

Literacy Status in Cooch Behar District, West Bengal- Based on Indian Census Report -2011

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Abstract:

Education is a key factor for the rapid development of a country and literacy is the basis of education. Literacy is an index of human development and quality of human life. Literacy is essential for eradicating poverty and mental isolation for cultivating peaceful and friendly international relation. Illiteracy, on the other hand takes away man from his dignity, perpetuates, ignorance, poverty and mental isolation hampers social advancement economic growth and political maturity. It is necessary for a persons to be literate before he become educated. Higher level of education provides to society and helps in the social upliftment.

Cooch Behar district is a district of the state of West Bengal, India, as well as the district's namesake town. During the British Raj, the town of Cooch Behar was the seat of a princely state of Koch Bihar, ruled by the Koch dynasty. The present work is an attempt to study the trends and pattern of literacy in Coochbehar district, it's also represent the rural-urban literacy rate, male-female literacy rate in the district. The literacy rate of the district was 66.3 percent in 2001 census and 2011 which literacy rate was increased 73.2 percent.

Keywords: Concept of Literacy, Measurement, Trend in Literacy, Rural & Urban Literacy Rate.

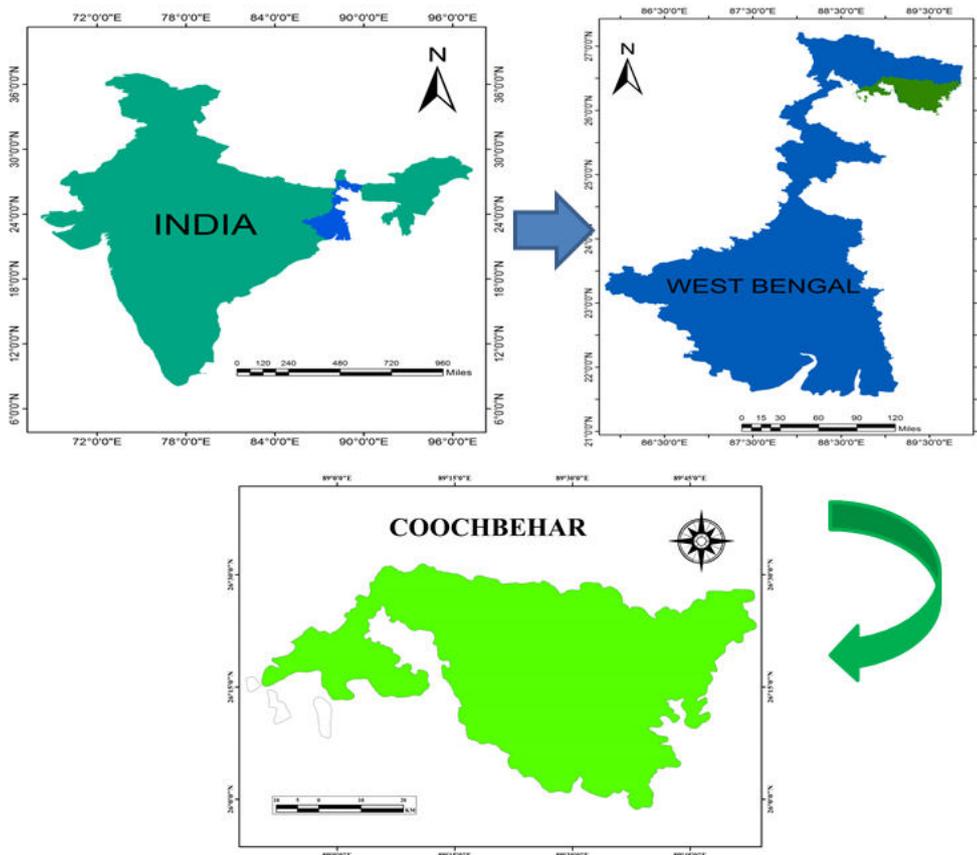
Introduction:

The concept of literacy that varies from country to country generally refers to the minimum level of literacy skills. The population commission of united nation considers the ability to both read and write a simple message with understanding in any language is a sufficient basis for classifying a person as literate. The Indian census has adopted this definition. Gradually many countries are shifting to this definition. A distinction can be made between literates and educated, as has been done in case in India. All those persons who are classified as literate on the basis of their ability to both read and write are further subdivided into a number of categories on the basis of their length of schooling. A person, who can only read but cannot write, is not literate. In the census prior to 1991, children below five years of age were necessarily as illiterate.

