

Educational Status of Oraon Children in Biswanath Chariali Tea Garden of Assam

Abstract

This paper presents the educational status of the children of Oraon in Biswanath Chariali tea garden of Assam. In Assam tea garden is one of the leading industry but unfortunately the socio-economic especially the educational status of the tea garden labour is very poor. This research work based on primary data and this paper focuses on the educational status of the children of Oraon community in tea garden. This paper tries to find out the factor responsible for low level of education in the tea garden community.

Keywords: Challan, Bagani Buli.

Introduction

The introduction of tea industry in Assam have changed the demography of Assam and also the socio-economic structure of the state. With the establishment of tea garden in Assam the companies needed a huge labour force but they could not manage from local areas. The planters tried to recruit local labor but the local people refused to work in the tea garden as they were self sufficient with their agricultural land. It became a serious for the planters to recruit labor for the tea garden. As the tea industry grew at a faster rate it was impossible to gather large numbers of labor so it became necessary to import labors from the other state so imported labour from different parts of the state and group of people migrated to Assam through challan.¹ The bonded labour forces of tea garden are integral part of socio-economic structure of the state. The tea tribe community of Assam is generally referred as 'bagani buli'.² Education is an important factor to improve socio-economic structure and cultural and rational qualities but the tea garden community of Assam are divested from education by and large and still have not accomplished greater section of labour community. The literate percentage of tea garden population is much lower in comparison to state percentage. According to PLA 1951 it was obligatory for the management to take responsibility for providing facilities of education to children. Lack of educational facilities in and around the tea garden is also one of the major factors to the indifference to the tea garden labour.

Objective of the study

1. To estimate the present status education and drop outs in elementary level and educational qualification of teachers in primary level.
2. To identify the impact of Sarba Sikhsha Abhiyan (SSA) in Tea Garden Schools.

Methods

Data for study based on primary sources. Primary data are collected from schools and from households by interviewing the teachers of schools and head of the family. With the help of schedule information regarding the number of children of different age group, school drop outs were collected. Basic statistic tools like simple average, percentage are used for analysis.

Review of Literature

According to **S.K Bose** (1954), At the beginning the planters did not pay attention to provide educational facilities to the tea garden labours instead they were more concentrated on development of roads. After a certain period of time due to government intervention the planters instigated the process of education for the tea garden workers and in the process they took the help of Christian missionaries.

Bora (2002) conducted a study on the existing facilities of primary education of tea gardens of Dibrugarh District and some of his findings are (i) teachers in the tea garden are engaged in other activities in addition to teaching. (ii) Schools fail to create amiable atmosphere to encourage the students to attend the school. (iii) Low percentage of enrollment of girls in school due to parents illiteracy and early marriage of girl child.



Banasmita Talukdar

Research Scholar
Deptt.of Anthropology
Ranchi College
Ranchi

Saikia (2007) in her study of Non-enrolment and drop out of children in tea garden found that the rate of drop outs is higher in girls than boys. Parent

addiction to alcohol is a major encumbrance in the path of educational progress of tea garden labour children.

Table 1: Illustration of percentage of students in four tea garden

Name of school	Number of student (boys)	Number of student (girls)	Total percentage of boys	Total percentage of girls
Sakumata tea estate primary school	45	39	53.57 %	46.42%
Dhulle tea estate primary school	80	50	61.53%	38.46%
Pratapgarh tea estate primary school	65	43	60.18%	39.81%
Monabari tea estate primary school	65	45	59.09%	40.90%
Total	265	177		

Table :2 Percentage of Students obtaining 60% and above

Grade	Language	Maths
I	12	27
II	21	31
III	19	25
IV	32	34

Table : 3 Qualification of the teacher in the school

Qualification	Untrained	Elementary graded trained	Total
Matriculation	2 (28.57%)	5(55.5%)	43.75%
Intermediate	3(42.85%)	3(33.33%)	37.5%
Graduation	2(28.57)	1(11.11%)	18.75%
Total	7	9	16

The highest number of percentage according to their level of education is the matriculation level consisting of 43.75% of whom 28.57% are untrained and 55.5% are elementary grade trained. The graduation being the lowest in the category which constitute of 18.75% out of which 28.57% are untrained and 11.11% are trained.

