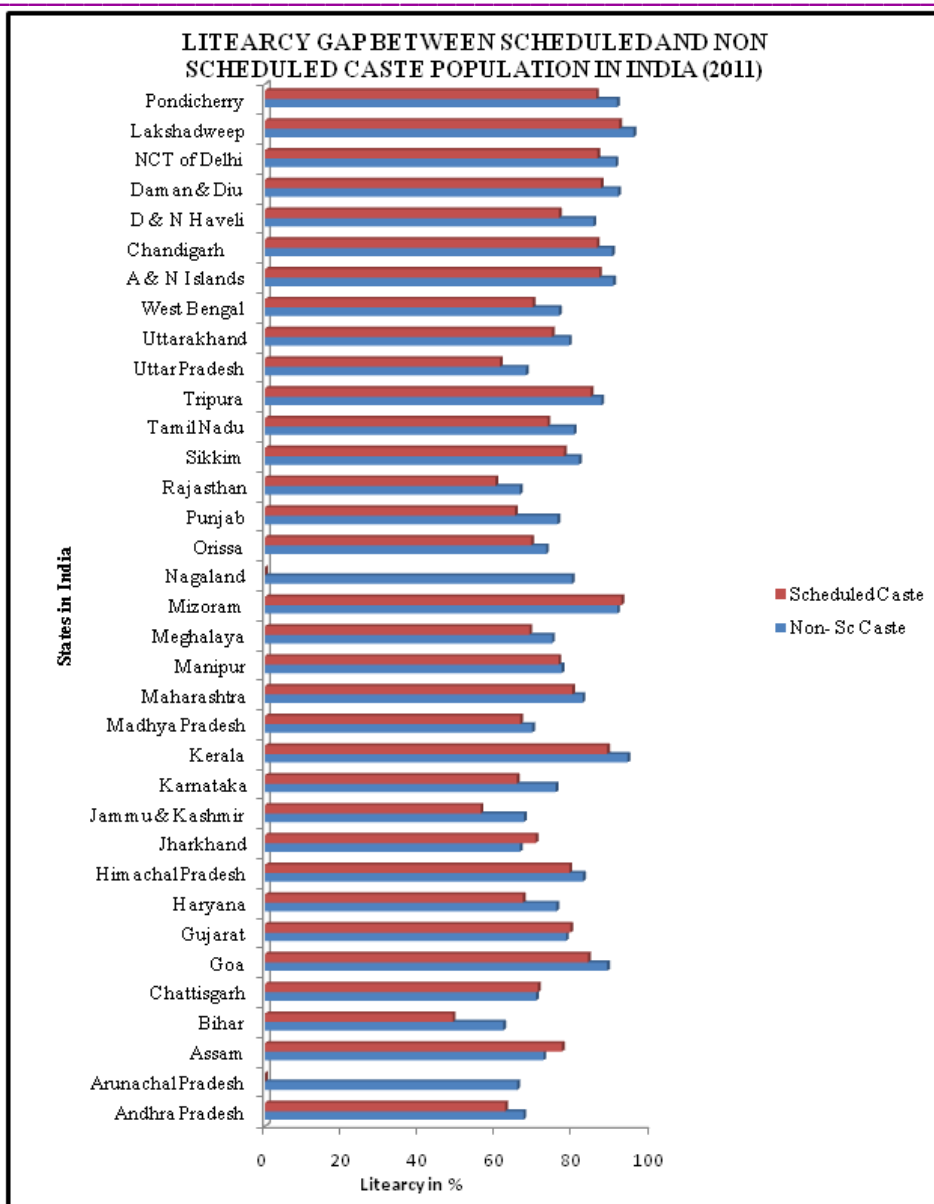


Fig.4

Table 3 also reveals that the literacy gap have declined between Non Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Caste population in 2001 to 2011. The total literacy gap between Scheduled Caste and Non Scheduled Caste for all India is 10.15 per cent in 2001 and 7.97 per cent in 2011 respectively; it is reduced to 2.18 per cent. Also the table clearly shows that the level literacy gap varies in different states in India. In 2001, the literacy gap among the scheduled caste and non-scheduled caste population have higher than the national average (10.15 per cent) in Bihar (18.53 per cent), Chandigarh (14.28 per cent), Karnataka (13.77 per cent), Punjab (13.43 per cent), Haryana (12.46 per cent), Pondicherry (12.12 per cent), and Tamilnadu (10.26 per cent) respectively. On the other hand, the states like D & N Haveli (20.62 per cent), Arunachal Pradesh (13.3 per cent), Daman & Diu (6.95 per cent), Assam (3.71 per cent), Nagaland (5.26 per cent), Gujarat (1.36 per cent), Tripura (1.49 per cent) and Mizoram (0.40 per cent), states have higher literacy rates than non-scheduled caste population.

In 2011, the national average literacy gap among the scheduled caste and non-scheduled caste population has declined up to 7.97 per cent. Literacy gap between the scheduled caste and non-scheduled

caste population stands highest in the state of Bihar (13.15 per cent) followed by Jammu & Kashmir (11.27 per cent), Punjab (11.03 per cent), Karnataka (10.03 per cent), Haryana (8.69 per cent), have also recorded literacy gap between the scheduled caste and non-scheduled caste population higher than the national average. The states of D & N Haveli (8.93 per cent), Assam (4.8 per cent), Jharkhand (4.5 per cent), Daman & Diu (4.44 per cent), Tripura (2.77 per cent) and Mizoram (1.7 per cent), Gujarat (1.15 per cent), states have higher literacy rates than non-scheduled caste population.

## CONCLUSION

On the basis of study we can conclude that the education is the main foundation for social and economic growth of society. But it gets affected by the mechanism of caste system. In India literacy differentials among different castes is found in each and every region. The literacy among scheduled and non-scheduled population has been increasing trend over the past five decades. Though the literacy rate of the Non Scheduled Castes population is comparatively higher than that of the Scheduled Castes during the 1961- 2011, but the growth rate of Scheduled Castes literacy has been always higher than the Non Scheduled Castes population as a whole. In fact, though the literacy gaps have declined from 2001 to 2011, yet, the literacy rates of the scheduled population still lags far behind that of the non-scheduled population for most of the states. This could be because of Dr. Ambedkar also had a vision for socially and economically disadvantaged sections. There have been several programmes, progressive legislations and constitutional safeguards as like “Reservation Policy”, which might have provided several opportunities to these socially backward classes in the field of education. Government takes some step to improve the education, quality of life and socio-economic backwardness of Scheduled Castes population and implicates some policies which improve literacy and employment structure. But only this policies are not sufficient because education of the Scheduled Castes in rural areas of the state is very poor so, Government should aware the people of Schedule Caste who are living in rural areas.

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