Study Area:

The name *Cooch Behar* is derived from the name of the Koch or *Rajbangsi* tribes indigenous to this region for many centuries. Cooch Behar formed part of the Kamarupa Kingdom of Assam from the 4th to the 12th centuries. In the 12th century, the area became a part of the Kamata Kingdom, first ruled by the Khendynasty from their capital at Kamatapur.

LOCATION MAP OF THE STUDY AREA



Map.1 Location Map of The Study Area

The study area Koch Bihar District (also known as Cooch Behar) lies in the North Eastern part of the state of west Bengal. Geographically, Cooch Behar district is surrounded by district Jalpaiguri to the North and West, State of Assam (Kokrajhar and Dhubri Districts) to the East and International Boundary with Bangladesh towards south, south-East and South-West. The location of the district is spread over from 26° 32' 20" N to 25° 57' 40" N Latitude and 89° 54' 35" E to 88° 47' 40" E longitude. According to 2011 census total population was 2,819,086 and population density 830/sqkm and total area 3,387 sqkm. Literacy rate 76.78% and sex ratio 942.

Objectives:

The main objectives of the present study are below-

- Trends of literacy rate from 1951-2011 in the Coochbehar District
- To analysis the spatial pattern of literacy and Crude literacy rate in the coocbehar district, 2011
- To analysis the segment disparity in literacy (Gender, Rural-Urban) in the district, 2011.

Data sourceand methodology:

A systematic approach has been applied for the present research. The main source of data is census Publications, brought out by Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Government in India 2011, these are-

- ❖ Census of India, Primary census Abstract- 2011 (India / States).
- ❖ Census of India, Primary Census Abstract- 2011 (India / States).
- ❖ Census of India, West Bengal 2011 (District Census Handbook Koch Bihar).

Data obtained from different sources is processed using following techniques for the analysis purpose:

$$\text{Crude Literacy Rate (CLR)} = \frac{\text{No of literate persons}}{\text{No of the total population}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Literacy Rate (LR)} = \frac{\text{No of Literate Persons aged 7 and above}}{\text{Population aged 7 and above}} \times 100$$

Measurement of Literacy Rate in India:

The simplest measure used to assess the level of literacy in a population is the crude literacy rate .This may be expressed as follows—

Crude Literacy Rate= $L/P \times K$ Where, “L”=No of the literates persons, “P”=No of total population, “K”=constant that is here equal to 100

According to cessus 1901-2011 report the improvement in crude literacy rate has been phenomenal in post independent india.The crude literacy rate has increased by almost 10 % point during the last decade.It surged forward by 12% points in case of females while there was an increase of 8% points in male crude literacy rate during the last decade.The gap in CLR of males & females has decreased from 18.09% points in 2001 to14.25 % points in 2011(Fig :1.)