In the tea garden labor community the children withdraw from the schools due to various reasons like early economic backwardness, irregularity of attendance. The girls withdraw school more in comparison to the boys.

Table 4: Illustration of causes of dropout of student

Causes	Boys	Girls
Economic backwardness	15	21
Parents lack of value in education	12	18
Lack of educational atmosphere in home	3	5
Household work	1	7

Table 5 : Sex Classification of School going Student

Education Qualification	Boys	Girls
v-viii	192 (59.25%)	132 (69.10%)
ix-x	65 (20.06%)	35 (18.32%)
xi-xii	42 (12.96%)	20 (10.47%)
Graduation	20 (6.17%)	3 (1.57%)
Masters	5 (1.54%)	1 (0.52%)
Total	324	191

In the above table the percentage of boys that go to the middle school constitute about 59.25% and the lowest is those who complete Master degree which is 1.54%. In the girls category about 69.10 % out of 191 students they attend middle school. The percentage of completing master is only 0.52 which is very low. From the above observation it can be concluded that state of education among the tea garden labor community is very low. The laborers are generally illiterate and they lack the knowledge of value of education. Only 40% of families send their students to school and remaining do not send their children to school after class IV as they faced difficulty in spending money for education. Due to lack of education the children after attaining age of 15 years they starts to work in the tea garden. There are altogether 515 students who attain the school and go for further education. The number of children attending school is highest at the medium level (Class V – VIII) and gradually the percentage declines.

Awareness of SSA among Oraon community in tea garden

Awareness among Oraon towards various issues like need of education, need of saving for future are the subject that were studied by earlier researcher. Oraon are unaware about the need of education and are not aware of various schemes which are specially meant for the tea garden labour community. Percentage of informants knows about SSA and other development schemes are given below.

- Knows about SSA- 9.8%
- Knowledge about Development schemes- 0
- Knows nothing about SSA- 82.2%
- Heard about SSA- 8%

It is astounding to know that majority of population are not aware of development scheme like SSA. Some of the person who are educated to Matric level are not aware various schemes which government have implemented for them.

Discussion

The tea garden in Biswanath Chariali has at least one primary school within the garden. 70% of the territory is served by the middle school within a distance of 3.5 km. It will be suitable for girls if there will be middle school within the proximity of tea garden. The infrastructure of the schools is not adequate. Authorities should take immediate step to provide qualified and trained teachers and special allowances and incentive may attract the teachers to teach in tea garden schools. Mid Day Meal scheme should be operated smoothly for the proper nutrition of children. The impact of SSA scheme on the education system of tea garden is not up to the mark in terms of enrollment of students and special focus is important to create awareness among people regarding various development schemes.

Conclusion

Education in modern time is very important as it generates skill and knowledge and generate attitude towards work and production. The need of education is very important for the economic development of the society. The illiteracy prevents in the creativity of skills and they remain ignorant about the modern techniques used in the modern times. The skilled labor has the better opportunity to better use of resources. The importance of education helps in mental and moral development of the individual. For the equalization of educational facilities it is necessary for equalization of opportunities for all the section of the society.

References

1. Bora, R. (2002), 'A Study of the Existing Facilities for Primary Education in Tea Garden labourers in Assam', M.Ed. Dissertation, D.U.
2. Bose, S.K (1954), *Capital and Labour in India Tea Industry*, Bombay, pp-21
3. Kar, R.K. (1990). *Midday Meal Scheme and Growth of Primary Education of District in Orissa*, JEPA Vol. XXIV, No.2, NEUPA, New Delhi.
4. Saikia , J.(2007), 'A study of the problems Associated with non-enrollment and droupout among Tea Garden labourer children in lower Primary stage of Jorhat district', M.Ed.mDissertation, Periyar University Salem.
5. Saikia ,S.(1987), *History of Education in India*, Mani Manik Prakashan, Guwahati.