



Literacy rate of Scheduled" Castes in Bihar

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Abstract: Meaning of literate : According to Census report of 1971 of India (Bihar), A person who can both read and write with under-standing in any language is to be taken as literate. A person who can merely read but cannot write is not a literate."³
According to 1961 census, the literacy rate among the scheduled castes in Bihar were found 5.9 percent, whereas the lite- racy rate among the general castes during that period was 18.4 upto 1971 census, The literacy rate of Scheduled castes in Bihar raise up to 15.8 percent, but till then the literacy among the general castes of Bihar became 19.9 percent, which was now became 26 percent in 1981 census.

Key Words: Litrare, Census report, read and write, language, litracy, scheduled, general caste.

The Backward Classes Commission said that the average literacy rate of the country is 24% in which only 10.27 percent literacy rate is found amongst the schedul castes. In the state lite Bihar, the literacy rate of scheduled castes is much less in comparison to all India average. Accordint to the report of the Backward Class Commission, literacy rate of scheduled castes in Bihar is much less than that of other States in India.

The following table shows the comparative study of literacy rate of scheduled caste in Bihar with some other States of India according to 1961 Census.

Table No. 01

Sl No.	Name of the State	Literacy rate.
1	2	3
1	Kerala	24.4%
2	Assam	24.4%
3	Gujarat	22.5%
4	Maharashtra	15.4%
5	Tamil Naidu	14.7%
6	West Bengal	13.6%
7	Orissa	11.0%
8	Uttar Pradesh	7.1%
9	Bihar	5.9%
10	Jammu & Kashmir	4.7%

Source : Backward Classes Commission Report, Vol. I, Page 9.

The above table indicates that except Jammu and Kashmir, Bihar is in bottom in respect to literacy rate of scheduled castes according to 1961 census. In 1971 census this rate became 15.8%, whereas average literacy rate of population of Bihar was 20%. According to provisional figures of 1981 census, the average literacy rate of Bihar is 26% which 6% more in respect of 1971 census.

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According to the avove noted table the literacy rate in Kerala and

Assam are about 5 times more than that of Bihar. The following table shows the rural and urban divisions of lite-rates and illeterate persons of the scheduled castes in Bihar.

Table No. 02

	Rural areas	Urban areas	Total
Illeterate	70,02,535	4,28,840	74,31,375
Literates	4,34,038	85,239	5,19,277

Source : Census of India (Bihar), 1971,

Social and Cultural Table, Bihar, Page-138.

The above noted table reveal the facts about the number of illeterates and literates population of scheduled castes in Bihar. This mass illeteracy of scheduled castes also indicates of their poverty and backwardness. Out of the total population of scheduled castes in Bihar. 74,31,375 persons are illeterate and only 5,19,277 persons are literate, Out of total illeterates, 70,02,535 are in rural areas and 4,28,840 are in urban areas. Among total literate persons of 5,19,277; 4,34,018 live in rural areas and 85,239 reside in urban areas Thus the table shows the poor literacy rate among the scheduled castes in Bihar. It also proves that illeteracy in the rural areas among the scheduled castes is much aggravated.

The following table shows the male, female literacy of scheduled castes in rural and urban areas of Bihar.



Table No. 03

Sex	Rural	Urban areas	Total
Males	4,06,579	72,081	4,78,660
Females	27,459	13,158	40,617
Total	4,34,018	85,239	5,19,277

Source : Census of India (Bihar) 1971,
Social and Cultural Table, Table, Page 1138.

The above table reveals the fact that out of the total literate persons i.e. 5,19,277 of the scheduled castes in Bihar, 4,78,650 are males and only 4,061 are females. Among total literate males 4,05,579 live in the rural areas and 72,081 live in the Urban areas. Similarly out of the total female literate of scheduled castes 27,459 live in rural areas and 13,158 reside in the urban areas. Thus like others, difference between male and female literacy of scheduled castes in Bihar is clear according to the aforesaid table No. 01. The total literacy rate in Bihar is 19.94 i.e. about 20 percent, whereas literacy among the scheduled castes in only 5.9 percent. The all india average of literacy is 29%.

The following table shows the caste-wise male-female literacy in rural and urban areas of Bihar among the scheduled castes according to 1971.

Table No-04

Sl.No.	Caste	Sex	Rural area	Urban area	Total
1	Bantar	Male	1,860	18	1,878
		Female	68	2	70
		Total	1,928	20	1,948
2	Bauri	Male	1,860	18	1,878
		Female	68	2	70
		Total	1,928	20	1,948
3	Bhogta	Male	3,393	126	3,519
		Female	232	11	243
		Total	3,625	137	3,762
4	Chamar or Mochi	Male	1,38,949	16,567	1,55,516
		Female	9,158	2,617	11,775
		Total	1,47,107	19,184	1,67,291
5	Chaupal	Male	1,755	13	1,768
		Female	91	2	93
		Total	1,846	15	1,861
6	Debgar	Male	283	299	2,582
		Female	12	23	35
		Total	295	322	617
7	Dhobi	Male	37,622	8,836	46,456
		Female	3,206	2,101	5,307
		Total	40,828	10,937	51,763
8	Dom or Dhagad	Male	5,922	1,750	7,672
		Female	414	295	709
		Total	6,336	2,045	8,381
9	Dusadh including Dhari or Dharhi	Male	1,37,336	18,416	1,55,752
		Female	8,886	2,954	11,840
		Total	1,46,222	21,370	1,67,592
10	Jhasi	Male	3,518	1,787	5,305
		Female	453	309	762
		Total	3,971	2,096	6,067

The table reveals the facts about the caste-wise literacy of scheduled castes in this State. according to the aforesaid table highest number of literate persons are found in the Dusadh castes, although Chamar or Mochi is the highest in the numerical point of view. Even females members of Dusadh castes are more literate than female members of Chamars of Bihar. The table says, qualitatively percentage of literacy among Lalbegi castes is much better. As table indicates out of total population, 759 of this caste 108 persons are literates. Only 14 in rural areas and 94 in urban areas. Thus literacy among the urban dwellers of Lalbegi castes is 7 times more than of its rural dwellers. The table says, the literacy among the females of Pasi castes in urban areas is more than that of its rural areas. The table also indicates about the lowest literacy rate of Mushar castes. As its number comes third from the numerical point of view of population, just after chamer and Dusadh. Out of total Mushar population i.e. 11,68,447, only 15,253 persons are found literates. Its women fold are much lagged behind in comparison of women fold of other scheduled castes. Out of total 5,51,940 Mushar only 700 are literates. In the urban areas this literacy is found among 72 womenly.

Thus literacy rate among the Mushar is quite Miserable in comparison of other scheduled castes in Bihar. According to the table literacy rate among the Dom (Dhagad) and Hari (Mehtar or Bhagi) also looks not good. From the literacy point of view, Mushar, Dom (Dhagad) and Hari (Mehtar or Bhangi) are just like scheduled caste among scheduled castes e.e. Harijan amongst Harijans.

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