Trends of Crude Literacy Rate in India During The Periods : 1901-2011

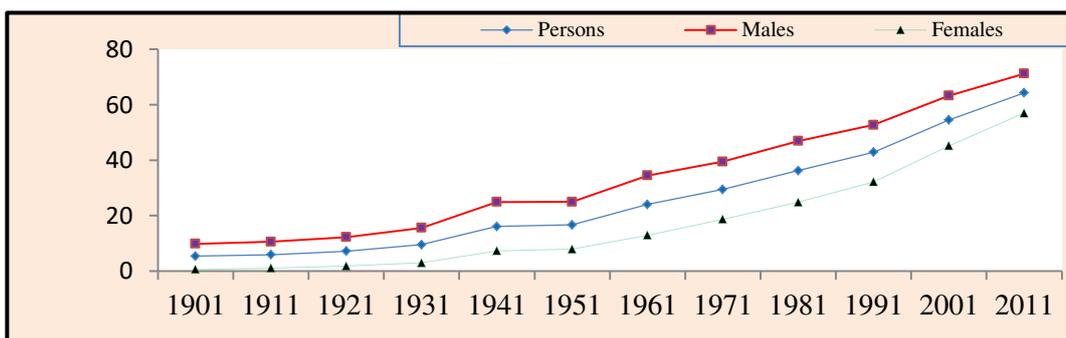


Fig : 1Source: Census of India 1901-2011

Crude literacy is one of crucial demographic elements and it is another measure of human development. According to Indian Census 2011, Crude Literacy rate of persons in coochbehar district have 65.64 %, there were male crude literacy rate 36.48 % and female crude literacy rate were 29.15%. In coochbehar district there are total twelve community blocks within included satellite town and Municipality. Calculated table and below line graph (Fig-2) show that the block Coochbehar=II (8.81%) and Coochbehar=I (7.76%) are respectively high Crude Literacy rate. And Haldibari and Sitai blocks are respectively very low persons of crude literacy rate (2.23% & 2.11%). Male and female crude literacy rate are maximum show respectively in the blocks Coochbehar=I and coochbehar=II blocks and Low crude literacy rate show in the blocks Haldibari, Sitai, SitalKuchi are respectively(Table-1).

Blocks	Crude literacy rate		
	Persons	Males	Females
Haldibari	2.23	1.24	0.99
Mekliganj	3.29	1.88	1.41
Mathabhanga=I	4.77	2.71	2.06
Mathabhanga=II	5.11	2.87	2.24
Cooch Behar=I	7.76	4.30	3.47
Cooch Behar=II	8.81	4.90	3.91
Tufanganj=I	5.74	3.21	2.53
Tufanganj=II	4.44	2.48	1.96
Dinhata=I	6.52	3.62	2.90
Dinhata=II	5.50	3.08	2.42
Sitai	2.11	1.18	0.93
Sitalkuchi	4.35	2.22	1.77

Table-1. Source: District Census Hand book, 2011

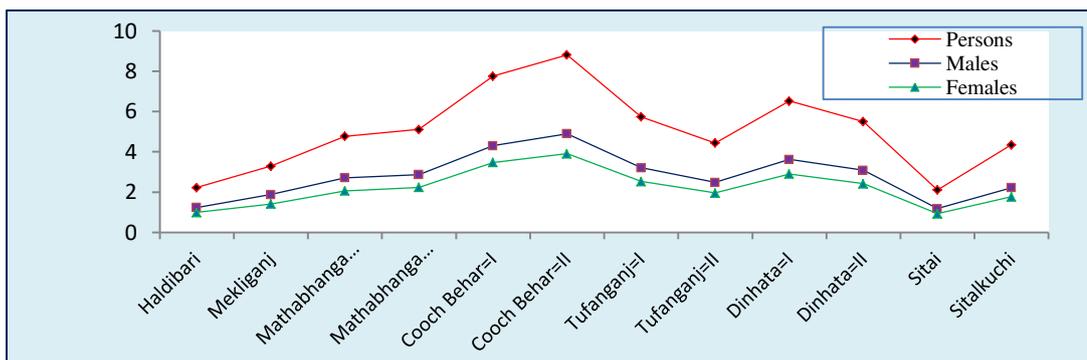


Fig:2. Block Wise Crude Literacy Rate of Coochbehar District

Block wise Literacy Rate by Sex in Cooch Behar District:

The coochbehar district has total literates population 1850504. Total male and female literates population are respectively 1028733 and 821771. Total illiterates population have **968582**. There are total male and female illiterates population have **422809** and **545773** respectively. According to census 2011, literacy rate by sex rural area and urban area of the coochbehar district, there are total five sub-division. Total rural and urban literacy rate are maximum (80.48%), which showing that Sadar sub-division. 70% showing that in Meckliganj, 72.30% showing in mathabhanga, 75.38% showing in Tufanganj and 72.27 % showing in Dinhata sub-division. Meckliganj sub-

division showing that the minimum rural and urban literacy rate by the below line graph (Fig: 3) . In Rural area show the minimum literacy rate than the urban area.

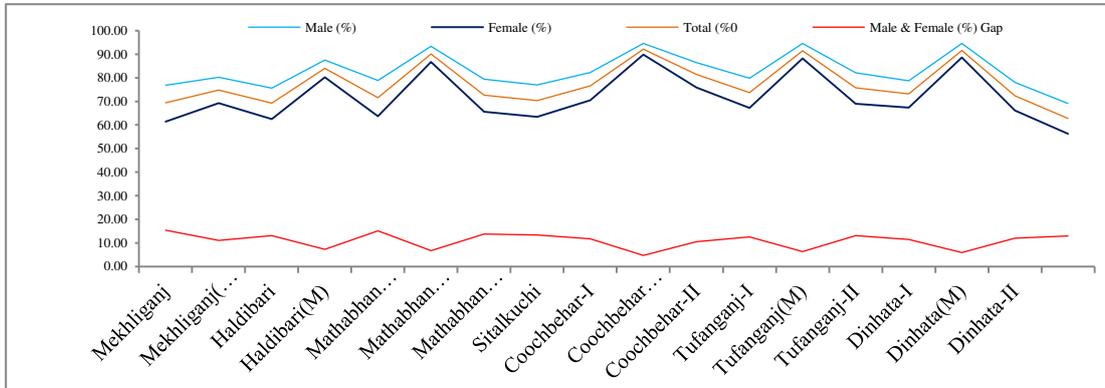


Fig : 2. Trends line Block wise Literacy Rate of Coochbehar District.

Trends line of Rural & Urban Literacy rate, sub-Division wise :

According to census 2011, literacy rate by sex rural area and urban area (Fig-3 & Fig-4) of the coochbehar district, there are total five sub-division .Total rural and urban literacy rate are maximum (80.48%), which show that Sadar sub-division. 70% show that in Meckliganj, 72.30% show in mathabhanga, 75.38% showing in Tufanganj and 72.27 % showing in Dinhata sub-division. Meckliganj sub-division showing the minimum rural and urban literacy rate. In Rural area showing the minimum literacy rate than the urban area in coochbehar district.

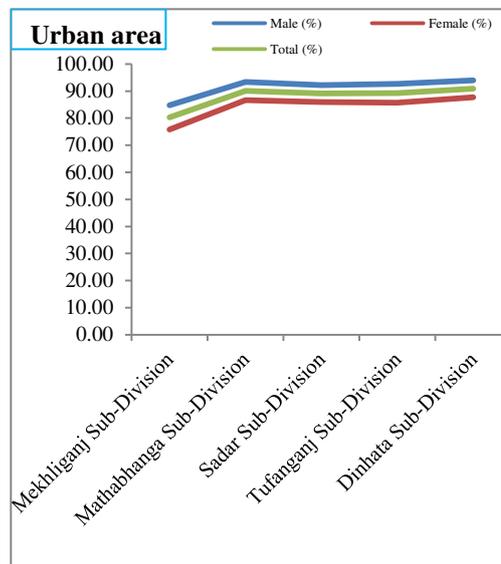
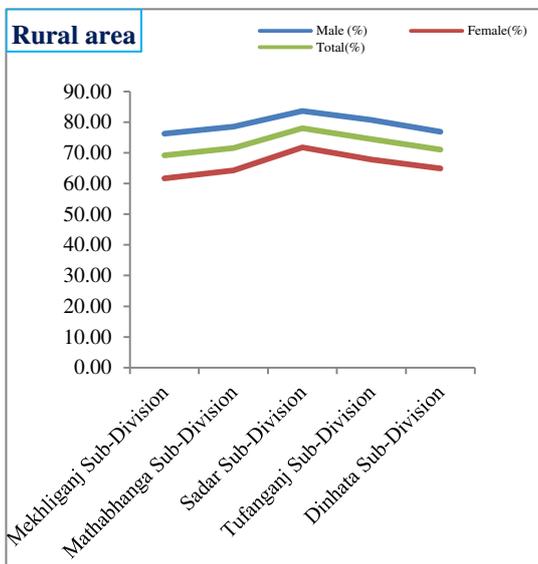


Fig-3.Source: District Census Hand book, 2011 Fig-4. (Urban area)

Literacy Rate Trends Compared between 2001 to 2011

Years	Literacy rate (%)			Increase in 2011 over 2001 (%)		
	males	females	totals	males	females	totals
2001	76.83	55.09	67.21	3.88	13.40	7.57
2011	80.71	68.49	74.78			

Table- 2.Source:District Census Hand book, 2011

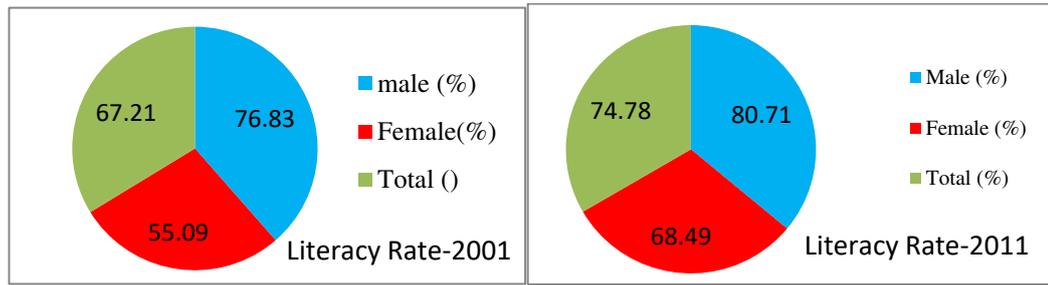


Fig-5.Literacy Rate-2001

Fig-6. Literacy Rate-2011

The effective literacy rate for Coochbehar district in census 2011, show that there are total literacy rate 74.78 % (Fig-6). There are corresponding figures of male literacy rate 80.71 %, (Table-2)which are maximum area cover in the circle and female literacy rate 68.49 % in the coochbehar. Thus three-four of the population of aged 7 years and above is literate in the country as well as coochbehar district. Four out of every five males and two out of every three females in the country are literate. Coochbehar district total literacy rate increased from census 2001-2011,there are total 7.57 % change of literacy rate. The increase in literacy rates in males and females are in the order of 3.88 % and 13.40 % percentage points respectively. According to census 2001, coochbehar district total literacy rate 67.21 % (Fig-5), there are 55.09 % in female and 76.83 % in male(Table-2).

Block wise Distribution of Literate & Illiterate Population (Rural Area) :

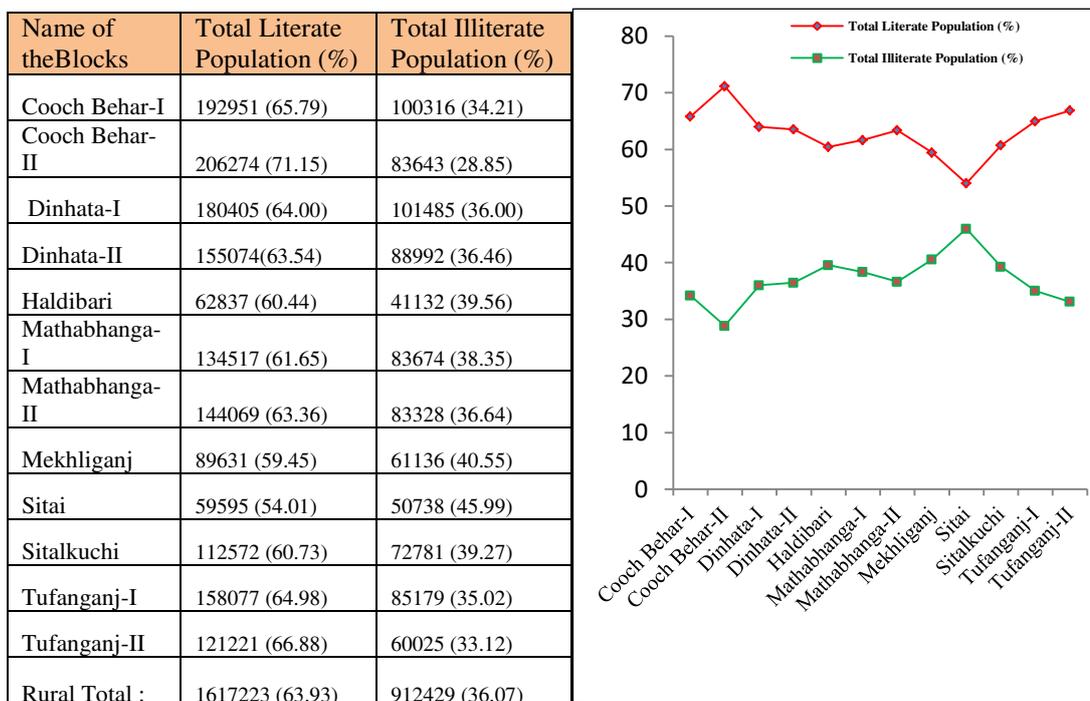


Table-3, Source: District Census Hand book, 2011. Fig-7.Literates & Illiterates Population.

Thecoochbehar district in Rural area maximum people are lived. There are showing the different blocks wise total literates and total illiterates population of the above line graph or figure(Fig-7), in the above figure red colour line indicate the total literates population and another line which blue colour indicate the total illiterates population in the Rural area. In the district total literates population have 1617223(Table-3) and illiterates total population have 912429(Table-3), which percentage of total literates population and total illiterates population are respectively 63.93 % and 36.07 %. In the district maximum population are literates and minimum population are illiterates. The maximum rural literates population found in the block coochbehar-II. which share the 71.15 % of total literates population. 65.79 % coochbehar-I and 64 % Dinhata-I, total literates population which are respectively rank second and third in District. At least lowest literates block are respectively Meckliganj (59.45%) and Sitai (54.01%). Total illiterates people have 912429, which are 36.07 % in the districts. Maximum illiterate population showing in respectively Sitai (45.99%) and sitalkuchi blocks (39.27 %). And lowest total illiterates population found respectively in blocks Coochbehar-II (28.85%) and Tufanganj-II (33.12%), Fig-7.

Block wise Distribution of Literate & Illiterate Population (Urban Area):

Falls in which Block	Name of Municipalities (M)/ Census Town (CT)	Total Literates (%)	Total Illiterates (%)
	Cooch Behar (M)	85.2	14.8
	Dinhata (M)	66.1	33.9
	Haldibari (M)	76.15	23.85
	Mathabhanga (M)	81.92	18.08
	Mekhliganj (M)	65.84	34.16
	Tufanganj (M)	84.42	15.58
CoB-I	Kharimala Khagrabari (CT)	82.37	17.63
	Guriahati (CT)	77.61	22.39
	Dhaliabari (CT)	71	29
CoB-II	Baneswar (CT)	84.86	15.14
	Khagrabari (CT)	80.47	19.53
	Baisguri (CT)	76.56	23.44
	Chakchaka (CT)	82.16	17.84
	Takagachh (CT)	67.87	32.13
DHT-I	Bhangri Pratham Khanda (CT)	76.09	23.91
MKG	Nagar Changrabandha (CT)	70.76	29.24
TFG-I	Kamat Phulbari (CT)	68.68	31.32
TFG-II	Chhoto Laukuthi (CT)	72.74	27.26
Urban Total :		122341(83.44)	24285(16.56)

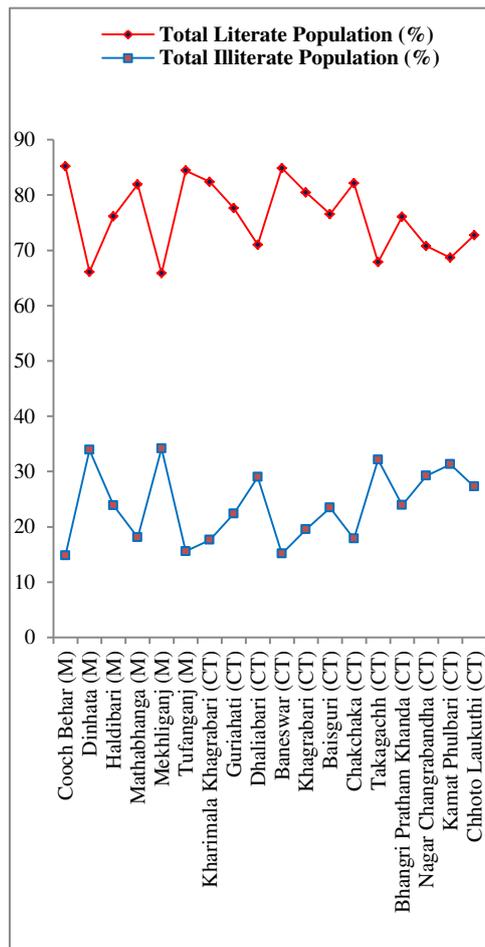


Table-4.Source: District Census Hand book, 2011.

Fig-8.Literate & Illiterate Population (urban).

According to Indian census-2011, the coochbehar district were total Literates population have 122341, share 83.44 % of the total population(Fig-8), which showing in red colour above diagram. There are total illiterates population 24285(Table-4), which share the 16.56 % of the total population. The block wise distribution of urban literates population, there are total maximum urban total literates population concentrated in the coochbehar Municipality, which 85.2% in the total literates population. 84.86 % Baneswar census town, 84.42% Tufanganj Municipality, total literate population which are respectively second and third rank of the District. 81.92 % in Mathabhanga, 82.37 % in Kharimala Khagrabari census town , 82.16 % Chakchaka census town, 80.47 % in Khagrabari census town, 77.61 % in Guriahati census town ,76.56 % in Baisguri census town, 72.74 % in Chhoto Laukuthi of the total Literacy Rate of Coochbehar District(Table-4). Total Urban Illiterates population in coochbehar district are 24285, which are share 16.56 % in total Illiterates population of coochbehar districts. Maximum Illiterates population showing in Mekhiliganj Census town (34.16 %). Lowest Illiterates population showing in coochbehar Municipality (14.8 %) ,15.14 % in Baneswar and 15.58 % in Tufanganj Municipality, which are respectively Second and Third rank in the district(Fig-8).

Literacy Rate By Sex in Coochbehar District (1951-2011) :

Year	Coochbehar Literacy Rate in percent (1951-2011)		
	Persons	Males	Females
1951	17.1	26.1	6.1
1961	25.1	37.4	11.4
1971	26.5	37.0	14.6
1981	34.8	46.1	22.6
1991	45.8	57.4	33.3
2001	66.3	75.9	56.1
2011	73.2	79.4	66.5

Table-5. Source: Primary Census Abstract in India-2011, Computed by the Author

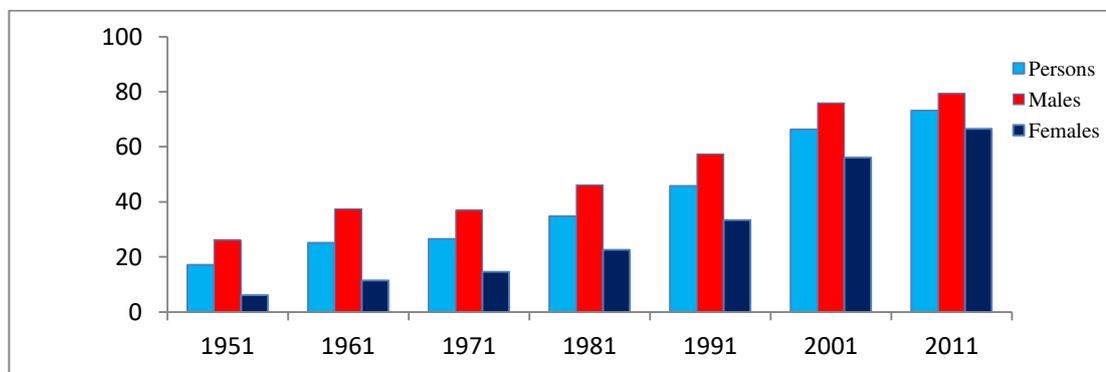


Fig-9. Literacy Rate in Coochbehar District By Sex: 1951-2011

According to census-2011, India was recorded a literacy rate of 74 percent and Rural areas reporting a literacy rate was of 68.9 percent and urban areas have literacy rate recorded 85 percent. The literacy of Coochbehar district was 17.1 percent in 1951, where males literacy rate 26.1 % and Females literacy rate was 6.1 percent. The literacy rate was increase till 1951 after it increase in 2011. The literacy rate was increase by 8% during the year 1951-1961. The literacy rate increase by 1.4 percent during the year 1961-1971, 17.7 percent literacy rate increase during the year 1981, 11 percent increase in the year 1981-1991, The literacy rate was increase 20.5 percent during the year 1991-2001 periods and 6.9 percent literacy rate increase during the year 2001-2011 periods in the district. The increase the literacy rate was the result of many schools opening with helps the different agencies like UNICEF, private School, Private policies and government policies towards the universalization of education.

Conclusion:

The above details discuss, mention that in spite of various literacy programmers it is seen that literacy rates in Coochbehar district varies sharply from place to place and region to region. Different Socio economic, Characteristics Government policies, attitude of the people towards education, Spiritual features as well as migration and immigration of educated and uneducated people affect this uneven distribution of literacy. So it is not only the duty of government but also of every educated citizen of India to operant out the educational but also of every parts of country, so that every person may get enlightened himself about the importance of literacy.

It can be seen from the above table that literacy rate remained higher than that of district coochbehar from 1951 to 2011. This is applicable both male and female literacy rate except for male literacy rate in 1981. The literacy rate for the state has increased from 25.0 in 1951 to 76.3 in 2011 whereas for the district it has increased from 17.1 in 1951 to 74.8 in 2011 Census.

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